

**Ambassador ENDO Kazuya's Remarks at the forum titled,
"Navigating Shifting Tides: Security Challenges and Strategic
Opportunities for the Philippines, Japan, and the US in the New
Trump Administration"**

March 07, 2025

Magandang umaga sa inyong lahat.

Thank you very much for that warm introduction. You certainly know how to make the opening act feel welcomed.

I would like to first extend my deep appreciation for our host, the Stratbase ADR Institute, for tirelessly organizing these in-depth dialogues. It is a privilege to be welcomed back by such an enlightened company, joining us today both virtually and in person.

Breaking new grounds in cooperation, Japan-Philippine relations have entered their Golden Age with renewed closeness. From subway construction to Reciprocal Access Agreement, our ties have grown from strength to strength, strategically embracing realities toward mutual prosperity.

Now, as the second Trump administration has started forming its foreign policy, it is exactly a good time to discuss how we can further strengthen the cooperation between like-minded countries such as Japan, the Philippines, and the United States.

We have long had strong foundations for our strategic trilateral cooperations, as both the Philippines and Japan are treaty allies to the United States, as we all share similar security challenges in this region. The formal institutionalization of trilateral cooperation developed rapidly in the last few years and April last year saw our historic trilateral summit, laying a firm foundation for our recent collaborations among the three nations. Our trilateral is a very meaningful framework toward the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific. While time does not permit listing all subsequent developments, let me highlight a few key achievements.

In the realm of maritime security, the first-ever Japan-Philippines-U.S. Maritime Dialogue held in Tokyo last December was a significant step forward. Our on-ground cooperation is equally vigorous. Japan and the U.S. have provided maritime safety expertise to support the Philippine Coast Guard under the SAPPHIRE initiative. Also, in February this year, the 6th Maritime Cooperative Activity, drills alongside Japan, the US, Australia and PH navies bolstered our collective capacities for regional stability. Japan-Philippine Reciprocal Access Agreement lays the foundation for further enhancing the interoperability of our forces.

We have also made significant strides in trilateral economic collaboration.

Last October, the Japan-Philippines-U.S. Trilateral Discussion on Economic Resilience marked a pivotal moment to reaffirm our unwavering commitment to fostering economic resilience.

Our cooperation in the field of ICT including Open Radio Access Network has also advanced. Last month, I had the honor to sign a diplomatic note with Foreign Secretary Manalo to provide Open RAN related key equipment to the Philippines, which is a foundation for economic security.

Immediately after the inauguration of the new U.S. administration, the Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting reaffirmed the importance of strengthening cooperation with like-minded countries, including the trilateral cooperation with the Philippines. I am pleased to hear that Secretary Manalo also spoke with United States Secretary of State Marco Rubio and noted the role of the trilateral cooperation with Japan not only in reinforcing regional security, but also in efforts to build stable supply chains in vital sectors and increase private investments.

Last month, Prime Minister Ishiba visited Washington D.C. and held the first in-person meeting with President Trump. The leaders' joint statement reaffirmed the importance of Japan-U.S.-Philippines and reaffirmed our strong opposition to the unlawful maritime claims, militarization of reclaimed features, and threatening and provocative activities in the South

China Sea. It is also encouraging that the two leaders agreed to advance cooperation among like-minded countries including the trilateral collaborations with the Philippines.

Those recent dialogues epitomize the determination of Japan - we communicate with the new U.S. administration from the perspective that constructive U.S. engagement in the region is in the vital interest of the U.S. itself. We continue our humble efforts while closely communicating with the Filipino friends, including our Foreign Minister's visit to Manila in January and that of our Defense Minister in February.

Having recognized this landscape surrounding the Japan-Philippines-U.S. partnership, it is crucial that we approach the future with foresight and collaboration. I look forward to insightful discussions from the experts of our three nations today. With our esteemed speakers and friends, I am confident that today's dialogues will be fruitful and will help us navigate the evolving political landscape together.

Maraming salamat po at mabuhay ang ating pagkakaibigan.