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NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Joint Statement on an Enhanced Partnership between the European Union and the Republic of the Philippines

**Joint Statement on an Enhanced Partnership between
the European Union and the Republic of the Philippines**

1. Bilateral relations between the European Union (EU) and the Philippines have developed into a strong and deep partnership, based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, as well as on the shared values of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and the rules-based international order.
2. The EU and the Philippines (hereinafter referred to as ‘both sides’) recall that the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement signed on 11 July 2012, which entered into force on 1 March 2018, serves as the general framework for EU-Philippines relations, providing the basis for cooperation in a wide range of areas and for addressing challenges in a more coherent and sustainable manner through regular dialogue.
3. Both sides express the desire to further strengthen their ties and deepen cooperation in areas of mutual interest, bilaterally, regionally within the ASEAN framework, and multilaterally.
4. Recognising the enduring strength and dynamism of our long-standing bilateral ties and to mark a new chapter in our relations, the Philippines and the European Union agree to elevate relations to an Enhanced Partnership.
5. The elevation of relations is founded on mutual benefit and built on the spirit of friendship, shared values, and respect for the rule of law and the rules-based international order.
6. The rules-based international order has long served as the linchpin of global security, stability and prosperity. Both sides reaffirm their shared interests in sustaining prosperity, and in preserving peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.
7. Both sides intend to meet and to consult regularly at the political level, including on the margins of regional and global meetings. In addition, both sides aim to continue to meet regularly at senior and working levels.

Peace, Security and Defence

8. Both sides recognise the interlinkages between the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific and underline complementarity between the EU's Strategic Compass and the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy, and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. Both sides commit to contribute to regional peace and stability, the rules-based international order, and ASEAN's central role in the Indo-Pacific's regional security architecture.
9. Both sides welcome the engagement under the Philippines-EU Security and Defence Dialogue as a platform to foster exchanges and cooperation in security and defence, including maritime security, cyber and hybrid threats, Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI), peace mediation and conflict prevention, and counterterrorism.
10. Both sides aim to continue to promote Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the participation of women in peacebuilding and conflict prevention efforts, as per the UN Security Council Resolution 1325/2000.
11. Both sides underscore that all disputes should be settled by peaceful means, without the threat or use of force, in accordance with international law. Both sides intend to continue to champion compliance with decisions and rulings of the dispute settlement mechanisms, including compulsory mechanisms, under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), such as the 2016 South China Sea Arbitral Award, as well as the respect for the advisory opinions that provide authoritative clarity to its provisions. Both sides reaffirm the importance of maritime safety and security, freedom of navigation and overflight, and other lawful uses of the seas in accordance with international law, especially UNCLOS, which both sides firmly uphold as the legal framework governing all activities in the oceans and the seas. In line with this, both sides oppose any attempts to restrict freedom of navigation through militarisation and coercive activities in the South China Sea.

12. Both sides express deep concern on Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Both sides reiterate their unwavering support for the sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine, within its internationally recognised borders, extending to its territorial waters and call for a full, unconditional ceasefire and cessation of any attacks against civilians and civilian objects, and for meaningful talks aimed at achieving a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in accordance with international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. Both sides further reiterate the need to ensure the immediate, safe and unconditional return of all Ukrainian children who have been forcibly transferred or deported.
13. Both sides remain gravely concerned over the deteriorating situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including the continuing catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza. Both sides welcome the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, as endorsed by United Nations Security Council Resolution 2803 (2025) and call for the full implementation by all parties of the ceasefire. In this regard, both sides restate their readiness to contribute to the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict in accordance with UNSCR 2803 and stress the need for immediate, safe, sustained, and unhindered humanitarian access. Both sides underline the importance of commitment to international law and a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace based on the two-state solution in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions where two democratic states, Israel and Palestine, live side-by-side in peace within secure and recognised borders.

14. On the situation in the Middle East, both sides welcome the signature of the MoU between the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran and call on all actors across the region to fully respect the ceasefire, and refrain from actions that endanger the ongoing diplomatic process. Both sides reaffirm the importance of maintaining maritime safety and security, and upholding freedom of navigation in and overflight above straits used for international navigation, in accordance with international law, as reflected in UNCLOS. Both sides express their support to initiatives aiming to ensure freedom of navigation. Both sides express deep concern over any discriminatory or unilateral measures, that may impede or obstruct vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz, or any straits used for international navigation, which are inconsistent with international law, as reflected in UNCLOS, and call for the restoration of the safe, unimpeded, without any charge and continuous transit passage of vessels and aircraft in the Strait of Hormuz, in accordance with UNCLOS, as well as for all parties to ensure the safety and protection of seafarers and ships from hostilities, armed attacks and unlawful detentions in accordance with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), the Maritime Labor Convention (MLC), and other applicable international laws and instruments minimising disruption to the flow of food, energy and essential goods, and mitigating its adverse impact on global economic stability.
15. Both sides seek to promote exchanges and cooperation in security and defence areas including through engagements such as the EU's Critical Maritime Routes in the Indian Ocean (CRIMARIO) and the Enhancing Security Cooperation in and with Asia and the Indo-Pacific (ESIWA+).
16. Both sides intend to continue strengthening efforts in counterterrorism and preventing violent extremism. Both sides aim to strengthen their cooperation on preventing and countering recruitment and involvement of children, youth and women in violent extremist and terrorist activities, as well as their exploitation by organised criminal groups.

17. Both sides aim to further explore defence cooperation. They welcome the decision of the Council of the European Union to provide support, under the European Peace Facility, to strengthen the maritime domain awareness capabilities of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.
18. Both sides aim to pursue cooperation and deepen national, regional and global exchanges to strengthen the mitigation of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risks and threats by promoting all-hazard security governance and strengthening strategic trade management of dual-use goods.
19. Given the significant impact of cyberattacks and other threats on infrastructure, as well as on regional security, both sides aim to continue existing collaboration on cybersecurity, and countering hybrid threats, including Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI), to mitigate risks and challenges. Both sides intend to share best practices, including on the use of new technologies in countering cyberattacks, and exchange experiences on common challenges, such as digital fraud, including online scams, phishing, and other malicious cyber activities which exploit vulnerable populations and fuel illegal activities.
20. Both sides aim to continue to cooperate in addressing transnational crime, including the growing number of scam centres, and in combating the organised criminal groups behind their establishment and operation, given the significant challenges they pose to both regional and international security. Both sides aim to further explore avenues to strengthen assistance for victims of human trafficking exploited within these centres, including support for their recovery and repatriation.
21. Both sides seek to explore ways to strengthen cooperation on countering and proactively preventing Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI), including disinformation, and other covert techniques. Both sides seek to explore working together in crafting an appropriate framework to improve media resilience and capacity to develop robust prevention and response systems.

Rule of Law, Good Governance and Human Rights

22. Both sides reaffirm their shared commitment to respect democratic principles and human rights, as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other relevant international human rights, norms, principles and instruments, including on labour rights, underscoring the need for accountability for human rights violations and abuses, in accordance with international human rights law, and for the principle of the rule of law, which underpins the internal and international policies of both sides.
23. Both sides aim to work together to defend and promote shared democratic values, strengthen democratic institutions, uphold the rule of law, and protect and fulfil human rights, including media freedom, civic space, and the freedom of association, assembly, opinion and expression.
24. Both sides recognise the need to strengthen governance, transparency, and accountability and to prevent the misuse or instrumentalisation of laws to target, weaken, or criminalise civil society, human rights defenders- including trade unionists, environmental and land defenders, and Indigenous Peoples' representatives- as well as journalists and media professionals. Both sides expect to explore further initiatives to ensure the safety of human rights defenders and to promote respect of human rights by business.
25. Both sides aim to exchange best practices on combating the world drug problem and preventing torture and ill-treatment, while continuing cooperation on human rights, democratic governance and the rule of law.
26. Both sides aim to strengthen EU-Philippines cooperation in the protection of the environment and the fight against climate change, which impact the enjoyment of human rights.
27. Promoting and protecting the rights and welfare of migrant workers in their respective communities remains a shared priority. Both sides intend to collaborate to enhance awareness about the rights of migrant workers, advocate for policies that support their dignity and well-being, protect from exploitation and strengthen mechanisms for effective monitoring and enforcement of migration laws and standards.

28. Both parties are committed to combating trafficking in human beings, including child trafficking for sexual exploitation, by strengthening the use of state-of-the-art technologies to counter trafficking in the digital environment and with the support of Eurojust in judicial cooperation. Both sides are committed to fighting against the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, online and offline.
29. Both sides reaffirm their commitment to ensure the full respect of human rights for all, in accordance with the rules-based international order, international human rights law and instruments, in particular for all persons in vulnerable situations including women, children and LGBTI persons, Indigenous Peoples as set out in the UN Declaration on the Right of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). They further pledge to promote gender equality, children's rights, labour rights and protection in the digital sphere, ensuring respect for human rights across all areas in observance of international frameworks such as the Budapest Convention.
30. Both sides intend to respect and realise the fundamental principles and rights at work as outlined in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, as amended in 2022. Both sides expect to work together and with social partners towards ratification and effective implementation of the ILO fundamental instruments as well as to cooperate on promoting ratification and effective implementation of other ILO Conventions as appropriate. Cooperation may include programmes and projects, as well as dialogue and initiatives on topics of common interest at bilateral, regional, or multilateral level, such as the ILO.
31. Both sides acknowledge the importance of sustained and locally determined support for advancing peace consolidation and development in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), such as technical assistance and grants.
32. Both sides, as parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, aim in addition to upholding their rights to work to ensure their access to education, employment, independent living, as well as to ensure accessibility of the physical and digital environments and transport, consistent with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Economic, Trade and Investment Cooperation

33. Both sides welcome the steady growth of their bilateral trade and investments. Acknowledging that significant untapped potential remains, both sides reaffirm their commitment to creating a more robust and mutually beneficial economic partnership. Both sides will further strengthen dialogue on economic and trade policy issues, strive to eliminate unnecessary barriers to trade and investment, and to facilitate trade, and aim to advance a free, fair and open trade and investment with the objective of achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and job creation, and mutual prosperity, particularly under the PH-EU Free Trade Agreement (PH-EU FTA). Both sides remain committed to conclude the PH-EU FTA negotiations as soon as possible.
34. Recognizing the growing importance of economic security in an increasingly interconnected and dynamic global landscape, both sides intend to strengthen the resilience of their supply chains, enhance cooperation and information sharing, and coordinate responses to economic vulnerabilities, where possible.
35. Building on the complementary nature of the EU's and the Philippines' economies, both sides should help businesses take advantage of the economic opportunities that their markets provide. Furthermore, both sides will deepen trade and investment opportunities in sectors of mutual interest. These include, but are not limited to, advanced manufacturing, electronics and semiconductors, critical raw materials, energy and the green transition, transportation, infrastructure, environment, sustainable agriculture and digital economy.
36. By expanding their bilateral trade and investment, and broadening mutual economic cooperation, both sides intend to bolster their respective and joint economic security. Both sides aim to continue to work towards a comprehensive reform of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to ensure a better fit with today's realities and improve all its functions. Both sides should also support new initiatives for incorporation into the WTO legal architecture, such as e-commerce and investment facilitation for development. Both sides reiterate the importance of a fully and well-functioning Dispute Settlement System and recognise the importance of WTO members joining the Multi-Party Interim Appeal Arbitration Arrangement (MPIA).

37. Both sides intend to work together in the framework of the EU's Global Gateway strategy to support, attract and mobilise quality and sustainable investments while creating a more conducive environment to accelerate Philippines' sustainable development efforts and further integrate the Philippine economy into regional and global markets.
38. Both sides are mindful of the significant role that micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) can play in narrowing the gap towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by boosting local value creation, capacity and ownership.
39. Both sides aim to identify technical cooperation and capacity building program needs to enhance competitiveness, promote local value creation, as well as to strengthen supply chain connectivity.

Clean Transition

40. Both sides recognise the urgent threat posed by the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. They reaffirm their commitment to enhancing environmental protection and combating climate change by accelerating efforts to facilitate the transition to renewable and low carbon and other clean energy sources, in a just, inclusive, orderly and equitable manner, halting and reversing biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, deforestation, forest degradation, and land degradation, while ensuring a healthy ocean. This shall be done in line with the best available science and achieved through the full implementation of, among others, the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the accelerated implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), through supporting the discussions in the International Maritime Organisation on decarbonisation of international maritime transport, and the Glasgow Declaration on Forests and Land Use, with a shared goal to halt and reverse deforestation and forest and land degradation by 2030.

41. Both sides recognise that protecting, preserving and regenerating forests and natural resources and ensuring their sustainable use is key to achieving climate and biodiversity objectives and recognise the role of Indigenous Peoples as well as local communities in the protection of forests.
42. The circular economy is identified as a cross-cutting priority with both sides intending to collaborate on sustainable consumption and production, product sustainability and raising global environmental standards.
43. Both sides further pledge to swiftly conclude negotiations on a legally binding UN instrument to end plastic pollution, that addresses the full lifecycle of plastics, including production and the phase-out of the most problematic and single-use plastic products, promoting sustainable production and consumption, resource efficiency, circular economy approaches, and extended producer responsibility, while strengthening the environmentally sound management of plastic waste as mandated by UNEA Resolution 5/14 (2022). This should also promote the development and deployment of affordable, scalable, and sustainable packaging alternatives, particularly for the sachet economy, to ensure that the transition does not disproportionately affect vulnerable populations.
44. Both sides aim to work together on green finance and regulatory frameworks to promote circular economy and mobilise high-quality green investment, including through the provision of climate finance consistent with international law. Both sides further aim to promote secure, sustainable and responsible supply chains for critical raw materials, consistent with national laws on environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, and the rights of Indigenous Peoples as set out in UNDRIP, essential for a clean and digital transition.
45. Both sides reaffirm their commitment to the Paris Agreement, and its temperature goal of pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5° C, as well as their commitment to their Nationally Determined Contributions and their effective implementation, reflecting Global Stocktake outcomes, consistent with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities in the light of different national circumstances.

Environment, Energy, Climate Change and Disaster Management Preparedness

46. Both sides recognise the importance of accelerating efforts to advance the clean energy transition. Both sides aim to strengthen cooperation on climate finance for climate-resilient investments to support implementation of the National Adaptation Plan, NDC, Just Transition Framework, carbon pricing, biodiversity finance, biodiversity conservation and nature-based solutions, while modernising energy systems to accelerate the deployment of renewable and low carbon energy and low carbon and other clean energy technologies, grids, storage, and energy efficiency. They recognise that more resilient and interconnected power systems can contribute to reducing exposure to global energy price volatility and supply disruptions, while supporting global climate goals, sustainable economic growth and competitiveness.
47. Both sides envisage further cooperation in the framework of the ASEAN Power Grid to support the development of interconnections, renewable and low carbon energy deployment including offshore wind, hydropower and geothermal energy, as well as investment and innovation in clean energy technologies and enabling infrastructure.
48. Both sides aim to collaborate on resilient supply chains, climate adaptation, waste management, and disaster risk reduction and management, empowering local communities and sharing solutions for early warning systems, anticipatory action, and disaster preparedness. They should continue exchanging knowledge, information, and best practices on humanitarian aid, civil protection, and disaster risk reduction, while strengthening institutions and local communities to become safer and more resilient against climate change and natural and human-induced hazards and disasters.

49. Both sides expect to maximise EU programmes such as Copernicus and commit to promoting the use of environmental and Earth Observation (EO) data to monitor and protect natural resources and ensure accountability in climate and environmental governance. They further recognise the value of EO and satellite-based technologies in strengthening disaster risk reduction and management by enhancing multi-hazard monitoring, risk assessment, and impact-based forecasting to support people-centered early warning systems. Both sides aim to promote the use of EO data to strengthen disaster preparedness through hazard, exposure, and vulnerability mapping, contingency planning, and anticipatory action, as well as improve emergency response through timely situational awareness, rapid damage and needs assessment, and informed decision-making for response and recovery operations.
50. Both sides should continue promoting aviation safety and sustainability, in particular through the EU-ASEAN Sustainable Connectivity Package (SCOPE) Aviation Partnership Project (APP) and regional engagement, as well as the development of the Philippines Civil Aviation Master Plan (CAMP).

Blue Economy, Ocean Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Resources

51. Both sides intend to scale up their efforts within the relevant fora, including United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC), to ensure the protection and sustainable management of the Ocean at the global level. Both sides welcome the entry into force on 17 January 2026 of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ Agreement), which establishes the first legally binding framework for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and call for its early and effective operationalisation and full implementation.

52. Both sides expect to strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation between maritime policy-making, administration, security, and law enforcement agencies through dialogue, including the Subcommittee on Maritime Cooperation, practical engagement, and capacity-building activities, such as workshops, seminars and training on maritime security operations, maritime domain awareness, coast guard cooperation, maritime search and rescue, maritime governance, marine environmental protection, safety at sea, maritime search and rescue, deep seabed mapping, protection of critical maritime and undersea infrastructures, and rigorous monitoring of vessels that pose risks to the safety of seafarers, evade international maritime safety standards and international sanctions inter alia. Both sides envisage cooperating on the prevention of sanctions circumvention in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the international treaties of which both sides are members.
53. Both sides aim to continue to collaborate closely to enhance the effective implementation of international education, training and working conditions standards for seafarers in the Philippines in alignment with international legal instruments, including the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978, amended (STCW Convention) and the Maritime Labor Convention (MLC, 2006).
54. Both sides highlight the importance of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture and pledge to work more together in this area.
55. Both sides underline the importance of further advancing efforts to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, under the EU IUU Regulation (Council Regulation 1005/2008) and in accordance with relevant international treaties and voluntary agreements, such as the FAO Port State Measure Agreement and the WTO fisheries subsidies agreement. Both sides aim to explore the potential for further cooperation in developing a sustainable blue economy, natural capital accounting on aquatic habitats and ecosystems, acknowledging the vital role of the ocean in regulating climate, sustaining biodiversity, and supporting livelihoods.

Digital, Connectivity, Technology and Science

56. Both sides highlight that science, research, innovation and technology are critical aspects of their future security and economic prosperity and intend to promote research and development opportunities between public and private sector organisations, fostering responsible innovation, capacity building, the sharing of expertise, and the translation of research into real world impact.
57. Both sides recognise that connectivity plays a central role in achieving a thriving digital economy and that it is a critical enabler of economic growth, investments, innovation and sustainability. Both sides intend to work jointly to advance secure, trusted and resilient digital connectivity in satellites, cables and in 5G. Through the Digital Economy Package, both sides would support secure, high-speed access to Copernicus data and drive the expansion of 5G technology, and explore opportunities for investments in inclusive, sustainable and secure digital connectivity under the EU Global Gateway Strategy.
58. Both sides see a potential to expand cooperation to emerging technologies, including on safe, secure, ethical, human-centred artificial intelligence (AI), AI innovation and resilient AI systems. They also recognise the importance of upholding a global trust framework for online interaction that contributes to mitigating cybersecurity risks. Further exploration of collaboration in the field of digital identity, digital wallets and digital trust services and public key infrastructure (PKI) to secure digital transactions, e-commerce platforms, and other public goods in the digital space is also envisaged. Both sides aim to promote a human-centric approach to digital transformation and convergence of international standards in the digital domain. Both sides intend to exchange best practices on AI governance, digital trust, and cybersecurity standards while respecting national laws and regulatory frameworks.
59. Both sides resolve to enhance cooperation in AI talent development, research and innovation ecosystems, and to explore the establishment of AI innovation hubs and AI factory models, to promote knowledge exchange and industry-academic partnerships.

60. Both sides aim to build upon the EU-PH Copernicus Program, which establishes the Philippines as the first Copernicus facility in Asia, to enhance geospatial analytics and technology solutions cooperation, by promoting the co-development of compelling use cases and services that have potential practical and operational benefits for both countries, as well as the broader ASEAN region.
61. Both sides reaffirm their intention to step up research, science and technology cooperation by developing joint activities, including through the Horizon Europe Programme for Research and Technological Development, capacity building for researchers and research institutions, supporting the mobility of researchers and academic staff, exchanging of experiences and practices, and facilitating joint training and research programmes.

People-to-People Relations

62. Both sides recognise that our people are central to every aspect of the bilateral relationship and reaffirm their willingness to further deepen and expand cooperation in education and training, including under the international dimension of the Erasmus+ programme, to provide capacity building and training for academic individuals and institutions, support the mobility of students and academic staff, foster equal opportunities for all and exchange experiences and best practices.
63. Both sides aim to explore cooperation in skills development and vocational training initiatives in relevant sectors, such as the twin clean and digital transition. Such collaboration shall prioritise inclusion and accessibility to facilitate mutually beneficial skills exchange and talent mobility. Both sides will explore mechanisms to facilitate mutual recognition of qualifications and study periods abroad, thereby supporting mobility and exchanges in relevant sectors.
64. Both sides intend to strengthen partnerships among higher education institutions by promoting student and training mobility, people-to-people exchanges, and language and cultural activities, with the goal of building a robust network for research, teaching, and learning collaborations. Both sides encourage the exploration of collaboration in Transnational Higher Education (TNHE).

65. Both sides aim to continue facilitating extensive governmental, commercial, and cultural exchanges from all sectors and parts of society and to support parliamentary exchanges through the EU-Philippines Interparliamentary Meetings (IPMs), and the ASEAN-Interparliamentary Assembly (AIPA) as well as other interparliamentary fora, to advance mutual understanding between their political representatives.

Signed in duplicate in _____ on _____ in the English language.

FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION

FOR THE REPUBLIC OF
THE PHILIPPINES
