

**REMARKS
OF
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE
DURING THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE
31ST ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
(ASEAN) SUMMIT**

[Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), Pasay City | 13 November 2017]

Fellow leaders of ASEAN Member States and dialogue partners; Vice President Maria Leonor Robredo; former presidents Joseph Estrada and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo; the Senate President Aquilino Pimentel III and other members of the Senate present; ASEAN Secretary General Le Luong Minh; honorable members of the Diplomatic Corps; Foreign Secretary Alan Peter Cayetano and the other members of the Cabinet present; other distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Less than a month ago, Philippine government forces liberated the city of Marawi from terrorist groups who pledged allegiance to the Islamic State.

Resolute, we are now in the process of helping people back on their feet to reclaim their lives.

We thank our international partners for providing assistance in dealing with the situation in Marawi City.

Our ASEAN brothers provided support by sending relief items for the benefit of the internally displaced persons while others provided valuable assistance and bolstered our military campaign.

Your Majesty, Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I apologize for setting the tone of my statement in such a manner.

But I only want to emphasize that our meetings for the next two days present an excellent opportunity for us to engage in meaningful discussion on matters of regional and international importance.

For example, terrorism and violent extremism endanger the peace, stability and security of our region because these threats know no boundaries.

Piracy and armed robbery, *[inaudible]* put a dent on our growth and disrupt the stability of both regional and global commerce.

The menace of illegal drug trade continues to endanger the very fabric of our societies.

These and other issues are high on the agenda of our meetings along with the other non-traditional security issues that challenge the prosperity of our economies, the integrity of our institutions, and more importantly, the safety of our people.

Your Majesty, Excellencies, in the coming days we shall be looking at the progress of ASEAN community-building and the direction of what our cooperation with our dialogue partners as well as that of the ASEAN-led mechanisms such as the ASEAN Plus Three and the East Asia Summit.

I am pleased to announce that ASEAN member states have come to an agreement on the ASEAN consensus on the protection and promotion of rights of migrant workers.

I will be joining other ASEAN leaders tomorrow in signing this landmark document that would strengthen social protection, access to justice, humane and fair treatment, and access to health services for our people.

[inaudible] that can see the fruition include those concerning health, women and the youth, terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism, trafficking, poverty alleviation, food security, coastal and marine environment, and the pursuit of innovation for our economies, among others.

Your Majesty, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it has been a privilege for the Philippines to chair ASEAN during its milestone year.

It has been a pleasure to work with our ASEAN family and our dialogue partners in moving the ASEAN community forward in enhancing cooperation in various areas.

And in all of these, towards the realization of the ASEAN vision for 2025.

On this note, it is my honor and pleasure to declare the 31st ASEAN Summit and its Related Summits open.

Thank you. *[applause]*

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