



**Ambassador Annika Thunborg's Speech – Swedish National Day
6 June 2022**

God eftermiddag, Magandang hapon, Good afternoon everyone, it is a great pleasure for me and Team Sweden to welcome you to this year's observance of the National Day of Sweden, that takes place on a more sombre note and in a smaller circle than usual due to the current crises. I especially would like to welcome

- Under-Secretary Myrna Cabotaje of the Department of Health
- Under-Secretary Verna Buensuceno of the Department of Transportation
- Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Jaime Ledda of the Department of Foreign Affairs
- Strategic and Development Adviser Josephine Romero of the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Entrepreneurship

Thank you so much for being with us today and for sharing your insights with us!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year we celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Sweden. We are Moving Forward Together, based on shared and universal values enshrined in the UN Charter, international law and international humanitarian law as well as the commitment to make the world a better place for everyone. This is particularly important in light of the multiple crises we face today. With the pandemic, Russia's war against Ukraine, subsequent socio-economic hardship, and the climate crisis, it is of great importance that we build back better, greener and more inclusively, not leaving anyone behind and building sustainably and resiliently for future generations.

I thank the outgoing government for excellent cooperation. And I congratulate the incoming government and look forward to working closely with you including together with the European Union to further this agenda.

The private sector has a leading role in sustainable development and I am proud to see that so many of the Swedish companies present in the Philippines are with us here today. ABB, Astra Zeneca, Atlas Copco, Ericsson, H&M, IKEA, Retail Associates, Swedish Match, Tetra Pak, Transcom, Volvo Buses and Volvo Cars – thank you – and thank you BDO – for your leadership on Corporate Social Responsibility. You are leaders in innovation and sustainability, which means that you lead on environmentally sound practices, circular economy solutions, renewable energy solutions, the respect of human rights, good labour conditions and good salaries, capacity-building opportunities for all employees, gender equality, and freedom from corruption. And we don't do this out of the goodness of our hearts - although I hope that there is a component of that as well - but because when Corporate Social Responsibility is integrated in our operations, it is good for business, it makes us more efficient and productive which the success and footprint of Sweden's companies in the world bears witness to.

Good health is also part of sustainability. To mark our National Day as well as the 75th anniversary, we embarked on a Covid-19 booster vaccination campaign as it was of concern to us to learn that only 13% of the Philippine population had gotten a booster shot despite the

Postal Address:
1634 Taguig

Tel. no.:
+63 2 811 7900

Email:
ambassaden.manila@gov.se

Address:
11/F DelRosarioLaw Centre
21st Drive corner 20th Drive
Bonifacio Global City, Taguig

Fax no.: +63 2 811 7940

easy access to vaccines. We thank the Philippine College of Physicians that helped us promote vaccine confidence, Team Sweden and the LGUs including Pasay City that helped organize vaccination drives and to the many Swedish companies that already have corporate vaccination and booster programs for their employees. No one is safe until everyone is safe and further lockdowns will harm us all.

Let us show solidarity with the most vulnerable in society, with our communities and businesses, and thus with society as a whole by getting boosted!

Thank you very much. Tack. Salamat.

Mabuhay ang Pilipinas! Mabuhay ang Sweden! Cheers, skål and enjoy!

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