



MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

MESSAGE

My warmest greetings to my fellow Filipinos and the Philippines' friends and partners in Japan, as we celebrate the 117th Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence.

This year's commemoration assumes great significance, as the Philippines celebrates its emergence as one of Asia's fastest growing economies. Challenges remain, but improving economic indicators, rising international confidence, and the continued optimism of the Filipino people leave no doubt that the Philippines has inexorably shifted to a sustainable and dynamic path towards inclusive growth.

Japan figures prominently in this revitalized chapter of our history. Our friendship, which is founded on respect and shared interest in key regional issues, has been further strengthened by my State Visit to Japan earlier this month. The Japanese people's enduring regard and the faith of Japanese business and industry all complement our official engagement, providing an unshakeable foundation on which our relations will thrive in the coming years.

The Philippines is well on its way towards becoming a modern and prosperous State. I am confident that our bilateral Strategic Partnership will continue to bolster this growth and serve our common desire to advance peace, prosperity, and the rule of law within our nations, the larger region, and beyond.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Aquino III".

BENIGNO S. AQUINO III

MANILA
12 June 2015