



# OCCASIONAL PAPER

JULY 2021  
ISSUE 14.07

SIGNS OF THE  
TIMES:  
BUILDING  
BACK BETTER



# SIGNS OF THE TIMES: BUILDING BACK BETTER

At the concluding year of every administration, political analysts are usually prodded by the demand of looking back at past administrations and the spirit of moving forward to enumerate governance lessons for the new government. What makes a post facto general analysis of the Aquino administration very appealing are the significant breaks and continuities it has had in terms of policy and leadership vis-à-vis the Duterte administration over the past 11 years. Looking back into the Aquino administration's social, political, and economic achievements offers us three overarching themes along which governance in this period could be characterized, namely, principled leadership, good governance is good economics, and a dignified foreign policy.

In a long cycle of simultaneous development, reversal, and decay, Philippine politics and governance is yet in another juncture of building back better. Roughly, the culmination of the Marcos dictatorship into a mass uprising or EDSA revolution in 1986 transpired during the third wave of democratization. Today, the political reversal under the Duterte administration has been manifested by the erosion of democratic values, e.g., right to expression, press freedom, and other civil rights; the tendency of the executive branch to lord over legislative and judicial branches; the culture of impunity; and the penetration of corrosive capital from China.

Eleven months into the final year of the Duterte administration, the decline of its approval rating in addressing the nation's urgent concerns cannot go unnoticed. As emphasized by Dr. Ronald Holmes, President of Pulse Asia Research Inc., in the recent virtual town hall discussion entitled "State of Philippine Governance: A Five-Year Review of the Duterte Presidency" organized by Stratbase ADR Institute last 28 July 2021, "the approval ratings of the national administration declined in terms of addressing inflation, where it went

down from 51 percent approval in November 2020 to 45 percent approval in February 2021, and is down to 43 percent at present."<sup>1</sup>

It is thus very tempting to delve into a general analysis of the reforms instituted by the Aquino administration eleven years ago. In this sense, building back better means looking back at promising reforms and changes in governance instituted by the Aquino administration and preparing for the 2022 elections to advance the needed political change.

This paper primarily aims to promote the achievements of the Aquino administration as a good barometer of building back better, as demonstrated by the abridged discussions of its principled leadership, "good governance is good economics," and a dignified foreign policy. In conclusion, the paper exclaims that only by contrasting the Aquino legacies with reference to the breaks and continuity of reforms under the Duterte administration can we put Philippine politics and governance in a vantage position of progression.

<sup>1</sup> THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THIS PAPER ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE INSTITUTE.





## CRITICAL ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The latest Stratbase-commissioned surveys from Pulse Asia (June 7-16, 2021) and Social Weather Stations (SWS) (June 23-26, 2021) were central in identifying the main themes of this paper, namely: “principled leadership,” “good governance is good economics,” and “a dignified foreign policy.”

The Pulse Asia surveys were instructive in that they revealed that the 2022 electorate is looking for a national candidate who has political integrity, can fight corruption, and knows how to listen to the population’s national concerns or urgent demands.

Accordingly, when it came to the top national issue that candidates must have a clear solution for, sixty-three percent of the respondents said that “controlling inflation” was the topmost issue. The other top issues were: “increasing the pay of workers” (53 percent); “creating more jobs” (45 percent); “fighting graft and corruption in government” (41 percent); and “reducing the poverty of many Filipinos” (30 percent).<sup>2</sup>

As to leadership qualities, the respondents said they want a leader that “has concern for the poor, pro-poor” (48 percent), is “not corrupt” (47 percent), is “trustworthy and honest” (37 percent), and “has a good platform and can give solutions to problems of the country” (32 percent). Further, they also want leaders who “fight anomalies in government” (25 percent), has “untarnished name and reputation” (22 percent), “has good leadership skills” (22 percent), and who “fulfills promises” (21 percent). They want leaders who “can defend Philippine territory against China” (18 percent), has “strong political will” (15 percent), and who is “approachable” (13 percent). Of the 11 traits and characteristics mentioned, it was evident that integrity was the common denominator.<sup>3</sup>

The Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey, on the other hand, shed light on Filipinos’ continuing concern over China’s activities in the West Philippine Sea. According to SWS President Dr. Mahar Mangahas, the key findings of the SWS survey include:

- Public opinion clearly favors strong action to assert the country’s right in the West Philippine Sea as per the 2016 Hague arbitral victory.
- Public opinion very strongly favors alliances with other countries to defend Philippine rights in the West Philippine Sea.
- Public opinion very strongly favors building structures in the West Philippine Sea as a means of asserting Philippine rights
- The most demanded moves are
  - o Strengthening internal Philippine military capabilities
  - o Conducting joint military exercises with allies
  - o Implement the terms of the Visiting Forces Agreement and Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement

The Pulse Asia and SWS surveys illustrate that there is continued concern among Filipinos on issues related to leadership, governance and economic reform, and the West Philippine Sea. Guided by these concerns, the following sections of this paper look back at the practices and policies put in place by the Aquino Administration with regard to three key themes. After the sections on “**Principled Leadership and Political Reforms**,” “**Good Governance is Good Economics**,” and “**A Dignified Foreign Policy**,” the concluding section of this paper will argue the value of extracting lessons from the Aquino Administration’s successes and forward the need for a deeper comparative analysis once President Duterte’s term has been completed.

## PRINCIPLED LEADERSHIP AND POLITICAL REFORMS

Eleven years ago, then-Senator Benigno Simeon Cojuangco Aquino III won the Philippine presidency anchored on the platform of fighting corruption. The newly-elected President used this as a stepping stone to embark upon the long journey towards bringing transparency and integrity in governance.<sup>4</sup>

The type of principled leadership that Aquino exhibited from the start carried with it a host of political reforms that, in turn, resulted in a series of administrative changes and reforms intended to ease the day-to-day operations of government.

At the level of implementation, the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA), for one, was able to gain momentum. As Gainer (2015) puts it:

*“The emphasis on reform at the top and Aquino’s appointments of receptive agency leaders set a tone that helped the ARTA program gain traction across agencies. Most observers within and outside the government said corporations owned or controlled by the government performed especially well and were most receptive to feedback. Some corporations even requested additional surveys from the Civil Service Commission (CSC).”*

Further, with the assumption of Aquino in the 2010 national elections, Magno (2015) asserted and argued about “a clear shift in the priorities of the Philippine government.” Apparent in the field of governmental and non-governmental affairs, Aquino’s reforms were rooted in the following:



*“Community-Driven Development programs that were launched more than a decade ago allow citizens to be directly involved in the allocation of specific projects... CSOs in the Philippines began experimenting with ways to monitor corruption as well as the quality of project implementation. Road Watch is an excellent example of a CSO that used participatory auditing mechanisms to counter the misappropriation and misuse of public goods... Reform-oriented governments were elected at subnational levels. Naga City is the best example of a local government unit that pursued innovative reform efforts.”<sup>5</sup>*

Putting the anti-corruption stance in the context of our social and political history, the struggle to combat corruption was always hard and complicated as it entails a painstaking process of dealing with the whole gamut of political practices and culture.

However, from any angle, bringing back public trust and confidence in government is vital in battling corruption. Alongside Magno’s analysis is Gainer’s perspective on the connection between Aquino’s platform of fighting corruption with transparency and integrity. The implementation too of the ARTA illustrates the Aquino administration’s commitment in addressing corruption at different levels of government and in setting the tone in terms of promoting and actualizing greater public trust and participation.

On another plane, Magno (2015) opined that interlacing corruption with poverty became the method of Aquino to put in motion institutional reforms and address the daily issues of governance. Finally, on the improving quality of governance in the last year of Aquino, Magno qualified his performance and stated that: “There have been a series of institutional reforms over the past three years, as the Aquino government seek to build new institutions that will create the opportunity to alter spending patterns and improve governance.”

Anchored on participation and the goal of limited corruption, the Aquino administration instituted innovative reforms to address issues such as the People's Budget, Empowerment Fund for Participatory Governance, Bottom-Up Budgeting, Budget Partnership Agreements, Full Disclosure Policy, Seal of Good Housekeeping, and Citizen Participatory Audits.

In terms of social reforms, the K to 12 program or The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (RA 1053) was among the most significant policies implemented. It was termed the government's newest effort to uplift the educational system to the global 12-year standard. K to 12 means one year of kindergarten and 12 years of elementary and secondary education. It was one of President Noyoy Aquino's campaign promises and, as such, was involved in the priority list of bills of the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (LEDAC).<sup>6</sup>

During his presidential campaign, Aquino was even referred to as the 'Education President'; he saw education as a primary area for change and as an indispensable factor in the growth of any nation. Indeed, the K to 12 program reflected the sincerity of the Aquino administration to usher change in the educational system and "insulate" it from politics by redefining basic education.<sup>7</sup> Aquino then worked hand in hand with Bro. Armin Luistro from the Department of Education (DepEd) to build and launch this reform. Following the principles of participative governance and stakeholder consultations, an 'aggressive awareness campaign' was pursued in building and implementing the K-12 framework.

Alongside educational reforms, Diola (2018), in her piece "Human Development and Poverty Reduction," depicted Aquino's *Pantawid Pamilya* program as the administration's flagship poverty alleviation initiative that extended cash assistance to the poorest households. It is worth noting, however, that its beginnings could be traced to the time of the Arroyo administration. As part of the program, financial support

was given to identified families in their continuous effort of keeping their children healthy and in school. This was perceived as an opportunity for beneficiaries to sever from the cycle of intergenerational poverty.<sup>8</sup>

Principled leadership, a strong anti-corruption stance, transparency, and integrity were the foundations of the Aquino administration in laying down a resurgent and competitive economy.

The economic agenda of rapid, inclusive, and sustained economic growth of the Aquino administration was exemplified by its policies against "wangwang," promotion of public-private-partnership, expansion of trade and investments, achievement of sufficiency in energy supply, raising agricultural productivity and rice self-sufficiency, and ensuring the presence of vital infrastructure (Aquino, 2011 as cited in Cuaresma, 2018).<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, Cuaresma (2018) summarized the legislative achievements of the Aquino administration, focusing on the objectives and programs of the economic development sector and its implementing agencies from 2011 to 2016. With this, it is quite remarkable to mention the relative efficiency of the Aquino administration in putting in place significant and major policies, particularly after the first three years of the Aquino administration.<sup>10</sup>

Several laws supporting business, trade, industry, and entrepreneurship were also passed, highlighting Aquino's leadership and political will. For instance, the passage of RA 10644, otherwise known as An Act Promoting Job Generation And Inclusive Growth Through The Development Of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises; and RA 10693 or An Act Strengthening Nongovernment Organizations (NGOs) Engaged In Microfinance Operations for the Poor were enormous accomplishments for the promotion of the micro, small and medium enterprise sector. Also, RA 10816, otherwise known as An Act Providing for the Development and Promotion of Farm Tourism in

the Philippines, was intended to establish a robust tourism industry, with benefits expected to cascade to the farms and farmers and the natural environment as well.<sup>11</sup>

## GOOD GOVERNANCE IS GOOD ECONOMICS

As anti-corruption reforms are intricately linked with poverty and economic development, governance and economics are mutually reinforcing factors in the social progression of any society. For this reason, it is important for us to look back at what made President Aquino's anti-corruption efforts such hallmarks of his presidency.

In an interview with BusinessWorld, Stratbase ADR Institute President Dindo Manhit said, "when you look at the strength of PNoy's (President Aquino) administration, you have to give him credit for putting good governance [at the forefront]. That was their campaign mantra." "Good governance is good economics, and that translated to a better environment for investments," Manhit added.<sup>12</sup>

The mantras that Professor Manhit referred to were the "*Daang Matuwid*" and "*Kung Walang Corrupt, Walang Mahirap*" promises made on the campaign trail. When he arrived in Malacanang, he delivered on these promises by implementing several anti-corruption reforms and initiatives.

Under President Aquino's leadership, his administration sought to institutionalize a culture of integrity, accountability, and transparency through a two-pronged approach: Establish a culture of accountability among those in public service and accountability in the use of public funds.

As part of this approach, early in his administration, Aquino appointed retired Supreme Court Justice Conchita Carpio-Morales as the

country's new Ombudsman. Carpio-Morales' predecessor was accused of mishandling cases, and her appointment gave the country, in the words of the President when he announced her appointment in his 2011 State of the Nation Address, "an honest-to-goodness anti-corruption office, not one that condones the corruption and abuses in government."

Several anti-corruption laws were also passed during the Aquino Presidency. For example, Republic Act No. 10149 was passed in 2011, creating the Governance Commission for GOCCS (GCG), a central policymaking and regulatory body mandated to safeguard the State's ownership rights and ensure that the operations of GOCCs are transparent and responsive to the needs of the public. In addition, laws strengthening our capacity to fight money laundering (RA 10365) and terrorist financing (RA 10168) were also passed into law.

The Aquino administration also had several initiatives to increase transparency in government. For instance, the websites of government agencies were required to feature appropriated budgets, public offerings, and project implementations status for public scrutiny. The increased availability of information online was also extended to disbursement of funds through the Department of Budget and Management's website. They also introduced "zero-based" budgeting, which signaled a departure from the status quo of incremental and leakage-prone spending.

This is not to say that the Aquino years did not have its fair share of controversy. Its Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP), for instance, was arguably the biggest controversy faced by the Aquino administration. That said, documents culled from the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) clarified, in the end, the innocence of accused officials. To wit:

*"The Court applied the doctrine of operative fact, acknowledging the beneficial result of the DAP even as it ruled that certain acts under it may be legally infirm: In its final decision, the Court extended the benefit of the doctrine of operative fact to the proponents and implementors of the DAP; and likewise affirmed that "the authors, proponents, and implementors of the DAP, being public officers, further enjoy the presumption of regularity in the performance of their functions (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 2015)."<sup>13</sup>*

Nevertheless, the Aquino administration's "good governance is good economics" approach did increase confidence in the country's leadership and contributed to the Philippines becoming the fastest growing economy in East and Southeast Asia during the early 2010s.

In a speech in 2015, President Aquino himself noted that the intensified interest of private sector investors in the infrastructure projects under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program is proof of the success of his administration's anti-corruption program.

Unlike before, when the government had to offer numerous fiscal incentives to attract investors, now, private firms are the ones offering premiums to the government in order to secure PPP projects, "Kayo na po ang magkumpara sa pagkakaiba. Dati walang nakikisama sa proyekto ngayon nag uunahan na ang mga pribadong kumpanya at nagbibigay ng premium," Aquino said.

One of President Aquino's flagship programs, the PPP program, was launched in 2010 to boost the country's infrastructure development. While the Public-Private Partnership Center (PPC) reported that only three PPP infrastructure projects (Daang Hari-SLEX Link Road, Phase 1 of the School Infrastructure Project, Automatic Fare Collection System) were completed as of 2015, as reported in the Official Gazette of the Republic of the Philippines, a total of 50 more infrastructure projects and services were approved by President Aquino to be completed

“AS ANTI-CORRUPTION REFORMS ARE INTRICATELY LINKED WITH POVERTY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNANCE AND ECONOMICS ARE MUTUALLY REINFORCING FACTORS IN THE SOCIAL PROGRESSION OF ANY SOCIETY.”



beyond his term. Many of these infrastructure projects, are, in fact, among the successes being claimed by the current administration under its Build, Build, Build program.

Some examples of PPP projects that were carried over to the term of Aquino's successor, President Rodrigo Duterte, are the NLEX Harbor Link, Pasig Marikina River Channel, Southwest Intermodal Terminal, C5 South Link Expressway, LRT Line 2 East Extension Project, NLEX Harbor Link Segment 8.2, Metro Rail Transit (MRT) Line 7, and Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 1 South Extension Project.

That said, the ability of the country to attract investment went beyond infrastructure projects. Driven by these governance and economic reforms, the country, once dubbed the "sick man of Asia," was suddenly considered an investment-grade growth star.

During the Aquino Administration, the Philippines' gross domestic product (GDP) grew an average of 6.2% during the Aquino presidency. GDP even reaching 7.6% in 2010, the highest the country has seen since the 1970s. Inflation remained low as well, averaging 1.4% during his term.

The Philippines also saw several credit rating upgrades during the Aquino administration. In 2013, the country received its first investment-grade credit rating of BBB- from Fitch Ratings and Standard & Poor. Later that year, the Japan Credit Rating Agency Ltd. (JCR) also raised its rating for the Philippines from the minimum investment grade of BBB- to BBB. Two years later, it raised it further to BBB+, the highest rating the country has ever received from the agency.

While these credit rating upgrades were votes of investor confidence in the country's strengthened macroeconomic fundamentals, they also reflected the changed global perception of the Philippines with

regard to corruption.

For instance, in 2015, the last full calendar year under Aquino, the country ranked 95th in Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, which ranks countries by their perceived levels of public sector corruption. This ranking represented a 39-place improvement from the 139th ranking the country received the year Aquino assumed office in 2010.

In the Heritage Foundation's 2015 Economic Freedom Index, which counts the rule of law and regulatory efficiency as key pillars, the Philippines ranked 47th. A marked improvement from its 85th rank in 2010.

The country also improved in the Global Enabling Trade Index, which measures market access, border administration, transport and communications infrastructure, and the business environment in that country. In this World Economic Forum and the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation published index, the Philippines, from 92nd in 2010, jumped to 64th by 2015.

Last but not least, the Philippines also improved from 85th in 2010 to 47th in 2015 in World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Index. This globally recognized report measures competitiveness based on twelve pillars that include the strength of institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic frameworks, health, education, efficient goods, labor, and financial markets, technology, and innovation.

On his passing earlier this year, business groups and policymakers alike paid tribute to the legacy of good governance is good economics that President Aquino left behind. "President Aquino bettered our lives by combining pro-people social policies — modernizing education, expanding cash transfers, for example — with relatively clean government. That meant taxes went to public services and infra, while foreign and local businesses were excited to make job-creating

investments," the Makati Business Club said in a statement.

In a statement from the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), the group said that "His (Aquino's) administration was marked by impressive economic growth, with four credit rating upgrades and a significant increase in foreign direct investments, aided by his focus on transparency and good governance."

"Although his administration had its fair share of challenges, the reforms he initiated in public infrastructure, the judiciary, education, health care, and social protections created an engine for progress. And he generated a new respect for the country on the world stage," MAP added.

In the Philippine Senate, legislators adopted a resolution expressing the chamber's profound sympathy and sincere condolences on the former president's death. Senate President Vicente Sotto III, who co-sponsored the measure, cited Aquino for anchoring his administration on the fight against corruption. "His reform agenda is to get rid of the culture of corruption to alleviate poverty for an equitable, progressive Philippines. Guided by this agenda, the country made tremendous economic growth beneficial to the nation," Sotto said.

## A DIGNIFIED FOREIGN POLICY

What further differentiates the Aquino and Duterte administrations is the significant reversal of a stronger foreign policy position vis-à-vis China to the capitulatory and defeatist policy of appeasement.

According to the account of De Castro (2017), the Aquino administration treaded in a balancing policy on China from 2011 to 2016. With this policy, it simultaneously promoted closer security cooperation with allies such as the US and other like-minded states.<sup>14</sup>



According to him: “This policy could be traced back to 2011 when President Aquino stood up to China’s expansive claim and heavy-handed behavior in the South China Sea. He ordered the AFP to focus on territorial defense; fostered deeper Philippine–US security arrangements; acquired American military equipment; and sought from Washington an unequivocal security guarantee under the 1951 MDT. The most significant offshoot of this foreign policy is the EDCA, which provides American forward-deployed forces strategic rotational presence in Philippine territory, as well as extensive access to Philippine military facilities.”<sup>15</sup>

The agreement that was forged to strategically manage China’s expansionist agenda in the South China Sea suffered an astounding reversal under President Duterte’s pronouncements and actions of appeasement, a foreign policy aimed at appeasing China in contrast to then-President Aquino’s balancing strategy. This was obvious in Duterte’s efforts to tap Chinese financial resources for several major infrastructure and investments projects in the Philippines and resort to bilateral negotiations with Beijing.<sup>16</sup>

Up against an Asian Goliath, the Aquino administration never delved into the war narrative and instead sought belligerent diplomatic solutions in accordance with international law and international treaties such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

From another account, Winston (2020) described the existing regional situation as follows:

*“As China’s perceived threat grew, Aquino became more assertive. After the Scarborough Shoal standoff in 2012 and his decision to take China to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the case, the Philippines vs. China, Aquino’s administration sought a balancing strategy vis-a-vis the United States. While*



*President Aquino challenged China in the international court, he created closer alliances with the United States, purchased American military equipment, and sought security guarantees based upon the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty.”<sup>17</sup>*

As public outcry to defend our national sovereignty and territorial integrity mounted, “the Philippines went to the International Court of Justice of arbitration and persisted in a trial that lasted for more than three years. China did not participate and did not agree with the outcome on the grounds that it had a historic right to the South China Sea.”<sup>18</sup>

On July 12, 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague released the ruling of the arbitral tribunal constituted under the UNCLOS on the case initiated by the Philippines in 2013 regarding China’s claims and activities in the South China Sea.<sup>19</sup> It then became part of international law, invalidating the nine-dash line claim by China, thereby granting a legal victory to the Philippines’ maritime claims in the South China Sea.

The Aquino administration’s feat in asserting our maritime rights and jurisdiction on international waters, specifically the West Philippine Sea, was the greatest legal victory that a small state could have against China.

## CONCLUSION

The aforementioned condense accounts of the Aquino administration’s achievements forwarded in this paper focused on three themes, namely, ‘principled leadership,’ ‘good governance is good economics,’ and ‘a dignified foreign policy’.

As these three themes are the top concerns of Filipinos today, over five years into his successor’s term, it only makes sense to extract valuable

lessons from Aquino’s leadership, governance, economic, and foreign policy successes.

Indeed, principled leadership under the Aquino administration was characterized by the anti-corruption, transparency, and integrity postures. This commitment to good governance and its strong macroeconomic fundamentals also fueled the country’s economic resurgence. In terms of a dignified foreign policy, the balancing act by the Aquino administration was far less problematic and compromising and saw through an effective countermeasure against China’s expansionist aggression in the South China Sea.

The underlying trait among these successes, it seems, was a clear commitment and genuine effort from President Aquino and his administration to deliver the reforms and promises made during the campaign and throughout the presidency, while simultaneously seeking to uphold democratic principles of transparency, accountability, participation, and the rule-of-law throughout the process.

The administration was by no means perfect. However, taking into consideration the Philippines’ economic improvement, the global recognition of the country’s improving governance, and the landmark arbitral victory against China, the Aquino administration clearly did a lot right.

That said, what this paper does not venture into is an in-depth comparative analysis of the approaches Aquino and Duterte Presidency. After all, President Duterte has still not completed his term. As of writing, Duterte still has eleven months in office and has just recently delivered his sixth and final State of the Nation Address SONA.

And while a full analysis must wait, President Duterte’s recent SONA message alone highlights some key differences in the two administration policies and priorities. For instance, President Duterte’s address highlighted reforms in the security sector and the war on illegal drugs, criminality, and insurgency; however, it set aside the Philippines’ hard-won Hague Arbitral Ruling on the West Philippine Sea.

Duterte also spoke about improving social services in terms of health and financial assistance for the poor, but with the backdrop of an ineffectively controlled pandemic and one of the world’s worst-hit economies.

He also highlighted anti-corruption achievements, such as the Presidential Anti-Corruption Commission, only to say later on, “But corruption, it’s endemic in government. You cannot stop corruption. Nobody can stop corruption unless you overturn the government completely. If I were the next President, if you think there’s really a need for you to change everybody in the system, then you declare martial law and fire everybody and allow the new generation to come in to work for the government. *Eh kung hindi mo ganunin, walang mangyari. Nandiyan* - it’s in the system.”

In a nutshell, it can be gleaned that Filipinos continue to be concerned with governance, economy, and security issues and that Presidents, as a rule, make it their business of addressing them. However, by contrasting the practices, policies, and results of the Duterte administration with those of the Aquino administration, we can extract valuable lessons for current and future leaders to build back better through the preservation and promotion of a democratic way of life, notably, integrity and decency in government, public participation, transparency, and social and institutional reforms.

ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Homes, R. (2021). “Concerns that matter.” Presented in the vTHD entitled “State of Philippine Governance: A Five-Year Review of the Duterte Presidency” organized by Stratbase ADR Institute, 28 July 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Manhit, D. (2021). “Governance prospects for 2022 and beyond.” Upcoming commentary in inquirer.net.

<sup>3</sup> Manhit, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Grainer M., (2015). Listening To The Public: A Citizen Scorecard In The Philippines, 2010-2014. Princeton University Case study. Retrieved from [https://successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/sites/successfulsocieties/files/Philippines%20Listening%20to%20the%20Public\\_ToU\\_1.pdf](https://successfulsocieties.princeton.edu/sites/successfulsocieties/files/Philippines%20Listening%20to%20the%20Public_ToU_1.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Magno, F.A., (2015). Public Participation and Fiscal Transparency in the Philippines. Global initiative for Fiscal Transparency. Retrieved from <https://www.fiscal-transparency.net/>

<sup>6</sup> Senate of the Philippines, (2011). K to 12: The Key to Quality Education?. Policy Brief in Senate in Economic Planning Office. Retrieved from <https://legacy.senate.gov.ph/publications/PB%202011-02%20-%20K%20to%2012%20The%20Key%20to%20Quality.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Sergio, M.S., (2012). K-12 Education Reform: Problems and Prospects. Presidential Assistant for Research and Advocacy Ateneo de Naga University. Retrieved from <https://www.adnu.edu.ph/urc/download/p070p080.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Diola, M. (2018). “Chapter 3: Human Development and Poverty Reduction,” pp. 29-70, In Villamejor-Mendoza, et. al. (2018). The Performance Of The Aquino Ad-

ministration (2010-2016): An Assessment. University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance. Retrieved from <https://ncpag.upd.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/PerfromanceOfAquinoAdmin.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> Cuaresma (2018). “Economic Development CLUSTER ASSESSMENT” (pp. 71-106). In Villamejor-Mendoza, et. al. (2018). The Performance Of The Aquino Administration (2010-2016): An Assessment. University of the Philippines National College of Public Administration and Governance. Retrieved from <https://ncpag.upd.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/PerfromanceOfAquinoAdmin.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Cuaresma, 2018.

<sup>11</sup> Cuaresma, 2018.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.bworldonline.com/a-look-back-at-the-pnoy-administration/>

<sup>13</sup> Araullo, et al. vs. Aquino, et al. (SC, 2015) The Aftermath of the DAP. Department of Budget and Management. Retrieved from <https://www.dbm.gov.ph/wpcontent/uploads/Executive%20Summary/2016/C1a.%20Aftermath%20of%20DAP%20updated.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> De Castro, R.C., (2017). The Duterte Administration's appeasement policy on China and the crisis in the Philippine–US alliance. Philippine Political Science Journal. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1080/01154451.2017.1412161>

<sup>15</sup> De Castro, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> De Castro, 2017.

<sup>17</sup> Winston, R. A., (2020). Philippine Hedging Strategy in the South China

Sea: an Analysis of Approaches by President Benigno Aquino III and President Rodrigo Duterte. Master's thesis, Harvard Extension School.

<sup>18</sup> Winston, 2020.

<sup>19</sup> Campbell, C. & Salidjanova, N. 201. “South China Sea Arbitration Ruling: What Happened and What's Next?” U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, Issue Brief, retrieved from [https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/Issue%20Brief\\_South%20China%20Sea%20Arbitration%20Ruling%20What%20Happened%20and%20What%27s%20Next071216.pdf](https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/Research/Issue%20Brief_South%20China%20Sea%20Arbitration%20Ruling%20What%20Happened%20and%20What%27s%20Next071216.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Picture credit cover and back page : [cnnphilippines.com/life/culture/politics/2016/05/12/pnoy-presidency.html](http://cnnphilippines.com/life/culture/politics/2016/05/12/pnoy-presidency.html)

<sup>21</sup> Picture credit page 2: [bworldonline.com/a-look-back-at-the-pnoy-administration/.jpg](http://bworldonline.com/a-look-back-at-the-pnoy-administration/.jpg)

<sup>22</sup> Picture credit page 4: [guimbawaterdistrict.gov.ph](http://guimbawaterdistrict.gov.ph)

<sup>23</sup> Picture credit page 8: [gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/370674/pnoy-phl-not-shifting-to-a-more-militaristic-position-on-sea-row-with-china/story/?related](http://gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/370674/pnoy-phl-not-shifting-to-a-more-militaristic-position-on-sea-row-with-china/story/?related) and [bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-03-07/aquino-in-6-5-billion-push-for-philippine-infrastructure-legacy](http://bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-03-07/aquino-in-6-5-billion-push-for-philippine-infrastructure-legacy)





ABOUT

Jaime M. Jimenez, Ph.D.

is the Deputy Executive Director for Research and the Head of the Editorial Board of the Stratbase ADR Institute. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Political Science and Master's Degree in Philippine Studies at De La Salle University. He earned his Doctorate Degree in Southeast Asia Studies at the National University of Singapore in 2003.



Francesco 'Paco' J. Pangalangan

is the Executive Director of the Stratbase ADR Institute. He specializes in public policy, policy advocacy, and strategic communications. Paco is a graduate of the University of the Philippines with a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration and a Master's degree in Technology Management. He also holds a Master of Science degree in Public Administration from Universiteit Leiden in the Netherlands.



STRATBASE ADR INSTITUTE

is an independent international and strategic research organization with the principal goal of addressing the issues affecting the Philippines and East Asia

The Financial Tower  
6794 Ayala Avenue, Makati City  
Philippines 1226

V 8921751  
F 8921754

[www.stratbase.ph](http://www.stratbase.ph)

