

Palace: Phl–Malaysia ties remain strong

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Malacañang has expressed hope that bilateral ties between the Philippines and Malaysia will remain close and strong after Mahathir Mohamad returned to power as prime minister following the May 10 polls.

“We wish to congratulate Mahathir Mohamad on his return as Prime Minister of Malaysia,” presidential spokesman Harry Roque Jr. said yesterday.

The Palace official noted that the victory of Mahathir will further bolster the strong relations between the two countries.

“(Prime Minister Mahathir) is an old friend of the Philippines and his fresh mandate augurs well for the deep relations between the Philippines and Malaysia,” he said.

President Duterte has visited Kuala Lumpur after he assumed office where he also established good ties with former prime minister Najib Razak.

“Malaysia, as we all know, is a brother nation and dependable partner of the Philippines for having played a constructive role towards the attainment of peace and stability in Mindanao,” Roque said.

“We are thus confident that the strong partnership between our countries would continue to be enhanced in the years to come,” the official added.

Mahathir was officially sworn in at Istana Negara as Malaysia’s Prime Minister last Thursday, following a hotly contested general election.

The Pakatan Harapan (PH) coalition celebrated a shock victory early last Thursday when it met the minimum threshold of 112 seats needed to form Malaysia’s new government.

According to figures from Malaysia’s Election Commission, PH won 113 seats, while Barisan Nasional took 79.

The 92-year-old former prime minister, who previously ruled the country with an iron fist for 22 years, came out of retirement to take on Najib who became embroiled in a massive corruption scandal.

“The Philippines is looking forward to working with Prime Minister Mahathir and his government in further enhancing the bilateral partnership between our two countries and peoples,” the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said in a statement.

The DFA said the results of the election and the peaceful transition of government affirm the adherence of the Malaysian people to the democratic process.

“We are confident that the new administration will continue to foster peace, security and the economic success of Malaysia,” it said. –