

Remarks of Ambassador ENDO Kazuya at the DLSU Japan

Festival Week Opening Ceremony

6 July 2026

Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat! みなさん、おはようございます！

It is a privilege to join the Lasallian community in opening the Japan Festival Week.

It's always nice to be back to this campus.

As we celebrate Japan and the Philippines' 70th Friendship Day on July 23, this event could not have come at a more opportune time.

Looking back on seven decades of our bilateral ties, I believe we could not have arrived at this historic milestone if not for the efforts of all those who came before us.

It was with profound foresight that the late President Elpidio

Quirino chose to grant amnesty, believing that two countries who once found themselves on opposite ends could one day become the closest of friends.

President Marcos' remarks during his address at Japan's National Diet echoes these sentiments, stating that "After the war, President Elpidio Quirino chose the path of reconciliation, guided by the belief that after all, destiny has made us neighbors."

Today, the strength of our bond becomes evident in our robust bilateral cooperation that cuts across a variety of sectors, thanks to all the efforts made by both sides following the spirit of the late President Quirino.

In the past few years alone, we have made great strides in our security and economic cooperation.

We welcome developments such as the entry into force of the Reciprocal Access Agreement, allowing the Japan Self-Defense

Forces to fully participate in the Balikatan exercises for the first time in April.

Japan is also the Philippines' largest Official Development Assistance donor, and we have witnessed the rise of some of the country's major infrastructure projects like the Metro Manila Subway and the North South Commuter Railway among countless others through this support.

Japan and the Philippines have recently elevated our bilateral ties into a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during President Marcos' successful State Visit to Japan.

This is the first for the Philippines, and the culmination of a relationship carefully built on decades of mutual trust and understanding.

A trust that has, above all, been nurtured and nourished by the far-

reaching and ever-deepening exchanges we have fostered among our people.

Indeed, this trust has never been more deeply felt than through our people-to-people connections.

Year after year, we welcome hundreds of Filipinos and Japanese alike as they traverse new frontiers through academic exchanges and cultural connections.

Only recently, I, myself, had the privilege of welcoming Nobel Laureate Professor Kitagawa Susumu for an academic conference on Chemistry, as well as the New Japan Philharmonic Orchestra for a commemorative concert.

And it is through these opportunities that we not only enrich our understanding of each other, but also shape a community of global citizens ready to be at the forefront as we navigate an ever-changing world.

The friendship that our countries celebrate today was certainly built by the generations before us.

But I believe that the brightest prospect is knowing that the friendship between Japan and the Philippines will continue to thrive in the next decades and beyond because of the inspiring individuals we have here today.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the Department of International Studies and all other partner organizations for providing us with this platform to further strengthen the bonds of friendship between our two nations.

To end, I humbly invite all of you to join us in weaving a shared future built on peace, prosperity, and endless possibilities.

Mabuhay ang pagkakaibigan ng Japan at Pilipinas!

Maraming salamat po!

ありがとうございます!

Animo La Salle!