

**Remarks of Mr. Teruo Asada,
Chairman of the Philippine Society of Japan**

His Excellency Ambassador Manuel M. Lopez,
Honorable Kenji Kosaka,
Distinguished guests,

Good evening.

I am Asada, Chairman of Philippine Society of Japan, and also Chairman of Marubeni Corporation. I would like to express my appreciation for being invited to this wonderful reception. Allow me to say a few words on this occasion.

This year, the Philippines celebrates the 117th anniversary of its independence. Since achieving independence from Spain in 1898, the Philippines had its share of struggles, but with the great achievements of its many heroes and the hard work of its forefathers, the Philippines has developed to what it is today. There are Filipinos with deep connections to Japan, such as national hero Jose Rizal and the first president, Aguinaldo. During the visit of Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and Empress to the Philippines in 1962 at the time they were Crown Prince and Crown Princess of Japan, President Aguinaldo, who was 93 years old at that time and on medical treatment, temporarily got out of the hospital and invited the Imperial couple to his house. This eased the negative sentiments felt by Filipinos towards Japan stemming from the Second World War. Again, I would like to express my admiration for the great history of the Philippines.

The relationship between Japan and the Philippine is considered a “strategic partnership,” and our ties have been strengthened through the years. As was evident during President Aquino’s state visit last week, our two countries actively engage in exchanges at the levels of our governments and people, and we maintain excellent relations in the areas of trade, investment and economy.

As everyone may know, the Philippines has shown remarkably steady economic growth in recent years. The Philippines has achieved a GDP growth rate of 6.1% in 2014, the highest among ASEAN countries, and its population rose to more than 100 million, with a very young average age of 23. These are very promising conditions. This year, the Philippines will chair APEC for the second time since 1996, and in the end of December, the AEC or ASEAN Economic Community will come into being. Under the outstanding leadership of President Aquino, I believe that the Philippines’ stable political and economic growth will continue, and that furthermore, the Philippines will draw worldwide attention not merely on its own as a state, but also within the multilateral frameworks such as APEC and AEC.

Our company began doing business in the Philippines in 1909, so we now have more than 100 years of history in the country. The Philippines is a very important market, and has also been an important friend for a long time. Starting from trade in Manila fiber (abaca), our business has expanded to cover a wide range of areas, including big power projects such as a hydroelectric power plant and a coal-fired power plant; social infrastructure projects such as one of the world's largest water and sewage works in Metro Manila; transportation infrastructure; and trade in food and chemical products. Our company commits to work towards the further development of the reciprocal relationship between Japan and the Philippines from hereon.

I would like to conclude my remarks by wishing for the success of tonight's event and praying for more prosperity and happiness for all the guests. Thank you very much for your attention.

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