

Romualdez invites international business bigwigs to PH for March WEF event

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House Speaker Martin Romualdez (Speaker's office)

Come see a glimpse of the ASEAN parliament dream in the Philippines.

House Speaker Martin Romualdez gave this invitation to the international business community Thursday, Jan. 18 during his continuing participation at the World Economic Forum (WEF) in Davos, Switzerland.

Romualdez was alluding to the forthcoming WEF CEO Roundtable to be hosted by Manila in March this year.

Romualdez, head of the Philippine delegation to the WEF 2024 Annual Meeting, extended the invitation in his closing remarks as one of the featured guests during the “Learning from ASEAN” session at the event hosted by CNN anchor Julia Chatterley.

“I see an ASEAN Parliament like the EU (European Union), I aspire for that. That has been an aspiration of the ASEAN ever since its inception,” the House leader said when asked how he sees the Association of Southeast Asian Nations five or 10 years from now.

“And to see the seeds of that we invite you to Manila this March 18 to 19. Manila and the Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. will be hosting the World Economic Forum CEO Roundtable. You will get a glimpse of our aspiration of an ASEAN Parliament,” vowed Romualdez, the fourth highest-ranked official in the Philippines.

The WEF roundtable in the Philippines, scheduled to be a special in-person event, is likely to take place at the Malacañang Presidential compound in Manila.

The event hopes to gather over 50 representatives both from local and

international companies and organizations with a special focus on foreign funds and investment companies that have interested in exploring opportunities related to the Maharlika Investment Fund (MIF).

It will be the first high-level roundtable to be convened in the Asia-Pacific region since the end of the pandemic.

Romualdez, who had been "selling" the Philippines' MIF to business bigwigs the entire week, said the event will be a great opportunity to bring together representatives from the public and private sectors.

“As such, CEOs from international and Filipino corporations will be able to share experiences and discuss government initiatives and areas of collaboration with international and local government officials,” Romualdez said.

Romualdez was joined in the session by Vietnam Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, Thailand Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin, and World Trade Organization (WTO)-Geneva Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala.

The WEF annual meeting runs from Jan. 15 to 19.