



Office of the President of the Philippines

STATEMENT

30 June 2021

Telephone Conversation with His Excellency GOTABAYA RAJAPAKSA PRESIDENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF SRI LANKA

President Rodrigo Roa Duterte received a telephone call from President Gotabaya Rajapaksa of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on 28 June 2021.

The two Leaders renewed their shared commitment to further enhance cooperation as the Philippines and Sri Lanka commemorate 60 years of diplomatic relations this year.

"Over the last six decades we have pursued fruitful relations. We look forward to sustaining this and exploring further the full potential of our cooperative ties," President Duterte said.

President Duterte also conveyed the Philippine Government's interest to further strengthen engagement with Sri Lanka in the United Nations on issues of common interest.

The President thanked the Sri Lankan government for its assistance in the repatriation of Filipinos amid this pandemic and for the safe return of Filipino seafarers in the MT New Diamond that caught fire off the eastern coast of Sri Lanka in September 2020.

For his part, President Rajapaksa extended deepest appreciation for the cooperation and mutual support between Sri Lanka and the Philippines in multilateral venues, including at the United Nations Human Rights.

He likewise extended his invitation for President Duterte to visit Sri Lanka, to which the President responded saying that he is looking forward to undertaking such visit when the global situation normalizes.

The two Leaders committed to explore new opportunities for bilateral cooperation, particularly in the areas of security and defense, trade and investment, labor migration, and tourism. They also agreed that combatting COVID-19 is a shared responsibility and an opportunity to work in solidarity with all nations. **END**