

**Presidential Communications Operations Office**

**Presidential News Desk**

**JOINT PRESS STATEMENT**  
**OF**  
**PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE**  
**DURING THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF MALAYSIAN PRIME MINISTER TUN**  
**DR. MAHATHIR BIN MOHAMAD**

[Reception Hall, Malacañan Palace | 07 March 2019]

Good afternoon.

Today, we are greatly honored to welcome Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad of Malaysia to the Philippines.

Mr. Prime Minister, your visit reaffirms the friendship between our two peoples and nations, and demonstrates your strong resolve as our partner for progress and a brother for peace.

Our discussions today augur well for other countries and for ours. As we reviewed the milestones achieved in further strengthening our bilateral relations, we also charted new paths [for] collaborative work.

We resolved to ramp up cooperation to address security issues, particularly on terrorism, piracy and transnational crimes, including the fight against the illegal drug trade.

We resolved to address security issues. We touched on our extensive economic cooperation. We shared the view that its further expansion serves our mutual interests as that of ASEAN and our region.

As two of Asia's growth engines, intensified two-way trade and investments between the Philippines and Malaysia is needed to sustain progress and prosperity.

Conscious of [the] synergy and dynamism of our private sectors, our governments have agreed to further enhance trade, investment and infrastructure development.

I thanked the Prime Minister for Malaysia's robust support for our Build Build Build program. This includes Malaysian companies' active role in the development of the sustainable and smart metropolis of Clark Green City.

I was happy to share with the Prime Minister the great strides we have achieved towards securing just and lasting peace in Mindanao.

The road leading to the historic transition to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region was paved in large part by the support of our international partners. Malaysia occupies a prominent role in this roster of friends.

The good work will have to continue.

I thanked the Prime Minister for Malaysia's unrelenting support for development in the south. Mindanao's progress is the key for the Philippines and the BIMP-EAGA sub-region.

I have personally seen significant headways that spurred and sustained economic communities in the BIMP-EAGA sub-region through which active socio-cultural and economic interchange across borders and enhanced cooperation between customs, immigration, quarantine and security matters.

We need to ramp up cooperation in this area.

We devoted exchanges on other matters of mutual concern, covering our people-to-people ties, including the promotion of reciprocal tourism, cooperation in health and education, as well as in the protection and promotion of the welfare of our respective nationals.

We affirmed our commitment to collaborate in regional and multilateral platforms, particularly within ASEAN to advance the rule of law in Southeast Asia and beyond.

We emphasized the importance of maintaining and promoting peace, security, stability, safety and freedom of navigation and overflight over the South China Sea, as well as the peaceful settlement of disputes. This is, without resort to the threat or use of force, in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law.

We shared the international community's hope for peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula and noted efforts by relevant parties to achieve progress through dialogue.

Indeed, there is much to look forward to as we write a new chapter of cooperation between the Philippines and Malaysia.

In closing, let me again say, the Philippines' destiny is in ASEAN and in Asia. Asia's destiny is in Asia.

Malaysia – the Philippines' partner for progress and brother for peace – will continue to play an important role as we generate and continue to progress our shared aspirations for the greater peace, progress, prosperity and stability in the ASEAN region.

Thank you.

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