



# PHILIPPINES - MALAYSIA BUSINESS COUNCIL



PMBC NEWSLETTER

FIRST QUARTER 2014

## Message of the Chairman of the Philippines-Malaysia Business Council



Ramon S. Ang

*(Delivered at the Philippine Investment Opportunities Conference with President Benigno S. Aquino III on 28 February 2014, Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia)*

Ladies and gentlemen,  
Selamat tengah hari (Good afternoon).

On behalf of the Philippines-Malaysia Business Council, I thank you for your warm welcome. As chairman of the Council, I thank the organizers of this afternoon's conference: the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Philippine Embassy [in Kuala Lumpur], the Philippine Trade and Investment Center, and the Malaysia-Philippines Business Council.

Thank you also to the Malaysian Ambassador to the Philippines, Ambassador [Dato' Mohd Zamri Bin Mohd] Kassim, the Philippine Ambassador to Malaysia, Ambassador [J. Eduardo] Malaya, and DTI Secretary [Gregory] Domingo.

Over the last few years, our relationship with Malaysia has become more strategic and more significant. In your support for the Mindanao peace process, we have broadened our relationship beyond trade and are working together to tackle regional challenges.

Malaysia's help in brokering a peace treaty for southern Philippines, as well as its role in negotiations between the Philippine government and the MILF has brought us to the final stretch towards lasting peace in Mindanao.

We thank you for your constructive role in helping to resolve this conflict.

We Filipinos admire Malaysia as a source of prosperity, racial and cultural diversity. Yours is one of Asia's most dynamic economies, and the Philippines' third largest ASEAN trading partner. In the first semester of 2013, Philippine merchandise trade with Malaysia reached close to US\$2 billion, consisting of nearly US\$800 million in exports and over US\$1 billion in imports. For the same period, the country posted a merchandise trade balance of over US\$300 million, in favor of Malaysia.

We come here today to share some good news about the Philippines.

Despite super-typhoon Yolanda, 2013 was a robust year for the Philippines. Prudent monetary policies and a solid fiscal situation, a stable export sector, strong consumer spending and surging remittances from overseas Filipino workers among them—earned investment-grade status for our country from the international rating agencies. The successive rating upgrades have confirmed our country's entry into the league of Asia's best-performing economies.

Our country today is far from being the economic laggard it once was.

From ranking 85th in 2010, the Philippines is now ranked as the 59th most competitive country in the world. We are proud of our government for its efforts in helping bring about this turnaround for the Philippines.

By fostering stronger partnerships between our two countries and our business communities, we hope to ensure that the gains that the Philippines has made will be both sustainable and inclusive.

My colleagues and I look forward to working with you on existing and new business links between the Philippines and Malaysia. Thank you very much. ■

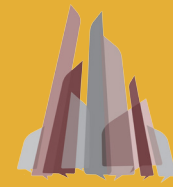
A quarterly publication of the Philippines-Malaysia Business Council, the **PMBC Newsletter** provides the latest socio-economic updates, as well as news on developments in trade and investments between the two countries.

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## PMBC joins State Visit to Malaysia; pushes for stronger bilateral ties

His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino III, President of the Republic of the Philippines, conducted a State Visit to Malaysia last 27-28 February 2014, the first high-level bilateral visit in recent years. The President's visit was to reciprocate Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak's visit to the Philippines last October 2012, wherein he highlighted the importance of a robust Philippine-Malaysian economic relationship.

Philippines-Malaysia Business Council (PMBC) Chairman, Ramon S. Ang, President and Chief Operating Officer of San Miguel Corporation, led a high-level business group as part of the President's delegation in Malaysia. The PMBC delegation was composed of executives and representatives from Maybank Philippines, Maybank ATR Kim Eng Capital Partners, SGV & Co., AlloyMTD Philippines, AirAsia Philippines, Megaworld Corporation, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, among others.

The two-day business delegation program commenced on the evening of February 27 with a Welcome Reception for the President by the Filipino community, hosted by the Philippine Embassy in Kuala Lumpur. Leaders of the Filipino communities based in Manila delivered their respective messages of gratitude and appreciation to the President and the administration.

On February 28, a joint meeting of the Philippines-Malaysia Business Council (PMBC) and the Malaysia-Philippines Business Council (MPBC) was convened in the form of a closed-door, roundtable discussion between its respective business delegations. The meeting was formally jointly chaired by Mr. Ramon S. Ang of the PMBC and Dato' Azmil Khalid of the MPBC, with DTI Usec. Ponciano C. Manalo, Jr. moderating the discussions. Companies represented by the Philippine delegation were San Miguel Corporation, AlloyMTD Philippines, Maybank Philippines, AirAsia Philippines, Belle Corporation, SGV & Co., Megaworld Corpo-

ration, Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Malaysian Association of the Philippines, and the Makati Business Club. The Malaysian delegation were composed of executives representing AlloyMTD Sdn. Bhd., AirAsia Bhd., Maybank, RHB Bank, Ernst & Young Malaysia, Resorts World Genting, among others.

Both delegations present agreed that, notwithstanding present constitutional economic restrictions, the generally favorable and business-friendly environment of the Philippines has captured the attention the Malaysian businesses and investors and, in turn, will be translating to an increased outpouring of Malaysian investments into the Philippines over next few years. Malaysian business and trade interests in the Philippines are mainly vested in and concentrated on the infrastructure, hotel and gaming, and food & beverages sectors.

In the afternoon, a Philippine Investment Opportunities Forum was organized by the Philippine Embassy in Kuala Lumpur in partnership with the Asian Strategy & Leadership Institute for all Philippine business delegations and the Malaysian business community. Messages on business opportunities in the Philippines, specifically on Mindanao were delivered by the DTI-Board of Investments and the Mindanao Development Authority, and a presentation on business prospects in Malaysia was given by the Malaysian Ministry of International Trade & Industry. All throughout his keynote speech, the President emphasized how the Philippines, once called "sick man of Asia", is now "entering a sustainable cycle of empowerment and opportunity, and a trajectory of growth where no one is left behind."

The State Visit concluded with a State Banquet hosted by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong (Supreme King of Malaysia) at the Istana Negara (National Palace), where the Presidential and business delegations were invited to enjoy a night of cultural festivities and entertainment. ■



### Join the Philippines-Malaysia Business Council!

The PMBC was established in 1996 to promote trade and investments between the Philippines and Malaysia. The council is composed of top business executives who seek to explore business opportunities between the two countries and to promote the exchange of views on policies of mutual concern. The Makati Business Club serves as the secretariat of the PMYBC.

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