

**Remarks of Ambassador ENDO Kazuya at the Threads of  
Dreams (BENCH/ Fashion Show)**

Space at One Ayala, Makati | 18 April 2026

Ladies and Gentlemen,

*Magandang gabi po sa inyong lahat!*

It is a great honor to be here with you today at this spectacular fashion show, where creativity and culture take center stage—and, where I don't have to worry about walking along the runway!

As the Ambassador of Japan to the Philippines, I am delighted to join this special event—commemorating the 70th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Philippines.

This milestone is not only a testament to seven decades of friendship and partnership but also a moment to look forward with hope and shared purpose.

The theme of this year's celebration, "Weaving the Future Together: Peace, Prosperity, Possibilities," resonates deeply with the spirit of today's event.

Just as fashion weaves threads into beautiful designs, our two nations have woven a strong bond of trust, cooperation, and mutual respect, though I must admit I'm only slightly better at weaving partnerships than weaving fabric!

I also admit that I may be the least qualified to talk eloquently about fashion, but even I can fully recognize that fashion is more than just style; it is a powerful medium of expression and identity. It reflects our histories, our values, and our aspirations.

Since coming to the Philippines, I have grown fond of the traditional Filipino attire, the Barong Tagalog, and wear it proudly.

My wife, Akiko, has likewise been captivated by the elegance of Filipiniana designs and the exquisite craftsmanship of Filipino textiles.

In the same way, we also take great pride in our own heritage, the Japanese Kimono, which Akiko always wears so beautifully.

These personal appreciations have only deepened our admiration for the rich cultural heritages that fashion so meaningfully represents in our respective cultures.

This fashion show becomes a metaphor for the relationship between Japan and the Philippines— where diverse threads come together to form a vibrant and harmonious tapestry.

And unlike my attempts at knitting, this tapestry is destined to last!

I would like to extend my sincere deepest appreciation to BENCH/, the esteemed organizer of this event.

BENCH/ has made tremendous contributions not only to the development of Filipino fashion culture but also to the promotion of Japanese cuisine and furniture in the Philippines through brands such as Marugame Udon. Maisen, St. Marc Café and Ritzwell.

I thank you for your efforts that have greatly enriched cultural exchange and deepened mutual appreciation between our two countries.

I also wish to thank Japan Foundation, Manila for their invaluable support in making this occasion possible.

This evening, let us continue to demonstrate the power of collaboration in promoting cultural exchange and mutual understanding.

As we celebrate this important anniversary, and particularly as we face serious shared challenges both in our region and around the world, we must keep weaving our futures together—threading our strengths to build on the foundations of peace, advancing

shared prosperity, and embracing the endless possibilities that lie ahead.

And who knows—perhaps one day, our collaboration will inspire a fashion line that seamlessly blends Japanese elegance with Filipino flair, which will lead us toward more peaceful, more stable and more prosperous future!

*Mabuhay ang pagkakaisa ng Pilipinas at Japan, at ang talento ng Pilipino!*

*Maraming salamat po.*

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