

JICA Chief Representative SAKAMOTO Takema's Speech for the  
Loan Agreement Signing Ceremony of the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project, Phase 3  
June 10, 2024 | DOF Office, Metro Manila, Philippines

- Hon. DOF Secretary, Ralph G. RECTO
- Hon. DOTr Secretary, Jaime J. BAUTISTA
- Hon. PCG Deputy Commandant, Allan Victor Dela Vega
- His Excellency, Ambassador of Japan to the Philippines, ENDO Kazuya
- Distinguished partners and colleagues,
- My dear *Kasama, Kaibigan* and *Kapamilya*,

*Magandang Hapon po sa inyong lahat!*

I am grateful and honored to be standing here finally, filled with joy, as we mark another milestone in enhancing our valuable and long-standing cooperation built on mutual trust and mutual respect.

We are gathering here today for additional five (5) 97-meter MRRVs<sup>1</sup> for Philippine Coast Guard (PCG).

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<sup>1</sup> Multi-Role Response Vessels

Signing this Loan Agreement for MSCIP3<sup>2</sup> is a clear testament to the profound value of our unwavering joint efforts, especially with PCG, in saving human lives, protecting marine environment, and maintaining peace among others.

This new chapter of our cooperation will definitely further strengthen the capability of PCG and the Government of the Philippines.

It can facilitate wider nation coverage in effectively conducting maritime law enforcement missions.

Also, it can ensure the safety of people and environment, through PCG's search and rescue missions for saving human lives, delivery of public services in remote islands, marine environmental protection, among others.

As you know, until today, we have already cooperated to deliver ten (10) 44-meter MRRVs and two (2) 97-meter MRRVs which are the biggest among PCG's fleet.

Consequently, following the successful implementation of MSCIP3, PCG will be able to have a total of seventeen (17) JICA supported MRRVs among its Capital Ships, currently counting about thirty (30).

I am very delighted and honored that JICA can make a humble contribution in this regard.

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<sup>2</sup> the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project, Phase 3

Now, let me add further to this.

In addition to the said hard component support, we have been supporting PCG continuously, in terms of enhancing their knowledge and skills, through various technical cooperation programs, such as long-standing dispatch of JICA experts, short-term trainings, and scholarship programs.

Proudly, I would like to inform you that the best mix of hard and soft support is one of the characteristics of JICA's unique cooperation.

As a result, our current 12 vessels are well operating in general, thanks to the diligent daily maintenance and proper operation, carried out by highly trained officials of PCG.

Demonstrating the significance of our long-standing cooperation, PCG has responded to several calls of distraught and tragedy utilizing the delivered MRRVs.

For instance, in February this year, PCG deployed BRP Malapascua (one of the delivered 44-m MRRVs) to aid search and rescue of missing fishermen in Batangas.

Our MRRV could successfully transport the rescued fishermen back to their beloved families after being found in Occidental Mindoro.

Next, in March of last year, both 44-m and 97-m MRRVs have responded to the Mindoro Oil Spill.

I recall that the Oil Spill affected more than 75km of coastline and impacted more than 42,000 families and their livelihoods in Oriental Mindoro, Palawan, Antique and Batangas.

Upon that disastrous accident, Japan/JICA has swiftly dispatched the Disaster Response Team to help PCG in oil spill clean-up and to mitigate further marine environment damages.

The Japan's team, dispatched among the quickest worldwide, could collaborate with PCG team very effectively, fully utilizing our MRRVs, too.

These examples are just some of PCG's very various missions.

Clearly, we can see that the MRRVs are more than just a vehicle for maritime law enforcement, but also a vehicle catering humanitarian and environmental needs among others.

To realize these benefits, we expect the Philippine Government, particularly DOTr and PCG, to move "Full Speed Ahead" in implementing this Project.

In return, we assure you of our highest commitment and support to address your needs and improve the current state of the maritime sector, including our possible future cooperation for a PCG support facility in Subic.

*Para sa kapayapaan, kaunlaran, at kaligtasan ng lahat!*<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For peace, prosperity, and safety of all

*Magbayanihan tayo.*

*Kaagapay niyo kami!*<sup>4</sup>

*Sama sama tayo, para sa Bagong Pilipinas!*

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

*Maraming Salamat po at Mabuhay!*

Good afternoon to all of you.

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<sup>4</sup> We are standing side by side with you