

Remarks of President Aquino at the state luncheon in honor of Prime Minister Davutoglu of Turkey

**Remarks
of
His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino III
President of the Philippines
At the state luncheon in honor of Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu of Turkey**

[Delivered at Malacañan Palace, Manila, on November 17, 2014]

Mr. Prime Minister:

Turkey is a nation that has always been at the crossroads of history, in large part because of your country's unique geographic location, one that rests within the Fertile Crescent, the birthplace of many civilizations. Yours is a nation that bridges Europe and Asia, the East and the West, the past and the present.

From the rise of the legendary city of Troy, to becoming one of the ancient capitals of both the Christian and Muslim worlds under the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires respectively; from being the battleground of the Gallipoli Campaign during the First World War, which paved the way for the Turkish War of Independence under the leadership of your nation's founding father, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, up until the transformation of your country into a global center of trade and cultural diversity, Turkey indeed has been a focal point of the imagination and attention of the world.

This is especially true today, as Turkey, once more, faces the difficult challenge of addressing the threat of ISIS in the embattled town of Kobane in Syria, which borders your country. It is a threat that has brought great conflict to that nation and to many other nations beyond that vital region. The various pressures presented by extremism seek to test the resolve of Turkey, a nation that has stood witness to many great battles in history, and I believe the government and people of Turkey, under your able leadership and that of President Erdogan, will continue to demonstrate the vibrant resilience that embodies Turkish civilization.

Mr. Prime Minister, Turkey has stood by us in helping usher in a new era of peace and stability for our countrymen in the Bangsamoro. This was demonstrated in 1996, when the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, to which Turkey is a member, lent support for the GPH-MNLF Peace Process. Turkey's regard for our countrymen is likewise seen in your present endeavors as a member of the International Contact Group and of the Independent Decommissioning Body in our talks with the MILF.

Just as your people have partnered with us in advancing a just and lasting peace in Mindanao, allow me to say that it is my nation's hope that we will be able to help Turkey as it confronts the persisting and emerging challenges of our time, such as the threat of ISIS. Rest assured, you will find a partner in the Filipino.

Mr. Prime Minister, it is upon this kind of solidarity that our two democratic nations, together with our partners in the international community, will work further towards building a future founded on peace, stability, and inclusiveness, not only for our peoples but also for the rest of the world.

On this note, allow me to wish Your Excellency the strength, health, and continued success as you work to lead your people on the straight path to advancement.

Thank you, and good day.

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