

**ADDRESS OF
PRESIDENT FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
FOR THE JOINT SESSION OF THE
NATIONAL DIET OF JAPAN**

28 May 2026

*“Weaving the Future Together:
Peace, Prosperity, Possibilities”*

Her Excellency Prime Minister TAKAICHI Sanae,

The Honorable President of the House of Councillors SEKIGUCHI Masakazu,

The Honorable Speaker of the House of Representatives MORI Eisuke,

*The Honorable members of the National Diet,
including the members of the Japan-Philippines Parliamentary Friendship League,*

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great honor that I bring the warmest greetings from the Filipino people to this citadel of democracy, and to the people of Japan.

Seventy (70) years have passed since our two countries decided to restore normal diplomatic relations—determined to write a new chapter in our shared history, anchored not in the shadows of the past, but in the promise of a partnership for the future.

The relationship between the Philippines and Japan is, at its core, a story of transformation— from reconciliation to deep mutual trust.

After the war, President Elpidio Quirino chose the path of reconciliation, guided by the belief that after all, destiny has made us neighbors. We made peace with the past, and so, on July 23, 1956, the Philippines and Japan normalized diplomatic relations.

Japan's reparations became the starting point of a partnership that steadily built confidence and goodwill.

The *Official Development Assistance Act of 1996* enabled these reparations to be institutionally channeled toward long-term development.

From reparations to aid, we have built a robust economic relationship, intensified by the *Philippines-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement*, the Philippines' first Free Trade Agreement.

Today, Japan stands as the Philippines' leading source of investments.

This strong economic foundation has matured into a relationship anchored in mutual trust.

It now enables both countries to work in more complex and strategic areas, including security, maritime, and defense cooperation, resilient supply chains, and emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and space.

Seventy (70) years after reconciliation, we have reached a point where mutual trust is no longer just a result of our partnership—it is the very force that drives our relations above and beyond.

As this trust reaches new heights, it gives us both the confidence and the means to work together toward peace, prosperity, and possibilities.

Today's more interconnected and interdependent economies and societies have brought not only unprecedented opportunity, but also new vulnerabilities, as disruptions in one part of the world can ripple across many others.

Yet it is in this same moment that human ingenuity, driven in large part by advances in technology, offers us the means to address today's challenges. And paramount among these challenges is the preservation of peace.

PEACE: A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Peace is the foundation upon which our shared prosperity is built, and from which new possibilities can emerge.

From the ashes of war, the Philippines and Japan chose reconciliation over division, and cooperation over indifference.

That choice continues to define our partnership today.

In an increasingly complex Indo-Pacific, where tensions test the resilience of a rules-based order, our two nations remain unwavering in our commitment to uphold international law, promote stability, and advocate for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

We affirm our deep respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and our fundamental belief that all states, regardless of size or power, are equal, have a voice, and are free to pursue their development in accordance with international norms and law.

As maritime democracies, the Philippines and Japan are committed to strengthening maritime security and ensuring that our seas remain open, secure, and governed by rules – not by force.

The Philippines remains at the forefront of upholding a rules-based maritime order.

In July of this year, we will mark the tenth anniversary of the *Arbitral Award on the South China Sea*, which embodies our determination to resolve disputes through peaceful means and mechanisms provided under international law.

This mutual commitment to peace extends beyond our seas and into our local communities. Japan's steadfast support for peace and development in Mindanao continues to help uplift a region long affected by instability and conflict.

We recognize Japan's contributions to international peace, and we value our growing strategic partnership that reflects not only common interests, but common principles.

This partnership finds concrete expression in our deepening defense and security cooperation – through frameworks such as the *Reciprocal Access Agreement*, the *Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement*, and Japan's *Official Security Assistance Program*, which supports the Philippines in enhancing its maritime domain awareness and defense capabilities.

Our cooperation is also clearly demonstrated in humanitarian assistance and disaster response, where our nations stand ready to help one another in times of crisis, as well as in law enforcement collaboration, where we work together to combat transnational crime and promote maritime safety.

In all these areas, our partnership reflects a shared commitment not only to security, but to being responsible members of the international community.

We are duty-bound to preserve a peaceful world where nations can thrive, and our peoples can realize their full potential.

For it is on this foundation of peace that prosperity takes root and where our partnership continues to deliver real, tangible progress.

PROSPERITY: A PARTNERSHIP THAT DELIVERS

Honorable Members of the Diet,

In all my visits to your beautiful country, I have experienced the warmth extended by the people of Japan toward the Philippines.

I am pleased to say that this warmth is deeply reciprocated by the Filipino people, brought about in no small measure by Japan's efforts to support Philippine development.

These contributions have fostered lasting goodwill and deepened mutual trust between us.

Japan has played an indispensable role in the Philippines' economic journey.

It is consistently among our top trading partners, a leading source of foreign direct investment, and our largest provider of development assistance –supporting infrastructure, connectivity, and human development that have transformed lives across our archipelago.

At the same time, the Philippines contributes to Japan's economy through the steady supply of high-quality agricultural products, and through the dedication of the nearly 360,000-strong Filipino community supporting key sectors in Japan, including healthcare, education, manufacturing, agriculture, and services.

The *Philippines-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement*, concluded two decades ago, underpins our economic engagement.

As our bilateral cooperation expands into new frontiers, such as digital innovation, energy transition, resilient supply chains, and smart agriculture, we must modernize this framework to meet rapidly evolving geoeconomic realities.

In this regard, promoting economic security must be a mutual priority.

We must work together to reduce undue dependencies and ensure that progress is not held hostage to disruptions or coercion.

For our goal must not only be to build strong economies, but also to create inclusive and equitable opportunities that improve lives today and for generations to come.

POSSIBILITIES: WEAVING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

Honorable Members of the Diet,

As the Philippines and Japan commemorate seventy (70) years of normalized relations, we look ahead with confidence and purpose.

The theme of this milestone, *"Weaving the Future Together"*, sets the course for our relationship for the next seventy (70) years.

Like threads carefully interlaced, our shared experiences, values, and vision must be directed to come together to form something even stronger and more responsive to the shifting tides of our time.

The possibilities before us are vast and already taking shape.

We see this in our growing multi-sectoral engagement in emerging technologies, including in clean energy, artificial intelligence, and space cooperation – ensuring that innovation serves humanity and supports sustainable and inclusive development.

There is also significant potential for deeper collaboration between our defense and critical minerals industries, which will not only strengthen our capabilities but also spur human resource development and technological advancement.

Both in substance and in form, we have been laying our bilateral ties as a foundation and a node for expanded cooperation with like-minded partners, including the United States.

Within ASEAN, which the Philippines has the honor to chair this year and to whom Japan has been a longstanding and reliable dialogue partner, we continue to promote a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

In the United Nations and other multilateral fora, the Philippines and Japan stand together in advancing solutions to global challenges, ranging from climate change and health security to conflict prevention and peace mediation.

The opportunities to further deepen our people-to-people ties are endless – among students, artists, scientists, workers, and communities – making our relationship not only institutional, but profoundly human.

Honorable Members of the Diet,

Seven (7) decades of bilateral relations have brought us milestones and new heights, but the past alone is not what sustains this strategic partnership.

Instead, it is us heeding the call to keep our eyes trained forward, to seek bigger and better things for our peoples and our region.

In this ever-changing world – with fast-paced technological change and a dynamic geopolitical landscape – there are more new opportunities for cooperation than there are challenges.

As natural partners, whose partnership was founded on shared values and principles, we will continue working hand in hand for our common aspiration for a region that is peaceful, secure, and prosperous, and where both the Filipino and Japanese people can succeed and thrive.

Our story of choosing to build on goodwill and mutual trust in pursuit of a shared future sends out a strong message that transcends our two countries.

Our partnership has reached a pinnacle, but we must continue to aim for higher summits.

Let us strive to become an exemplar of strategic collaboration that inspires pathways to peace, shares opportunities toward common prosperity, and seizes new possibilities that redound to the benefit of our nations, our peoples, and the wider Indo-Pacific region.

In these halls, you represent and give voice to the will of the Japanese people, for whom Filipinos hold deep friendship and admiration.

It is my hope that, with openness to what lies ahead – to new ideas, new horizons, and possibilities not yet imagined – the Philippines and Japan may continue to build a future worthy of our shared aspirations.

Thank you. *Arigatou gozaimasu.*