

Philippines National Day Special

Strong bonds lead to peace, prosperity

FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.
PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES



I send my warmest greetings to our *kababayans* (compatriots) and friends in Japan on the 125th anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence. All Filipinos around the world unite in our celebration of this historic day, an occasion to renew ties of family and tradition, to recall the fulfillment of our aspirations for freedom and the assertion of our identity, and together, look to a prosperous and peaceful future.

In a highly successful visit I made to Japan eight months into my presidency, I was pleased to see how well our fellow Filipinos are doing in Japan. As the Japanese people continue to welcome Filipino workers, I am full of confidence that the ties of friendship between our peoples will continue to strengthen over time. These are

the fundamentals of the truly unbreakable bond between the Philippines and Japan.

With a strong mandate to pursue national development, I have begun to realize a strong post-pandemic recovery, and in response to current external challenges, achieve food and energy security vital to the continued growth of our nation. As the Philippines also transitions into upper-middle-income country status, we aim to cement the achievements of the past and forge a new pathway to growth. We are deepening our international relationships to seek mutually beneficial outcomes to open up more opportunities for, and leverage the strength of, the private sector, harness the creativity of our middle class, and pursue economic development through the continued inflow of investments, free trade, industrial growth, strong innovation and the enabling pillars of infrastructure and connectivity.

This needs the cooperation of all sectors of society, and of our friends and allies. To this end, we continue to strengthen an already excellent relationship with Japan to guarantee not only our peace and prosperity, but also protect our values, and the

livelihood and prosperity of our people — the essence of our independence.

We laid these foundations in our official visit in February, and affirmed with Japan, one of our most valued friends and eminent strategic partners, that this will be a relationship that will deliver solutions to current needs and can anticipate future changes. With the Indo-Pacific at the center of global growth, the Philippines will play its role to create more momentum for this prosperity anchored on peace and stability.

2023 is a momentous year for the region as we celebrate 50 years of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations — Japan friendship and cooperation. The peoples of ASEAN and Japan, in the spirit of mutual respect, backed by shared values, and

continuously working for prosperity and independence, have been well-served by the dynamics of a heart-to-heart relationship. As we commemorate the momentous achievement of the proclamation of our national independence and reaffirm our determination to create a truly strong Philippines, we will continue to lend our voice and talent to strengthen the region in which we can prosper and thrive together.

To our *kababayans* and friends in Japan, *mabuhay tayong lahat* (we wish you long and prosperous lives)!

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. and Prime Minister Fumio Kishida pose at a summit in Tokyo on Feb. 9. PCO



President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. (second from left) and First Lady Louise Araneta-Marcos speak with Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako in Tokyo on Feb. 9. PCO

ENRIQUE A. MANALO
SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE PHILIPPINES



We send our greetings to our friends and *kababayans* (compatriots) in Japan on this deeply cherished day of our national calendar. On the 125th anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence, we renew our call to Filipinos around the world to join us in celebrating our hard-won independence and to continue to contribute to nation-building for a better future.

Under the leadership of President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., the nation and government work tirelessly to achieve the goals of unity and progress. Under this banner,

we have built strong relations with Japan. The vision of our two leaders, Marcos and Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, has established these relations on a firm footing of mutual respect and benefit. They renewed a decade-old strategic partnership into one that is transformative and forward-looking, and which will keep responding to contemporary needs and scoring practical successes.

Over many decades, investments that flowed into our country from Japan enabled us to build a strong manufacturing sector. Japan continues to be one of our top investors, and we are immensely proud of the strong alliances we have with Japan Inc. Our infrastructure spending is now upward of 5% of gross domestic product, thanks to Japan's enabling assistance, a major part of which is going to upgrades in our transport network and development of areas outside metropolitan Manila.

Japan is a key partner in our maritime

domain awareness efforts, and, through human security assistance, they continue to support the success of our peace process. Japan provides top-class training for our scientists and engineers, and it remains one of the top destinations for higher studies among science, technology, engineering and math graduates from the Philippines. As two island nations sharing similar vulnerabilities to earthquakes and weather conditions, cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster response is robust.

We are now laying the foundations of our future collaborations — in the digital and space sectors, in smart agriculture, in clean energy — and strengthening food and energy security, as well as taking proactive measures to respond to future health challenges.

The bond between the Philippines and Japan rests on the close interaction between our peoples through two-way tourism cooperation, cultural and capacity-

building exchanges, education programs through the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship Grant Aid of Japan, and dispatch of competent Filipino health workers to Japan through the Philippines-Japan economic partnership agreement.

These are the building blocks of a strong relationship that can withstand the challenges of an ever-changing present, which will make our people, society and institutions more resilient. Resilience and strength are key for us to carry out a truly independent foreign policy, and enable us to be a friend to all and enemy to none.

Today, as we reflect on the past that has brought us many successes, and continue to think on the future we aspire to, we send this message of goodwill and friendship to Japan and to the Filipino diaspora in Japan — valuable partners in our journey of national development. *Mabuhay ang ating Kalayaan* (long live our freedom)!



Congratulations

to the Republic of the Philippines
on the Anniversary of its Independence

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of the Philippines
on the Occasion
of
Their National Day

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Philippines National Day Special



Left: President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. addresses attendees at a Filipino community event in Tokyo on Feb. 12. Right: Marcos answers questions at the inauguration of the Pagudpud Wind Farm on May 19. PCO

Friendly ties built on mutual respect

MYLENE J. GARCIA-ALBANO
AMBASSADOR OF THE PHILIPPINES



On June 12, the Philippines proudly celebrates the 125th anniversary of our proclamation of independence. This is a significant milestone in our history that calls to mind the unwaver-

ing spirit of freedom that has defined our nation. As ambassador of the Philippines, I am honored to share this momentous occasion with the readers of The Japan Times, our friends in Japan and our big Filipino diaspora in this great country.

On June 12, 1898, the Filipino people proclaimed their independence from colonial rule, igniting a flame of liberty that continues to burn brightly in the hearts of every Filipino. This day holds deep significance as it symbolizes our nation's unwavering commitment to self-determination, sovereignty and the pursuit of a better future for all Filipinos.

Since independence, our country has developed good relations with countries that are instrumental in our fight not only for freedom, but also for prosperity of all Filipinos, the heart of true independence. Through our friendship with Japan over many decades, we have built a unique and profound relationship, characterized by mutual respect and cooperation, a relationship that has produced beneficial outcomes for both our peoples, and one that has strengthened the foundation of our independence. From the ashes of war, our nations have risen as steadfast partners,

promoting peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. It is a testament to the enduring spirit of our peoples who have shared values and commitment to freedom and the rule of law.

The friendship between our countries has transcended time and has been nurtured by countless interactions and collaborations. Japan has played a pivotal role in the Philippines' development, providing economic assistance, investment and technical expertise, that has contributed to our progress in various sectors. Likewise, the Philippines has served as a valued partner to Japan, offering a vibrant market, skilled workforce and a gateway to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

Today, our partnership extends beyond economic ties. It encompasses cultural exchanges, people-to-people connections and a shared commitment to addressing regional challenges and advancing common goals. Together, we have tackled issues such as climate change, disaster resilience, maritime security and sustainable development, leveraging our strengths to create a more inclusive and prosperous future for our respective nations.

As we celebrate Philippine Independence Day, it is an opportune moment to recognize the immense contributions of the Filipino community in Japan. They have become a bridge of understanding and friendship, enriching both our societies and fostering a deeper appreciation of our shared heritage. Their dedication, resilience and unwavering commitment to their families and communities, both in the Philippines and in Japan, embody the heart-to-heart relationship of our two countries, and nurture the strength of our mutually beneficial relationship.

Amid the global challenges we face, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of solidarity, cooperation and resilience. The Philippines and Japan have stood side by side, supporting each other during these trying times. Through collaboration in health care, research and humanitarian efforts, we have demonstrated the strength of our partnership and our shared commitment to overcoming adversity.

Looking ahead, we envision a future of even greater collaboration and shared achievements as we chart a second decade for our strategic partnership. We will continue to explore new avenues of cooperation, leveraging innovation, technology and sustainable practices to address emerging challenges. Together, we can build a more resilient, inclusive and prosperous region that upholds the principles of peace, mutual respect and the well-being of our people.

This celebration compels us to reflect and remember how the past struggles of our forefathers and their vision for a free and sovereign nation has led us to the freedom, prosperity and stability we enjoy today. But we must sustain our efforts to protect the achievements we have worked for, and to value the friends who have helped us to get there. In this, we thank the Japanese people for their friendship, partnership and support throughout the years.

On this auspicious day, I extend my warmest greetings to the Filipino community in Japan, our Japanese friends and all those who celebrate the values of freedom, independence, and the pursuit of a better future. May our friendship continue to flourish and serve as a beacon of hope, inspiration and unity for generations to come.

Mabuhay ang Pilipinas (long live the Philippines)!



**From left: Palau
Island; Left: A street
vendor takes a rest
from selling hats in
Intramuros, Manila.**

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Congratulations
on the Anniversary of
the Independence of
the Republic of the Philippines

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