

MESSAGE OF MINISTER MAKOTO IYORI
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
TURNOVER AND COMMISSIONING CEREMONY OF THE
“MARITIME AND SAFETY CAPABILITY IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT
FOR THE PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD”

22 December 2016

UNDERSECRETARY FELIPE JUDAN;

COMMODORE JOEL GARCIA;

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

It is my great pleasure and honor to attend this ceremony this morning and would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the turnover and commissioning of BRP Malabrigo. “Malabrigo” is the second of ten (10) multi-role response vessels financed and built by Japan to help improve the Philippine Coast Guard’s (PCG) capabilities to quickly address maritime operations such as patrol, search and rescue, and law enforcement.

As mentioned by President Rodrigo Duterte in his speech during the commissioning of the first vessel Tubbataha last October, “we have a long history of friendship and cooperation” and recent events have shown significant milestones.

This year President Duterte and Prime Minister Abe held a summit meeting on October 26th in Tokyo during President Duterte's state visit to Japan. The two leaders had wonderful discussion on wide range of issues, including the importance of the rule of law. They also confirmed that they will strengthen the cooperation to resolve disputes in a peaceful manner based on international law.

They also discussed ways to enhance friendship, ranging from peace and security, fight against terrorism, economic cooperation such as infrastructure development and people to people exchanges.

After this summit meeting, the two leaders witnessed the signing of the Exchange of Notes on Japanese ODA Loan for the two (2) large-scale patrol vessels to the Philippines.

Just like the first vessel “Tubbataha”, I am confident that the “Malabrigo” will further attest to the friendship between Japan and the Philippines. I would like to conclude my remarks by reconfirming that we will continue to work together with the Government of the Philippines to further deepen our relations.

Thank you for your attention and *Mabuhay!*