CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE

by H.E. Kim Jae Shin
Ambassador, Republic of Korea
to the Philippines

Father Jose Ramon Villarin; DFA Assistant Secretary and former Ambassador to Korea Luis Cruz; Officials and faculty members of the Ateneo; Esteemed panelists; Ladies and gentlemen:

Magandang umaga po sa inyong lahat! Good morning to all of you. 안녕하세요

Before anything else, I would like to congratulate the Ateneo Initiative for Korean Studies for holding this conference.

It is my honor and privilege to be invited here, and to visit the Ateneo de Manila University, which is one of the top universities in Asia as well as in the Philippines.

The Ateneo is a highly respected institution that has been producing leaders for more than 150 years, one of whom is no other than President Benigno Aquino III.

Furthermore, I am very happy to know that there are almost a hundred Koreans studying in this esteemed university, a number which has been increasing each year.
Ladies and gentlemen:

As you might know, the Philippines and Korea have a long history of friendship, which was reinforced during the Korean War 65 years ago.

Since then, our relations have extended beyond the diplomatic, political, and economic fields to include cultural and even academic. This is one of the pillars of a strong and stable cooperation.

I am particularly proud that the Ateneo has this program and that more and more people – not just students – are expressing interest in Korean issues and culture. I notice that K-Pop and Korean drama are quite popular among many Filipinos. This program should provide Korean culture another pathway to Filipino society.

For my part, I intend to encourage Korean studies in the Philippines by supporting events such as this. To this end, student exchange programs are also available. In fact, universities in Korea regularly offer scholarships to foreigners, including Filipinos. Our Embassy has been receiving many applications – over a hundred for graduate studies and around thirty for undergraduate this year. Those who will be accepted can study in Korea under a full scholarship, although not necessarily in Seoul.

With this in mind, I would like to thank AIKS and the Ateneo Center for Asian Studies for co-hosting today’s conference, and I’m sure it will be very successful.

Maraming salamat po. Thank you very much. 감사합니다.