

**Presidential Communications Operations Office  
Presidential News Desk**

**INTERVENTION OF  
PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE  
AT THE 18<sup>TH</sup> ASEAN-INDIA SUMMIT**

[28 October 2021]

Thank you, Mr. Chair.  
Prime Minister Modi,  
Your Majesty, Excellencies,

Throughout our battle against the COVID-19 pandemic, India has been a reliable partner of ASEAN.

We thank India for its contribution of 1 million US dollars to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund.

We recognize India's support of and active participation in ASEAN-led mechanisms. We look forward to further enhancing our cooperation in countering terrorism, violent extremism and transnational crimes through the exchange of best practices and information.

The Philippines also welcomes the adoption of the ASEAN-India Joint Statement on Cooperation on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. With this, we aim to deepen our strategic partnership, particularly in public health, maritime security, digital economy, connectivity and science, technology and innovation.

We count on the ASEAN-India Business Council to further promote trade and investment and the development of micro, small and medium enterprises.

We must continue to enhance cooperation on biodiversity conservation and in curbing illegal wildlife trade through the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity.

A step in the right direction is the capacity-building project currently undertaken by the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and India's National Biodiversity Authority.

ASEAN and India also stand to benefit from closer cooperation in disaster management, green recovery and smart cities. These are vital areas of engagement in the context of climate change.

Your Majesty, Excellencies,

We all recognize the importance of the South China Sea in global maritime activities and trade. Stable maritime links are crucial to our post-pandemic recovery and sustained economic growth.

We thank India for its consistent affirmation of the importance of the rule of law, freedom of navigation and peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with the 1982 UNCLOS.

We thank [Thailand] as Coordinator of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations and welcome Singapore as the next country Coordinator.

Finally, we look forward to 2022 as ASEAN-India Friendship Year and commit to continue strengthening our relations for mutual gain.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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