

JSDF Day Reception 2026

14 October 2026 at Ambassador's Official Residence

Magandang Gabi po sa inyong lahat!

Welcome to the 72nd Japan Self-Defense Force Day. I am especially honored to host this reception as the new Ambassador of Japan to the Philippines at such a historic moment as we celebrate the 70th anniversary of the normalization of our diplomatic relations.

Earlier this month, I presented my credentials as Ambassador of Japan to President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. If the presentation of my credentials had not been completed by today, I would not be standing here on this stage tonight. Instead, you would probably find me somewhere up in the balcony, watching as the Chargé d'Affaires (CDA) deliver these remarks and wondering when I might be allowed to come down. Therefore, I sincerely appreciate the efforts of our dear friends in the DFA and Malacañang for making this possible.

The 72-year history of the Self-Defense Forces, or JSDF, demonstrates its remarkable adaptation and transformation. Looking back over the past 10 years alone, the JSDF has evolved into a more capable, and reliable force, ready to meet demands not only at home but also internationally, while remaining firmly committed to our path as a peace-loving nation.

I myself was actively engaged in the domestic process surrounding the peace and security legislation in 2015. These laws enabled Japan to exercise the right of collective self-defense under certain conditions. With these fundamental changes, the JSDF has been called upon to take on more increasingly responsible roles.

Here in the Philippines, we can see this evolving role taking concrete shape through our expanding defense and security cooperation. This year, more than 1,400 men and women of the JSDF participated in the Balikatan Exercise under the Reciprocal Access

Agreement (RAA). And, of course, we are proud to be regular participants in the Maritime Cooperative Activities (MCA). Most recently, a JASDF C-130 received logistical support from the Philippine Air Force under the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) framework for the very first time.

Our shared objectives remain clear: stability and peace, resilience and development, and prosperity and happiness for our peoples. To achieve these goals, we must contribute our strengths, work together enthusiastically with determination, continuity, and effectiveness, and do so in close cooperation with our allies and like-minded partners.

For Japan, the defense equipment transfer policy has been revised this year. Towards the updated Free and Open Indo-Pacific, Japan aims to become more resilient and prosperous along with the region as a whole. With this, I extend my sincere gratitude and respect, and express my deep sense of camaraderie with our Philippine friends, including the AFP, PCG, POMC, and NSC, as well as all those contributing to the government-wide efforts to uphold and strengthen a rules-based, free and open maritime order.

It is certainly not an easy mission. And for that, I personally salute all those who devote themselves to this important duty. They truly deserve our deepest appreciation tonight.

Before I overhear whispers from our guests along the lines of, “*The speech of the new ambassador tends to be long,*” allow me to introduce our special guests from Japan. Thank you very much for joining us this evening. I would also like to thank my Embassy staff and their families, as well as to my wife, for preparing this reception.

Now, let me conclude by putting my Tagalog practice to the test.

Maraming salamat po sa inyong lahat!

Mabuhay ang pagkakaibigan ng Japan at Pilipinas!