

**JOINT PRESS RELEASE
ON THE OUTCOME OF THE
2ND FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTERIAL MEETING (2+2)**

1. Overview

Secretary for Foreign Affairs Enrique A. Manalo, Secretary of National Defense Gilberto C. Teodoro Jr., Minister for Foreign Affairs KAMIKAWA Yoko, and Minister of Defense KIHARA Minoru (hereinafter referred to as “Ministers”) met in Manila, Philippines on July 8, 2024 for the 2nd Philippines-Japan Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting (“2+2”). They affirmed that the meeting is a timely follow-up to the inaugural 2+2 held in Tokyo on April 9, 2022.

The 2+2 Foreign and Defense Ministers Meeting is the highest consultative mechanism between the Philippines and Japan to date. It strengthens the decades-old Strategic Partnership of the Philippines and Japan towards their shared goals of ensuring peace and stability in the region, promoting regional economic growth, and addressing the increasing and complex regional and global challenges.

2. Strategic Outlook

The Ministers discussed the current bilateral security environment and exchanged views on regional issues including the situation in the East China Sea, South China Sea, Taiwan, and the Korean Peninsula.

The Ministers emphasized the need for the international community to speak out on the importance of maintaining and strengthening the free and open international order based on the rule of law. The Ministers strongly opposed any unilateral attempts to change the peacefully established status quo by force or coercion.

The Ministers underscored their unwavering commitment to freedom of navigation and overflight consistent with UNCLOS and expressed serious concern over the dangerous and escalatory actions by China at Second Thomas Shoal, which obstructed freedom of navigation and disrupted supply lines, thus increasing tensions. The Philippines appreciated Japan’s consistent support on the various incidents which constitute destabilizing conduct. The Philippines and Japan decided to continue coordination in promoting the adherence to international law, in particular UNCLOS, and through various related initiatives, and called on China to abide by the final and legally-binding 2016 Arbitral Award on the South China Sea.

The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and called for a peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues.

The Ministers reiterated their commitment to achieving the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of North Korea and emphasized the importance of the full implementation of the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions. The Ministers also urged North Korea to immediately resolve the abductions issue.

3. Political and Security Cooperation

The Philippine side expressed appreciation for Japan's decision to grant aid for coastal surveillance radar systems under the "Official Security Assistance (OSA)", which enhances the capabilities of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. This is a testament to the positive developments on security and defense cooperation between the two countries. In this light, the Philippines also looks forward to further cooperation with Japan under this year's OSA.

To address law enforcement and security challenges both countries face, the Ministers decided to continue cooperation on strengthening maritime and air domain awareness, including with other like-minded states.

The Ministers recognized that the signing of the Philippines-Japan Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) is a historic milestone in overall bilateral defense cooperation between both countries. The Ministers confirmed that the RAA will elevate the two countries' defense partnership.

The Ministers decided to further develop defense capabilities and promote interoperability between Japan Self-Defense Forces and the Armed Forces of the Philippines through the conduct of bilateral/multilateral exercises and cooperation on defense equipment and technology.

The Ministers reaffirmed their Leaders' commitment to strengthening cooperation in the promotion of economic security and to coordinate in addressing economic coercion.

The Ministers also decided to further promote cooperation on cybersecurity and open, interoperable, secure, reliable, and trusted telecommunications networks including Open Radio Access Network (Open RAN).

The Philippines recognized Japan's role and significant contribution to the Mindanao Peace Process. In particular Japan has helped in promoting economic resilience including through socioeconomic development assistance on the issue of Women, Peace and Security (WPS) as well as peace and stability in Mindanao and Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

4. ASEAN Cooperation

The Philippines extended appreciation to Japan for the Vientiane Vision 2.0 and the new Japan-ASEAN Ministerial Initiative for Enhanced Defense Cooperation (JASMINE) which has been regarded as a manifestation of Japan's commitment to ASEAN centrality and unity, and Japan's strong desire to pursue open and equal cooperation with ASEAN.

5. Multilateral Cooperation

While the Ministers took stock of the bilateral gains as Strategic Partners during the 2+2 Meeting, they also affirmed the importance of strengthening trilateral cooperation with the United States, which aims to complement existing multilateral mechanisms.

The Ministers emphasized that both trilateral and multilateral cooperation grant

nations the ability to uphold international peace and security through shared values.

The Ministers likewise discussed expanding strategic cooperation among Australia, Japan, the Philippines, and the United States, and underscored the close collaboration of the four nations in promoting the shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific through the conduct of the Maritime Cooperative Activity among the four armed/defense forces.

The Ministers reaffirmed the continuing commitment of Japan and the Philippines to realizing a world without nuclear weapons and promoting the commencement of negotiations for a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT).

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