



**SPEECH BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY  
THE PRESIDENT OF  
THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
AT THE STATE BANQUET  
HOSTED BY  
THEIR MAJESTIES  
THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF JAPAN**

IMPERIAL PALACE  
TOKYO, 27 MAY 2026

Your Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, Your Excellency Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae, Philippine Ambassador to Japan Mylene Garcia-Albano, Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Endo Kazuya, Honored Members of the Philippine and Japanese Delegations, Ladies and gentlemen, good evening.

On behalf of the Filipino people, I convey my profound appreciation to Their Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan, for the gracious hospitality extended to me, the First Lady, and the entire Philippine delegation.

Your warm welcome reflects not only the significance of this occasion, but also the kinship between the Filipino and Japanese peoples.

This year auspiciously marks seven decades of the normalization of Philippines-Japan diplomatic relations.

Beyond formal ties, our relationship is a story shaped not only by governments, but by generations of Filipinos and Japanese who chose understanding

over difference, friendship over division, and partnership over isolation.

For over seventy years, wave after wave of people-to-people engagement and wide-ranging collaboration have collectively transformed our bilateral relationship into one of the most vibrant and forward-looking partnerships in the Indo-Pacific—rooted in shared values, strengthened by mutual trust and meaningful cooperation, and guided by a common vision for peace, prosperity, and development.

We are particularly delighted to be in Japan at this gentle turning of the seasons, as spring yields to early summer and fresh greenery or *shinryoku* fills the landscape. It speaks of renewal, continuity, and quiet strength, and is a fitting metaphor for a relationship that continues to grow and thrive with each passing year.

It was around this time last year that the Philippines was preparing, with the earnest and tireless support of our Japanese hosts,

for our National Day celebration at the *World Expo* in Osaka.

The Philippine Pavilion was a dynamic showcase of our nation's culture, heritage, and creativity.

It also became a space where we proudly welcomed partners and friends from around the world to celebrate our openness to innovation and our commitment to build a sustainable, people-centered future.

The enduring partnership between our nations continues to flourish, anchored in trust, mutual respect, and shared purpose.

Japan remains among the Philippines' most valued partners in advancing development, security, infrastructure, agriculture, connectivity, and resilience, while we are proud to say that Filipinos in Japan contribute meaningfully to your society and economy.

Across offices, classrooms, factories, laboratories, and communities, the bonds between our

two peoples strengthen the foundation of our friendship and build better bridges of understanding.

Whether in seasons of abundance and hardship, Japan has consistently stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the Filipino people, extending solidarity and assistance at the right moments to reassure us that we have a friend we can always count on.

Certainly, that spirit will not waver for the future. Our cooperation now extends further into maritime security, humanitarian response, and regional stability.

The horizon is vast, as we are poised to expand collaboration in energy and food security, space cooperation, digital transformation, emerging technologies, climate action, and innovation.

Together, we reaffirm our unwavering dedication to peace and a rules-based order governed by international law, ensuring stability, prosperity, and dignity for future generations, and upholding our values and responsibilities as maritime democracies.

The Philippines remains committed to working closely with Japan to harness our intensifying strategic partnership as a force for good not only for our two countries, but also for the broader Indo-Pacific region.

Your Majesties, Your Excellency, Ladies and gentlemen, may I now invite everyone to raise your glasses in a toast:

- To the continued blessings of good health and success for Their Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan;
- To the further deepening of our partnership with the Government and people of Japan, anchored on trust and common purpose; and
- To the enduring friendship between the Philippines and Japan, that it may flourish for future generations, like the seasons that return each year with renewed promise.

*Kampai! Mabuhay!*