

**Remarks of Ambassador ENDO Kazuya at the Signing
and Exchange of Notes Ceremony for “The Project for
Enhancing Tuberculosis Screening in Remote Areas”**

30 October 2025 at The Westin Manila, Mandaluyong

City

Good afternoon. *Magandang hapon sa inyong lahat.*

It is a privilege to stand before you all at this signing ceremony. I thank our partners for joining us as we welcome a major step in this project.

Today, we further formalize a truly vital undertaking: “The Project for Enhancing Tuberculosis Screening in Remote Areas.” With this investment in health, the depth of our countries partnerships continues to grow ever deeper.

Tuberculosis, or TB, remains an unseen, yet devastating threat to the wider health and stability of the country. In 2024 alone, the Philippines recorded approximately 540,000 TB cases with over 9,800 lives lost to this disease.

Adding to this, natural disasters risk damaging existing health infrastructures, further limiting effective options in addressing TB. For a number of Filipinos, TB remains a barrier not only to wellbeing, but their right to dignified lives.

For decades, Japan has assisted the Philippines in this endeavor. Since 1992, Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) has supported the Philippine Government's efforts to combat tuberculosis, including Technical Cooperation Projects and a Grant Aid in 2000 to establish the National Tuberculosis Research Institute.

With this new grant, we again prove that the Philippines needs not tackle this health issue alone. As a committed neighbor and partner, Japan stands ready to lighten the burdens brought by TB. In realizing healthier outcomes in the Philippines, we hope to strengthen the health of the region we share.

Under this grant, strategic provisions will be made for

twenty x-ray units, powered by Japanese technology. To reduce the burden of TB, it is crucial to provide more individuals with opportunities for screenings. The mobility of these lightweight X-rays can reach more areas across the country, including Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas (GIDAs). The integration of Computer Aided Detection (CAD) with AI welcomes modern innovation in enhancing TB response.

With this state-of-the-art equipment and its portability feature, I am very hopeful to see how this project can transform the landscape of TB screening in the country. By boosting TB screening capabilities, we aim to support early detection and timely treatment, contributing to enhanced public health outcomes and improved well-being of our communities.

Addressing public health challenge like Tuberculosis is a collective responsibility. It demands concerted efforts and meaningful collaboration of stakeholders across all levels- from government institutions, international partners,

private sector down to our local communities.

I sincerely thank the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and Stop TB Partnership for taking on the challenge of implementing a noble and impactful initiative such as this.

With the Philippine government's cooperation through the Department of Health and support from all our valuable partners, we can help bring the DOH's vision within reach: the goal of a TB-Free Philippines. And, in doing so, contribute meaningfully to the global effort to reduce TB cases worldwide.

Together, I am hopeful we can reduce TB from a present reality to a distant memory. Let our friendship help more Filipinos breathe freely and fully, unburdened by the ravages of TB.

Thank you all very much. Mabuhay kayong lahat.