

POLÍTIKA

CRITICAL ISSUES OF PHILIPPINE POLITY

2ND QUARTER



Philippine Political Economy at the Outset of the Marcos Jr. Presidency

The May 9 elections are considered legitimate and credible, despite the results overwhelming and provoking different political expectations and aspirations. Marcos, Jr.'s inaugural address talked about themes of unity, the potential of the Filipino people, the golden-age nostalgia for the previous Marcos Sr. regime, and an independent foreign policy.

Philippine Foreign Relations and Maritime Framework

A clear pivot is being made not only in favor of promoting the country's strategic interests in the West Philippine Sea, but also in overcoming the attitude of defeatism and capitulation with respect to foreign policy, where 9 out of 10 Filipinos agree that the incoming Marcos Administration must assert our rights in the West Philippine Sea.



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OVERVIEW

The second quarter of 2022 represents a critical juncture in Philippine politics. While it formally signifies the end of President Rodrigo Duterte's erratic and populist leadership, now Filipinos have to cope with, balance the outlook on, and welcome the presidency of Ferdinand "Bongbong" R. Marcos Jr.

POLITIKA's issue for the Second Quarter of 2022 presents a portrait of Philippine political economy that the Marcos Jr. presidency has to deal with. It discusses the different contexts on the national, electoral, and multidimensional levels, including most urgent national and personal concerns like poverty and hunger. It talks about surveys conducted by Social Weather Stations and PULSE Asia as these apply to pressing national issues and sentiments.

Further, this publication provides accounts on world competitiveness and corruption. It also analyzes President Marcos Jr.'s inaugural address.

In the second and final section, the Stratbase ADR Institute presents a foreign and security policy agenda. It urges the current administration to consider experts' policy recommendations. It also delves into a Philippine maritime framework that will be important in dealing with regional and international power shifts.

This section tackles the likely stance of President Marcos Jr. on our territorial right, on the challenges and opportunities for the U.S.-Philippines alliance, and on forging a Philippine maritime framework.

In the last part, results of the latest survey of PULSE Asia -- on the public's perception of the issue of the West Philippine Sea -- is presented. This includes the assertion of our rights, investing in the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Coast Guard to protect our territory and marine resources in our Exclusive Economic Zone, the forming of alliances, and the trust ratings of countries.

I. PHILIPPINE POLITICAL ECONOMY AT THE OUTSET OF THE MARCOS JR. PRESIDENCY

The Duterte administration will go down in the annals of Philippine history as the government that witnessed astounding record highs in terms of foreign debt, joblessness, hunger, inflation, and poverty rate; and record lows in terms of economic growth, foreign investments, and remittances. Despite these, President Duterte's approval and performance ratings remained very high even toward the end of his term.

National Context

In the waning days of his administration, President Duterte was still caught up between the fantastic perception of his performance and the actual achievements of government in relation to the existing socioeconomic conditions of the population.

In as much as the ratings of the outgoing president were remarkably "good" as revealed by the PULSE Asia and SWS surveys, attention on such ratings would have been more relevant if it focused on the perceived performance of the Duterte administration on pressing national issues and on Filipinos' urgent personal concerns.

As provided by the latest PULSE Asia survey (June 24 – 27), the approval rating of the national administration is average when it comes to fighting corruption in government (61%) and stopping the destruction and abuse of our environment (50%).

Memorable in the aspect of corruption were the PHILHEALTH and Pharmally Pharmaceutical Corporation scandals and the irregularities in the "ayuda" or social amelioration program.

Further, the much less-desirable ratings acquired by the national administration pertain to the most urgent concerns of the population, i.e., increasing the pay of workers (56%), creating more jobs (52%), and defending the integrity of Philippine territory against foreigners (51%).

Notably, the lowest ratings of the administration directly relate to addressing the top-of-mind concerns by the population, i.e., controlling inflation (30%) and reducing the poverty of many Filipinos (37%). It is also in these two national issues that the Duterte administration got the highest disapproval ratings, respectively at 44% and 32% ratings. See Table 1

Nevertheless, the said good ratings of the national administration in selected national issues and its worse approval ratings can further be contextualized if the people's perception of their most urgent concerns are considered.

According to the same survey, controlling inflation is the most urgent national concern for more than 5 out of 10 Filipinos or 57%. Meanwhile, 45% cited increasing the pay of workers and reducing the poverty of many Filipinos are the second top-of-mind concerns, and creating more jobs (29%) and fighting graft and corruption (20%) are the third urgent national concerns. See Table 2

Table 1
Comparative Ratings of the National Administration on Selected National Issues: **PHILIPPINES**
In Percent
(March and June 2022)



PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Selected National Issues	Approval		Change*	Undecided		Change*	Disapproval		Change*
	Mar 22 (A)	Jun 22 (B)	Jun 22 - Mar 22 (B-A)	Mar 22 (C)	Jun 22 (D)	Jun 22 - Mar 22 (D-C)	Mar 22 (E)	Jun 22 (F)	Jun 22 - Mar 22 (F-E)
Fighting graft and corruption in government	51	61	+10	27	25	-3	22	15	-7
Stopping the destruction and abuse of our environment	54	50	+5	32	27	-5	14	14	0
Increasing the pay of workers	45	56	+11	30	26	-4	25	17	-8
Creating more jobs	44	52	+8	36	32	-4	21	16	-5
Defending the integrity of Philippine territory against foreigners	48	51	+3	32	32	0	20	17	-3
Reducing the poverty of many Filipinos	36	37	+1	32	31	-1	32	32	0
Controlling inflation	28	30	+2	28	26	-2	44	44	0

Table 2
Most Urgent National Concerns, Overall: **PHILIPPINES**
In Percent/Multiple Response, up to 3 allowed
(June 24 - 27, 2022)



PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Base, Total Interviews, 100%								
NATIONAL CONCERNS	RP	LOCATION			CLASS			
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
Controlling inflation	57	67	46	62	69	48	58	62
Increasing the pay of workers	45	47	43	52	43	43	46	46
Reducing the poverty of many Filipinos	45	47	43	52	43	43	46	46
Creating more jobs	29	31	32	26	23	19	30	29
Fighting graft and corruption in government	20	23	22	22	15	29	20	15
Enforcing the law on all, whether influential or ordinary people	15	11	17	18	13	22	15	11
Fighting criminality	14	12	14	17	15	10	15	14
Promoting peace in the country	14	12	17	13	10	24	13	9
Providing assistance / subsidy to those who lost their livelihood and jobs because of the COVID-19 pandemic	14	13	12	18	14	5	15	13
Addressing the problem of involuntary hunger	12	11	10	17	14	6	12	22
Reducing the amount of taxes paid	9	8	13	2	5	12	8	10
Stopping the destruction and abuse of our environment	7	10	9	5	5	7	6	16
Providing support to small entrepreneurs to restore their businesses	7	8	8	6	7	15	7	4
Defending the integrity of Philippine territory against foreigners	7	5	10	4	6	16	6	4
Controlling the spread of COVID-19	7	7	9	4	5	6	7	5
Protecting the welfare of OFWs	5	3	3	4	10	2	5	3
Preparing to face any kind of terrorism	3	3	3	4	4	3	4	2

The Electoral Context

The May 9 elections overwhelmed the people and provoked different political expectations and aspirations. Still, election results were considered legitimate and credible. The generally peaceful conduct and widely accepted results of the said elections represent another improvement for Philippine democracy.

In terms of general standards, the public perception on the presence of cheating, the speed of counting in COMELEC, and the credibility of results were looked into by the PULSE Asia Inc. In the latest survey conducted June 24 – 27, 39% of respondents said that there is “Less cheating now.” This national median is almost the same with those coming from the NCR, Balance Luzon, Class D, and Class E. However, Visayan respondents registered lower at 29%, while Mindanao respondents registered higher at 47%. Class ABC registered at 44%.

For the counting of votes, 86% say that it is “Faster now.” Respondents from the NCR and the Visayas registered at 90%, while those from the Balance Luzon and Mindanao respectively registered at 83% and 85%. Under the class groups, Class ABC registered a much higher rate of 96%, while Classes D and E, respectively, registered at 84% and 87%.

As to the credibility of results, 67% say that they are “More credible now.” The NCR and Mindanao respondents registered higher at 77% and 78%, while the Visayas registered at 67% also and Balance Luzon registered lower at 59%. For the class category, their responses averaged at 65%, with Class ABC registering at 65%, Class D at 68%, and Class E at 62%. See Table 3

Table 3
Comparing 2022 Elections with 2016 Elections Based on Standards: PHILIPPINES
In Percent
(June 24 - 27, 2022)



PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Base: Total Interviews, 100%

In accordance with the following bases or standards, overall, how would you compare this election of May 2022 with the previous May 2016 elections? Let us begin with (STANDARD). Would you say that this May 2022 elections is ... [SHOWCARD?]

RP	LOCATION				CLASS			
	NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E	
PRESENCE OF CHEATING								
More cheating now	5	9	3	6	6	4	5	6
Less cheating now	39	40	40	29	47	44	38	40
Same as before with rampant cheating	7	4	7	9	8	8	7	6
Same as before with little cheating	16	7	9	31	22	8	16	26
Can't say	33	39	42	25	17	36	34	23
SPEED OF COUNTING OF VOTES IN COMELEC								
Faster now	86	90	83	90	85	94	84	87
Slower now	2	4	2	0	1	1	2	3
As fast as before	9	5	9	8	14	2	11	8
As slow as before	0.2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Can't say	3	1	6	2	0	3	3	1
CREDIBILITY OF RESULTS								
More credible now	67	77	59	67	78	65	68	62
Less credible now	6	7	9	5	1	11	5	6
As credible as before	18	9	19	20	19	15	18	20
Not credible as before	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	4
Can't say	7	5	12	6	0	7	7	7

Q26. Batay sa mga sumusunod na pamantayan o “standards” sa pangkabuuan, paano po ninyo ikukumpara ang eleksiyong ito ng Mayo 2022 sa nakaraang eleksiyon ng Mayo 2016? Simulan po natin sa (STANDARD). Masasabi po ba ninyong ang eleksiyong ito ng Mayo 2022 ay (SHOWCARD)?
a. Pagkakaroon ng dayaan b. Bilangan ng boto sa COMELEC sa pagka-Presidente, Bise-Presidente, Senador, Party-List Groups at mga Lokal na Posisyon c. Pagiging kapanipaniwala ng resulta

Comparing the credibility of the recently concluded elections with that of 2016, the national median is higher by +4% (67% less 63%). While the same is reflected by the NCR (+10%), Balance Luzon (+4%), and Mindanao (+6%), the Visayas registered slightly lower at (-2%). In the class category, Class ABC (+6%) and Class (+5%) also registered higher, while Class E reflected a -2% net response. See Table 4

Table 4
Standards of the May 2016 / May 2022 Elections, Credibility of Results: PHILIPPINES
In Percent
(July 2016 and June 2022)

PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Base: Total Interviews, 100%

INTRO: In accordance with the following bases or standards, overall, how would you compare this election of May 2016 / May 2022 with the previous elections? Let us begin with (STANDARD). Would you say that this May 2016 / May 2022 elections is ... ?

STANDARDS OF THE MAY 2016 / MAY 2022 ELECTIONS	RP	LOCATION				CLASS			
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E	
CREDIBILITY OF RESULTS									
More credible now	June 2022	67	77	59	67	78	65	68	62
	July 2016	63	67	55	69	71	59	63	65
Less credible now	June 2022	6	7	9	5	1	11	5	6
	July 2016	9	9	13	7	4	15	9	8
As credible as before	June 2022	18	9	19	20	19	15	18	20
	July 2016	20	16	23	17	20	16	20	22
Not credible as before	June 2022	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	4
	July 2016	2	3	3	1	1	4	2	2
Can't say	June 2022	7	5	12	6	0	7	7	7
	July 2016	5	5	5	5	4	6	5	3

Q. Batay sa mga sumusunod na pamantayan o "standards" sa pangkabuuan, paano po ninyo ikukumpara ang eleksiyong ito ng Mayo 2016 / Mayo 2022 sa mga nakaraang eleksyon? Simulan po natin sa (STANDARD). Masasabi po ba ninyong ang eleksiyong ito ng Mayo 2016 / Mayo 2022 ay... ? (SHOWCARD) c. Pagiging kapanipaniwala ng resulta

Table 5
Trust Ratings of the 2022 Election Results: PHILIPPINES
In Percent
(June 24 - 27, 2022)

PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Please indicate how big or small your trust is that the results of the 2022 elections were accurate and credible. Would you say this is...?

(Base: Total Interviews, 100%)

	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
BIG TRUST	82	84	73	85	96	79	82	81
Very big	27	23	16	22	54	19	28	25
Big	55	61	57	63	42	60	54	56
CANNOT SAY IF BIG OR SMALL	14	11	22	10	4	12	15	12
SMALL TRUST / NONE	4	5	5	5	0	9	3	7
Small	4	4	5	5	0	9	2	6
Very small/None	0.3	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

(Base: Those who did vote last May 2022 elections, 93%)

BIG TRUST	83	84	74	86	96	81	83	80
Very big	28	25	17	22	53	20	30	24
Big	55	59	57	64	42	61	54	57
CANNOT SAY IF BIG OR SMALL	13	10	21	8	4	9	14	12
SMALL TRUST / NONE	4	6	6	5	0	10	3	7
Small	4	5	5	5	0	10	3	6
Very small/None	0.4	1	0	0	0	0	0	1

Q31. Pakisabi kung gaano kalaki o kaliit ang inyong pagtitiwala na ang naging resulta ng eleksyon ng 2022 ay tama at kapani-paniwala? Masasabi ba ninyo na ito ay... (SHOWCARD) Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding off or to Don't Know and Refuse responses.

Given that the May 9 election involved less cheating and the faster counting of votes, and that the results are more credible, the trust rating of the 2022 election results garnered a BIG TRUST rating of 82%, with “Very big trust” at 27% and “Big trust” at 55%.


Those who cannot say if they have a big or small trust registered at 14% and those with “Small” trust registered at only 4%. See Table 5

Most Urgent National and Personal Concerns

According to the same PULSE Asia survey, the top ten most urgent national concerns in the mind of the Filipinos are predominantly economic in nature.

The top-of-mind concern is “controlling inflation,” where 57% or one in every two Filipinos is worried about the high prices of commodities. The next concerns are “increasing the pay of workers (45%) and “reducing the poverty of many Filipinos” (33%). The third concerns are “creating more jobs” (29%) and “fighting graft and corruption in government” (20%). The fourth group of concerns pertains to “Enforcing the law on all, whether influential or ordinary people” (15%), “fighting criminality” (14%), “promoting peace in the country” (14%), “providing assistance / subsidy to those who lost their livelihood and jobs because of the COVID-19 pandemic” (14%), and “addressing the problem of involuntary hunger” (12%). See Table 6

Table 6
Most Urgent National Concerns, Overall: PHILIPPINES
In Percent / Multiple Response, up to 3 allowed
(June 24 - 27, 2022)



Base, Total Interviews, 100%

NATIONAL CONCERNS	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
Controlling inflation	57	67	46	62	69	48	58	62
Increasing the pay of workers	45	47	43	52	43	43	46	46
Reducing the poverty of many Filipinos	33	30	34	26	41	31	34	35
Creating more jobs	29	31	32	26	23	19	30	29
Fighting graft and corruption in government	20	23	22	22	15	29	20	15
Enforcing the law on all, whether influential or ordinary people	15	11	17	18	13	22	15	11
Fighting criminality	14	12	14	17	15	10	15	14
Promoting peace in the country	14	12	17	13	10	24	13	9
Providing assistance / subsidy to those who lost their livelihood and jobs because of the COVID-19 pandemic	14	13	12	18	14	5	15	13
Addressing the problem of involuntary hunger	12	11	10	17	14	6	12	22

Sa mga sumusunod na isyung pambansa, pakisabi ang hanggang tatlong isyung dapat aksyunan agad ng papasok na administrasyon ni Presidente Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. Maaari kayong magbanggit ng iba pang wala sa listahan. Alin po ang unang isyung dapat aksyunan agad ng papasok na administrasyon? Ang pangalawa? Ang pangatlo?

As the economic nature of most urgent national concerns has been consistently shown in the past surveys, the PULSE Asia survey also reveals the predominance of economic concerns on the individual level.

Sixty-six percent of respondents say that being healthy and avoiding illnesses is their top urgent personal concern, while 47% say it is having a secure and well-paying job and having enough to eat every day. Forty-

six percent are concerned with being able to provide schooling for their children. The next top concern pertains to having some savings (39%), having their own house and lot (29%), and avoiding being a victim of any serious crime (29%). See Table 7

Table 7
Most Urgent Personal Concerns, Overall: **PHILIPPINES**
In Percent / Multiple Response, up to 3 allowed
(June 24 - 27, 2022)



PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Base, Total Interviews, 100%								
PERSONAL CONCERNS	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
To stay healthy and avoid illnesses	66	72	66	70	58	88	63	58
To have a secure and well-paying job or source of income	47	48	47	41	52	28	52	43
At least to be able to have enough to eat every day	47	40	49	49	46	51	44	59
To finish schooling or to be able to provide schooling for our children	46	43	48	51	41	41	46	55
To be able to have some savings	37	36	35	35	43	34	39	26
To have my own house and lot	29	30	26	31	31	29	29	28
To avoid being a victim of any serious crime	29	32	29	24	28	30	28	32

Social Political and Economic Contexts

The mounting social political and economic demands from the various sectors of society emanate from the following national conditions: 1) the need to revive a devastated economy; 2) urgency of health care and social protection; 3) instigation of reforms in the legal and regulatory environment to entice domestic and foreign investments and create more jobs; 4) development of alternative schemes or arrangements in the innovative implementation of infrastructure projects; 5) preparation and strengthening of the digital foundations with the growing importance of the online world; 6) acculturation of policy makers with evidence-based decision-making; and 7) engagement of the private sector and civil society in inclusive and participatory governance.

The pandemic consequences and mismanagement, the still-burdensome fuel prices and threats to food security borne by the Russia-Ukraine war, the economic slowdown in China, and the global threat of recession have ultimately affected the poor, marginalized, and vulnerable population.

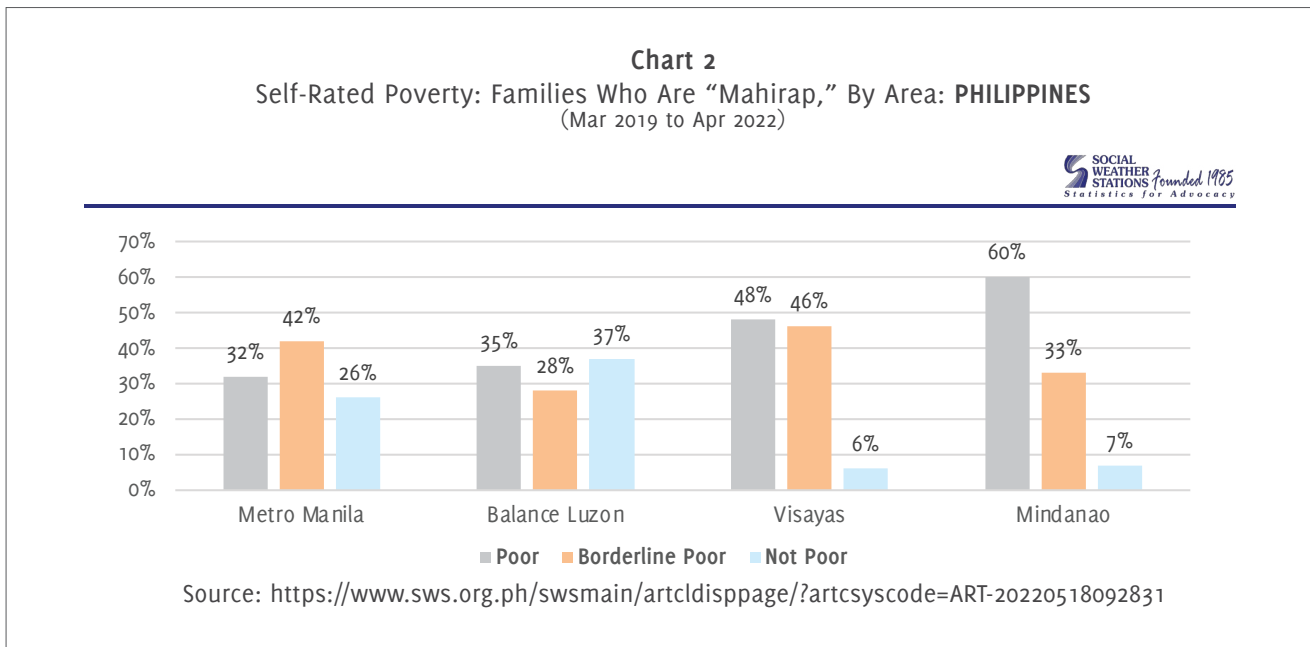
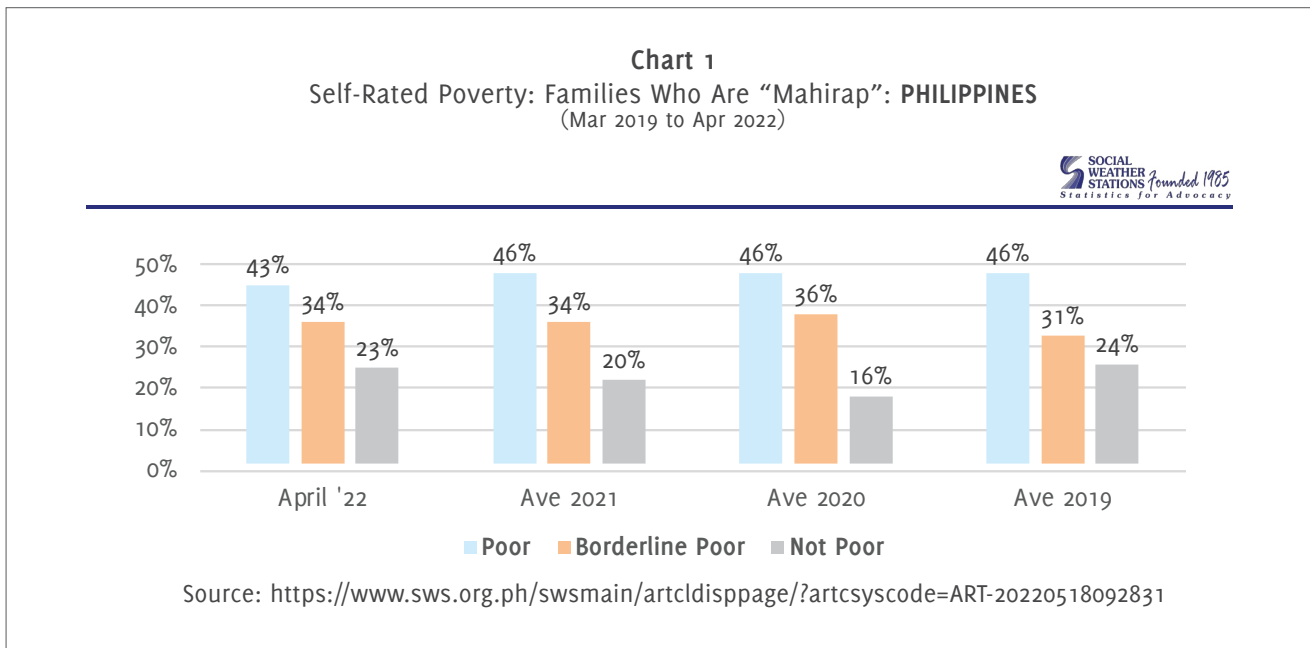
Self-Rated Poverty

The primary indicator that describes the socioeconomic situation of the population is poverty. The act of rating themselves as poor or not poor is indicative of the living conditions of the people.

The SWS national survey of April 19-27 showed that 43% of Filipino families rated themselves as Mahirap or Poor while 34% of the families said that they are Borderline Poor (by placing themselves on a horizontal line dividing Poor and Not Poor) and 23% rated themselves as Hindi Mahirap or Not Poor. See Chart 1

Moreover, it should be noted that despite the similarity in the number of self-rated poor families in December 2021, the April 2022 number is greater than .2 million.

In Mindanao and Metro Manila, while a rise in the number of self-rated poor families, respectively, registered at 60% (from 43%) and 32% (from 25%), a decrease is seen in the Visayas (from 59% to 48%) and in Balance Luzon (from 41% to 35%).



For the Borderline Poor, the Visayas registered an increase (from 33% to 46%), while a decrease was felt in Mindanao (from 48% to 33%), in Balance Luzon from 34% to 28%, and in Metro Manila (from 47% to 42%).

And for the Not Poor, the numbers rose from 25% to 37% in Balance Luzon, while a downward trend was seen in the Visayas (from 8% to 6%), in Mindanao (from 9% to 7%), and in Metro Manila (from 28% to 26%). See Chart 2

In another survey conducted by PULSE Asia Inc. on poverty self-rating, June 2022 data show that in the Philippines, 6% are “Very Poor” and 63% are “Poor”; while 22% are “On the line” and 8% are “Well-off / Wealthy.”

As to the poverty thresholds for June 2022, the overall monthly median income of PhP20,000 indicates that a Philippine household is not poor. But for NCR, the median is PhP25,000 for the household, PhP23,000 to not very poor or poor, PhP20,000 to be on the line, and PhP25,000 to be well-off or wealthy.

In terms of Medium Food Poverty Thresholds, a monthly income of PhP10,000 is the median in order not

to be food poor or on the line, while it is PhP12,000 for the wealthy or well-off Philippine household. In the NCR, PhP10,000 is the median, while PhP15,000 is for wealthy or well-off. See Table 8

Table 8
Economic Indicators: **PHILIPPINES** and **NCR**
(November 2020 and June 2022)



PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Economic Indicators	Philippines		NCR	
	Nov20	June22	Nov20	June22
POVERTY SELF-RATING				
Very Poor	8%	6%	2%	6%
Poor	61	63	51	47
On the line	22	22	31	22
Well-off / Wealthy	8	9	16	26
MEDIUM OVERALL POVERTY THRESHOLDS (in pesos)				
Total Household	15,000	20,000	18,000	25,000
Very Poor / Poor	15,000	20,000	15,000	23,000
On the line	15,000	20,000	15,000	20,000
Well-off / Wealthy	20,000	20,000	25,000	25,000
MEDIUM FOOD POVERTY THRESHOLDS				
Total Household	8,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Very Poor / Poor	8,000	10,000	9,000	10,000
On the line	10,000	10,000	8,000	10,000
Well-off / Wealthy	10,000	15,000	15,000	12,000

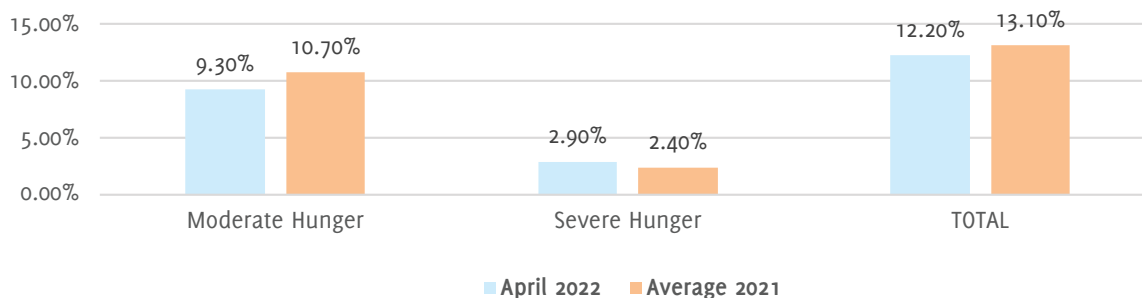
Hunger

Among many other indicators, self-rated poverty can be derived from the experience of involuntary hunger, which is beyond the individual’s control. As a pandemic consequence, not having food to eat is attributable to the loss of jobs and income, and lockdowns that are heavily geared toward social control and people’s immobility.

In the same SWS survey, 12.2% of Filipino families, or an estimated 3.1 million, experienced involuntary hunger. This refers to the situation of “being hungry and not having anything to eat, at least once in the past three months.”

Chart 2
Total, Moderate, and Severe Hunger: **PHILIPPINES**
(Jul 1998 to Apr 2022)

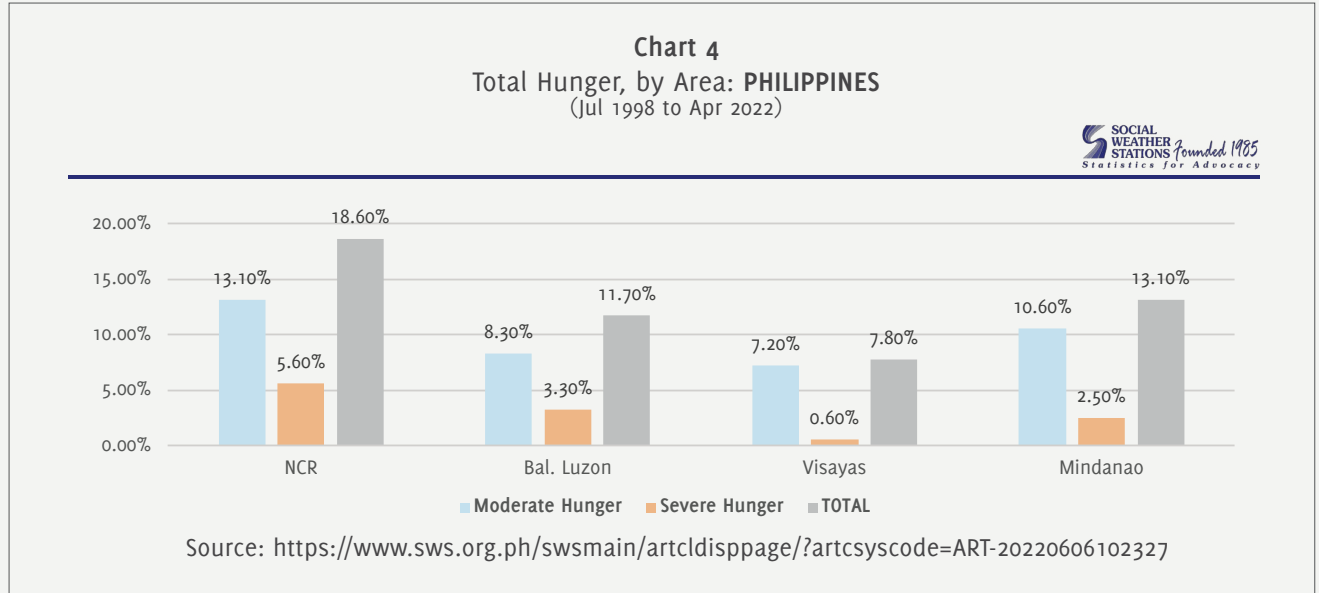
SOCIAL
WEATHER
STATIONS *founded 1985*
Statistics for Advocacy



Source: <https://www.sws.org.ph/swsmain/artcldisppage/?artcsyscode=ART-20220606102327>

Though this rate is only 0.4 points above the 11.8% (estimated 3.0 million families) in December 2021, the marginal rise of 2.2 points in comparison with September 2021 data of 10% hunger rate is noticeable. This translates into an additional hunger incidence for an estimated 2.5 million families.

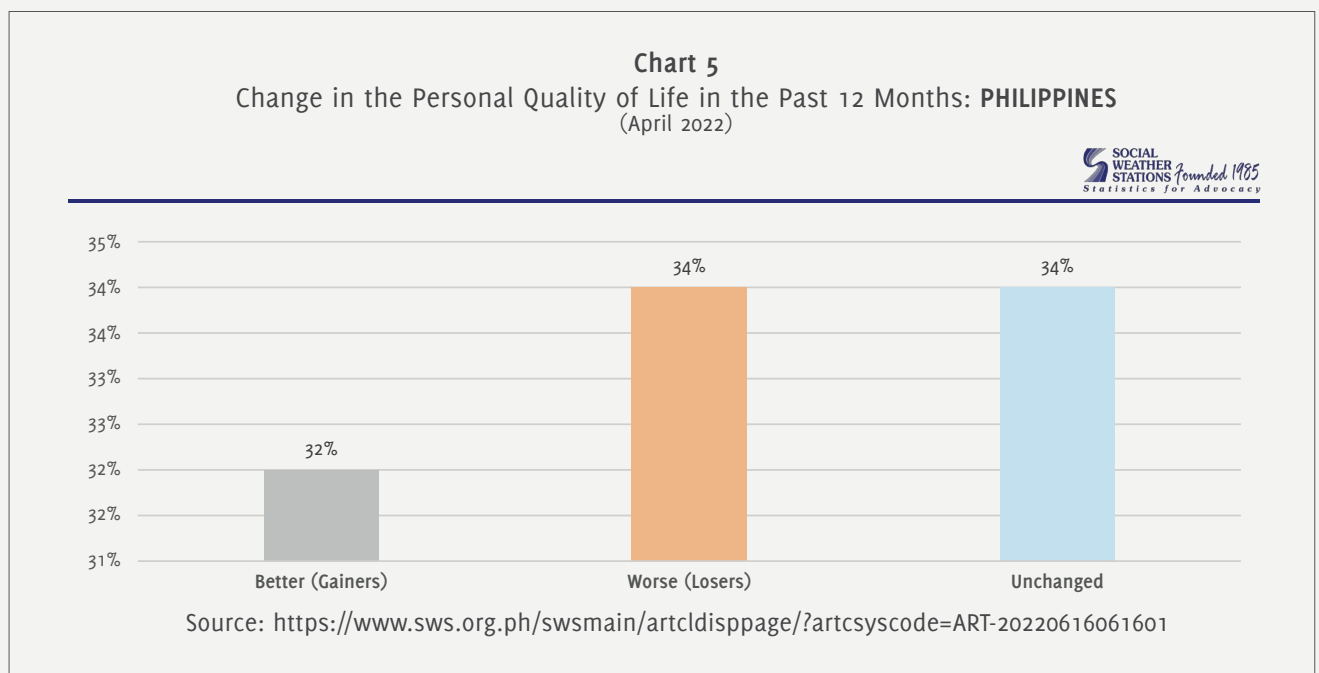
The increase in hunger is highest in Metro Manila with 18.6% of families, followed by Mindanao at 13.1%, Balance Luzon (or Luzon outside Metro Manila) at 11.7%, and the Visayas at 7.8%. See Chart 4



Being Better or Worse

How things unfolded for the population is primarily demonstrated by their perception of their condition of being better or worse compared to the previous year.

The SWS survey of April 19-27, 2022 revealed that 34% of adult Filipinos said that their quality of life was worse than it was 12 months before (termed by SWS as “Losers”), 32% saying it got better (“Gainers”), and 34% saying it was the same (“Unchanged”). Although this is an improvement, it pales in comparison with the pre-pandemic level in December 2019. See Chart 5



Optimism / Pessimism

With regard to the degree of optimism and pessimism, 44% of adult Filipinos said that in the next 12 months their quality-of-life will improve (termed by SWS as “Optimists”) while 39% said it will stay the same (“No Change”) and 4% said it will worsen (“Pessimists”) in the next twelve months.

It should also be noted that personal optimism is felt among the gainers, non-hungry families and the self-rated not poor. See Chart 6

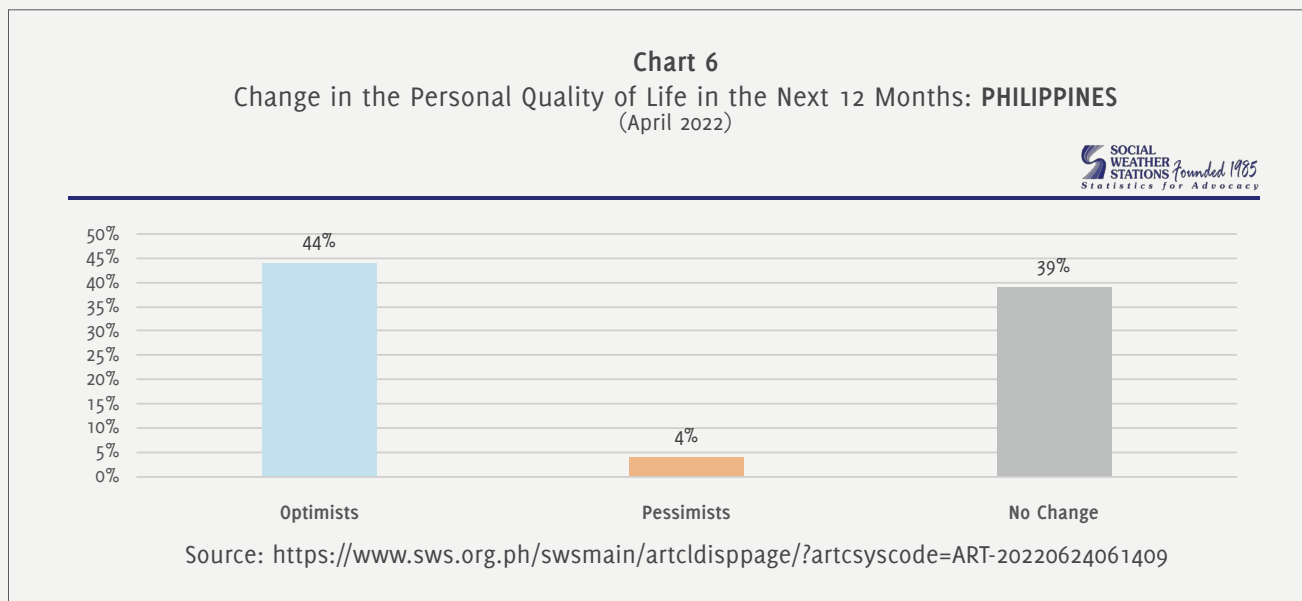


Table 6
Quality of Life Indicators: PHILIPPINES
In Percent
(June 24 - 27, 2022)

PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

If you compare the quality of life of most Filipinos now with that of the last 12 months, would you say that the quality of life of most Filipinos is ...?
(Base: Total Interviews, 100%)

RP	LOCATION				CLASS			
	NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E	
Gainers (Better now)	33	40	37	25	26	41	33	19
Same as last year	28	26	28	27	33	21	30	25
Loser (Worse now)	39	34	35	48	41	38	36	56
Net Gainers*	-6	+6	+2	-23	-15	+3	3-	-37

In your opinion, what will be the quality of life of most Filipinos in the coming 12 months? Would you say that it would be ...?
(Base: Total Interviews, 100%)

Optimist (Better than now)	68	73	74	44	71	74	68	62
Same as now	26	20	24	40	22	20	27	29
Pessimist (Worse than now)	6	7	1	15	7	6	5	9
Net Optimist**	+62	+66	+73	+29	+64	+68	+63	+53

Q4. Kung ikukumpara ang uri ng inyong pamumuhay ngayon sa nakaraang 12 buwan, masasabi ba ninyo na ang uri ng inyong pamumuhay ay...?
Q5. Maaari bang pakilinaaw itong inyong dating uri ng pamumuhay noong nakaraang 12 buwan na ikinukumpara ninyo sa ngayon? Ang dating uri ba ng inyong pamumuhay noong nakaraang 12 buwan na ikinukumpara ninyo sa ngayon ay...?
Q6. Sa inyong palagay, ano ang magiging uri ng inyong pamumuhay sa darating na 12 buwan? Maaasabi ba ninyo na ito ay...?
Q7. Kung ikukumpara ang uri ng pamumuhay ng karamihan ng Pilipino ngayon sa nakaraang 12 buwan, masasabi ba ninyo na ang uri ng pamumuhay ng karamihan ng Pilipino ay...?
Q8. Sa inyong opinyon, ano ang magiging uri ng pamumuhay ng karamihan ng Pilipino sa darating na 12 buwan? Maaasabi ba ninyo na ito ay...?

Notes:
(1) * NET GAINERS = % Gainers minus % Losers.
(2) ** NET OPTIMIST = % Optimist minus % Pessimist.
(3) Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding off.

Quite similar with these findings are the data from the June 24 – 27, 2022 survey of PULSE Asia. Accordingly, 33% say they are “Gainers or Better now” than the last 12 months, while 28% say life is “Same as last year” and 39% say life is “Worse now (Loser).”

For the Gainers, the highest were from the NCR (40%) and from Class ABC (41%) while for Losers, the highest were from Visayas (48%) and from Class C (56%). See Table 9

World Competitiveness

In terms of third-party studies looking at governments’ performances for the past five years, the improvement of the Philippine’s competitiveness on a global scale is all too apparent.

On 15 June 2022, the IMD World Competitiveness Center, Switzerland published the “World Competitiveness Ranking 2021.” Placed at 48th out of 64 countries, the Philippines rebounded from the 52nd place in June 2021. It’s regional ranking, however, showed no improvement from 2018 to the present.

Specific to the competitiveness environment, the country’s performance comprises of four (4) main components: Economic Performance (53rd from 57th), Government Efficiency (48th from 45th), Business Efficiency (39th from 37th), and Infrastructure (57th from 59th).

Economic Performance consists of Domestic Economy (48), International Trade (59), International Investment (42), Employment (19) and Prices (58). Government Efficiency covers Public Finance (51), Tax Policy (13), Institutional Framework (53), Business Legislation (52), and Societal Framework (50).

Business Efficiency comprises Productivity and Efficiency (56), Labor Market (15), Finance (41), and Management Practices (41), and Attitudes and Values (28). Infrastructure includes Basic Infrastructure (52), Technological Infrastructure (46), Scientific Infrastructure (52), Health and Environment (58), and Education (60).

The IMD competitiveness report further describes the country’s “Challenges in 2022” as follow: 1) Implementing effective post-pandemic economic recovery strategies while strengthening fiscal responsibility; 2) Regaining lost momentum in poverty reduction and inclusive economic development; 3) Promoting innovative governance and a smooth post-election transition of power; 4) Building resilient and future-ready health and education systems; and 5) Investing in sustainable infrastructure and reducing climate change vulnerability. (As provided by the Asian Institute of Management, Rizalino S. Navarro Policy Center for Competitiveness.)

The performance ratings of our country in terms of world competitiveness reflect three crucial implications with regard to the needed governance as well as economic reforms in the next administration. First, the Marcos Jr. administration should be able to establish a sensible legal and regulatory environment for the economy and business to prosper. As in the experience under the Duterte administration, a government that does not honor contracts and whimsically reneges on its obligations scares away investors and makes the business environment volatile.

Second, another telling factor against efficiency and competitiveness is corruption. Duterte’s strong-willed promise of eliminating corruption in a span of three to six months was exposed to be a mere promise that made the Filipino people hopeful for six years. And third, the much-hyped Build Build Build program was only able to make a slight dent in the infrastructure campaign to uplift our country’s competitiveness.

Corruption

IMD World Competitiveness Center says that to boost the country's competitiveness, "governments therefore need to provide an environment characterized by efficient infrastructures, institutions and policies that encourage sustainable value creation by the enterprises." It is in this regard that the never-ending struggle against corruption must be pursued.

Through the lens of three international indices, namely, The Corruption Perception Index, The Rule of Law, and the World Competitiveness Ranking, government's performance in terms of reducing or combating corruption is accordingly reviewed.

In essence, the first two indices describe a worsening in the incidence of corruption in the country. However, during roughly the same time frame, the Philippines concurrently improved its global competitiveness. Despite signing the United Nations Convention on Corruption (UNCAC) in 2003, the Philippines in more recent years has failed to deliver on its international commitments, with many provisions at best partially implemented. This is the government the Marcos administration will inherit – plagued by a culture of corruption, even as it displays a nascent desire to improve competitiveness.

Index 1 – Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index

Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index is perhaps the world's foremost resource on understanding corruption on a global scale. The index allows observers to track a country's progress, or lack thereof, in reducing corruption. In 2021, the Philippines was awarded a score of 33 points out of a possible 100, a sobering reflection of the country's perennial problem with corruption.

It is also important to notice that in addition to the low corruption rating, the Philippines was mentioned as one of the region's biggest decliners, down 5 points since 2014. Only Australia experienced a greater decline, dropping 12 points since 2012. In other words, not only has corruption in the Philippines always been an issue, it has also worsened over the last few years. While the Philippines has stagnated in its corruption response, two Southeast Asian neighbors found themselves in the most significant improvers list: Timor Leste and Myanmar. Significant steps have been undertaken by neighboring countries which have allowed them to reduce corruption, while the Philippines has thus far avoided implementing important reforms.

The Transparency International Corruption Perception Index touched on the proliferation of government corruption during the COVID-19 crisis. The Philippines was not spared from this trend. As uncovered by various journalistic investigations, the Philippine government awarded anomalous contracts worth billions of pesos to companies with little to no healthcare equipment manufacturing experience. Transparency International's index accurately portrays the Philippines as a country wherein private capture of government contracts has resulted in a persistent culture of corruption.

Index 2 – World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index

The World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index depicts a similar pattern to the Corruption Perception Index: year-on-year worsening of corruption. The Philippines' overall Rule of Law score dropped from 0.53 in 2015 to 0.46 in 2021. On a global scale, the Philippines in 2021 ranked 102nd out of 139 countries. The Rule of Law Index score considers issues such as Constraints on Government Power, Absence of Corruption, Open Government, Fundamental Rights, Order and Security, Regulatory Enforcement, Civil Justice, and Criminal Justice.

The Absence of Corruption component is of particular interest. According to the World Justice Project, this factor considers “three forms of corruption: bribery, improper influence by public or private interests, and misappropriation of public funds or other resources. These three forms of corruption are examined with respect to government officers in the executive branch, the judiciary, the military, police, and the legislature.” Based on this metric, the Philippines has consistently declined year-on-year from 2015 to 2021. In 2015, the country received a 0.49 score, and by 2021 this score has dropped to 0.44. With this score, the Philippines currently sits below both the global and regional average for Absence of Corruption.

The International Institute for Management Development’s World Competitiveness Ranking “analyzes and ranks countries according to how they manage their competencies to achieve long-term value creation.” Over the course of the last four years, the Philippines has slightly improved its competitive edge. In 2018, it ranked 50th out of 68 countries and by 2022, it was ranked 48th, with minor fluctuations during those years. Bucking the trend of the previously mentioned corruption ratings, the Philippines in this case has shown improvement rather than decline.

However, due to the relative nature of the rankings, it remains unclear whether this rise in ranking was caused by gains made by the Philippines or losses incurred by other countries. While the country can take encouragement from its rise in competitiveness rankings, regional peers such as Malaysia and Indonesia are still faring better. Despite improvements in overall competitiveness, the Philippines’ persistent corruption problem is a barrier to long-term, significant improvements in global standing.

Given the Philippines’ well-documented struggle to control corruption, the opportunities for such corruption to take place in the coming months are plentiful. Perhaps the most obvious example of a corruption risk is the formulation of a national fiscal budget. As the 19th Congress begins its session in July, it will be given the behemoth task of finalizing a national spending plan. Increased funds for discretionary use will surely increase ease of government corruption. Observers should pay attention in particular to government spending in infrastructure and COVID-19 response – recent history shows us these are areas of high corruption risk. Illegal smuggling of commodities such as rice and sugar in the face of a complicit Bureau of Customs will also likely grow as Filipinos seek cheap alternatives to expensive goods.

When understood alongside each other, the three rankings above portray the Philippines as a nation that has consistently failed to curtail corruption over the last few years. The Corruption Perception Index and the Rule of Law Index show not only stagnation in anti-corruption efforts, but a measurable worsening in the state of corruption. Improvements in the World Competitiveness Ranking may illustrate a current of productive government reforms that have taken place despite widespread corruption.

The incoming Marcos administration has inherited a government apparatus that is highly captured by vested interests. International rankings point in an unambiguous direction: corruption has consistently worsened year-on-year during the Duterte administration. In the absence of fundamental, far-reaching reforms, institutionalized corruption will continue to grow. Reversing the tide of increased government corruption will surely be one of the Marcos administration’s most challenging mandates.

The Inauguration

Prospective laws which aim to liberalize the economy and attract foreign investment present an opportunity for economic growth. The recently signed laws amending the Retail Trade Liberalization Act (RTLTA) and the Foreign Investments Act (FIA) will make it easier for a foreign entity to engage in retail trade by lowering minimum capital requirements and reducing equity requirements for small- and medium-sized foreign enterprises and promoting foreign investment through a better organization of the bureaucracy.

Additionally, amendments to the Public Service Act (PSA) will induce growth by allowing foreign ownership of public services, which will hopefully offer more livelihood and income opportunities for Filipinos.

Though further aggravated by the socioeconomic impact of the Russia-Ukraine war, e.g., high fuel prices and food insufficiency, the formidable woes and challenges confronted by Philippine society are now inherited by the Marcos Jr. presidency. With the benefit of the inaugural address and prior to the first State of the Nation Address, the new administration is directly feeling the pressure of doing things right in its first 100 days.

President-elect Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. was inaugurated as the 17th president of the Philippines last June 30, 2022. In line with his assumption, President Marcos Jr. has yet to bare the complete composition of his Cabinet.

While the appointments of some Cabinet members were hailed by the business community, others were criticized for various reasons. To date, Marcos has yet to announce his picks to lead other crucial government agencies.

The presidential address revolved around four themes, namely, national unity, the unbounded potential of the Filipino people, the golden-age nostalgia for the previous Marcos Sr. regime, and an independent foreign policy. These themes provide a glimpse as to how the Marcos Jr. administration will govern the country. Hopefully, Marcos’ State of the Nation Address on July 25 will provide the Filipino people a more definite and comprehensive plan of doing things and creating a more “agile, resilient republic.”

Nevertheless, the 25-minute inaugural address of President Marcos Jr. contained the following takeaway points.

- Embarking upon the campaign narrative of unity, the president stated that his “call for unity resonated with the people.”
- Emphasizing that he fully understands the gravity of his new responsibility as president and is ready for the task.
- Vowing that the government will get things done without requiring much or anything from the people,
- Assuring the people that his State of the Nation Address (SONA) will contain exactly how government will get things done.
- Saying that a comprehensive, all-inclusive economic plan is being undertaken.
- Vowing to complete infrastructure projects which started during the Duterte administration and saying that he does not intend to claim them as his own.
- Emphasizing the need to prioritize agriculture and food security.
- Assuring the people that “we will find a way” as “we are not far from oil and gas reserves that have already been developed.”
- Acknowledging the need to rethink the current materials being used in schools.
- Stating that OFWs will be provided with their needs to survive and thrive.
- Vowing to fix the country’s public healthcare system and address the shortcomings of the past administration on its COVID-19 response.
- Promising to look to the country’s partners and friends to help the Philippines with regard to climate change and the environment.
- Underscoring the need to move on to “a future of sufficiency.”
- Making numerous mentions of his father, Ferdinand Marcos Sr., whom he painted in a positive light.

II. PHILIPPINE FOREIGN RELATIONS AND MARITIME FRAMEWORK

Envoys and ambassadors have started to pay courtesy calls and visits to President-elect Ferdinand Marcos Jr. This post-election ritual mirrors the continuing foreign interest in furthering economic and diplomatic ties. It also galvanizes the potential and opportunities to deepen and broaden Philippine foreign relations.

Among others, diplomats from the United Kingdom, Singapore, France and the European Union (EU), Brunei Darussalam, Russia, China, Italy, Japan, South Korea, India, New Zealand, the United States, Norway, Finland, Hungary, Romania, and South Africa have expressed their welcome and support to the new president.

In the meetings, a wide range of issues were discussed and mentioned—boosting the economy, recovery, cooperation and collaboration, tax incentives and structures, ease of doing business, trade, investments, infrastructure, human rights as well as media rights and freedom, the peace process in Mindanao, the UNCLOS, security concerns, and historical accounts among others.

As the country has historically been open and accommodating to foreign interests and economic diplomacy, Philippine foreign relations will be able to have a fortified stance if the country's maritime potentials are protected and promoted. The harnessing and improvement of maritime power will also be important in dealing with regional and international power shifts.

Regional and International Dynamisms and Developments

The architecture of regional and international relations is being influenced by several factors, alongside the expanding notion of security and the strategic impact of economic diplomacy and people-to-people ties between countries.

First, the brewing tensions in the South China Sea variably involve the littoral states of Brunei, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, Vietnam, and the Philippines. The dispute has also resulted in different responses and actions from the more affected states.

Second, the presence of China's aggressive expansionist agenda, which is most felt in the West Philippine Sea (WPS) and directly encroaches upon Philippine sovereignty and territorial jurisdiction, persistently provides different meanings and appearances to the South China Sea dispute.

Third, the convergence of international and regional alliances in upholding a rules-based international system is becoming more pronounced and actualized. With this development, it is clear that multilateral and minilateral partnerships play an important role in cementing rules-based initiatives in both geopolitical and geoeconomics planes.

Fourth, the long-standing competition between the U.S. and China and its global implications to the economy and politics of countries shape the behavior of states. The two primary actors alongside state partners and allies deal with the growing challenges and opportunities that the competition brings.

The fifth factor points to the impact of extant and emerging political conflicts and economic problems. For instance, the Russia-Ukraine war has spilled over to Europe, the Americas, and Asia in terms of oil price hikes, the threat of recession in the European and U.S. economy, food security in Africa, and shocks to global financial markets.

Sixth, the evolving definition of security naturally lends additional meanings and scope as both traditional and non-traditional security threats are equally taken into consideration. This aspect represents the non-military dimension and transboundary nature of pandemics and climate change.

Seventh, the role of small states is deemed significant as they continue to struggle in safeguarding their country's security under a rules-based order and their contribution to the definition of security and to regional and international commitments.

In essence, the challenges and opportunities for small, medium, and big states alike rely on the dynamic relation of interconnectivity and unpredictability between states and the international system.

Stratbase Foreign and Security Agenda for the Marcos Presidency

Last May 20, the Stratbase Albert del Rosario Institute launched the book *Beyond the Crisis: A Strategic Agenda for the Next President*, which crafted an evidence-based agenda for the next government.

In the aspect of foreign and security policy, the forwarded actionable recommendations particularly implore the attention of the Marcos Jr. presidency.

As ventilated in the ADRi statement, president and founder Professor Dindo Manhit said: "In the face of various security challenges, the incoming administration should work towards formulating a responsive and strategic foreign policy that allows the country to pursue its strategic interests and positively contribute to regional affairs."

The act of being responsive and strategic entails the "configuration and protection of our national sovereignty, particularly in the context of the West Philippine Sea issue and the evolving international order. The next set of leaders must also foster multilateral and inclusive cooperation through alliances and strategic partnerships with like-minded states including the United States, Japan, Australia, and the European Union. Likewise, economic diplomacy must also be prioritized through participation in regional and global initiatives," Prof. Manhit added.

In essence, the book aims to catalyze public conversation, enlightened discourse, citizen involvement, meaningful reforms, and positive change in the affairs and performance of the new administration for the next six years.

Given the context and situation of regional and international relations, governing beyond the crisis necessitates a forward-looking, preventive, and collaborative new presidency.

Manhit's paper, "A Responsive and Strategic Foreign Policy Outlook in an Interconnected and Multipolar World" embarked on a backdrop where "the interconnectedness of states has led to a more unpredictable geopolitical environment, especially in the Indo-Pacific region. Under these circumstances and the current state of globalization, a renewed definition and understanding of cooperation among states to collectively solve these issues have become more significant."

Against this milieu, it is imperative for the new presidency to develop a "responsive and strategic foreign policy prioritizing the country's national sovereignty, territorial integrity, and developmental interests" (Manhit, 2022).

In essence, Manhit stressed the significance of "a values-based policy" for the new leadership to manage the emergence of multilateral initiatives driven by critical issues. His policy advices comprise of the following courses of action: (1) Implement a clear, cohesive, and consistent foreign policy direction; (2) Develop the country's comprehensive power according to its military, economic, scientific, and cultural capabilities; (3) Uphold national sovereignty and territorial integrity in the West Philippine Sea; (4) Foster multilateral and inclusive cooperation through alliances and strategic partnerships; and (5) Prioritize Economic Cooperation and Participation in Regional and Global Economic Initiatives.

In the lens of geopolitics, Stratbase trustee and program convenor Dr. Renato de Castro put forth his defense and security policy recommendations and focuses on the reformulation of the National Security Strategy. His paper, “A National Security Strategy (NSS) for the 17th Philippine President: The Case for A Limited Balancing Strategy,” capitalizes on the lessons learned from the Duterte administration.

De Castro proposed a nationalized strategy of promoting territorial and sovereign rights based on the 2016 Arbitral Ruling, incorporating and highlighting human security priorities such as Public Health Security, continuing the AFP modernization program, implementing organizational and legislative reforms involving the PNP and AFP, and strengthening existing and new alliances and partnerships with multilateral organizations committed to a rules-based international system.

Further into the balance of security and geopolitics, another perspective offered by the book is realizing the archipelagic potential of the country. Dr. Chester Cabalza in his paper, “Philippine Civil and Maritime Security: Transforming from Archipelagic to Maritime Power,” centers on the aspect of transforming the country’s archipelagic nature into a maritime power. This transformational perspective involves the following: (1) Shifting the focus into the geographical strengths of the country can strategically address China’s grey zone operations; (2) Strengthening deterrence and fleet policies, (3) Shifting to an outward-looking military strategy, (4) Accelerating naval diplomacy; (5) Solidifying a self-reliant defense posture; and (6) Exploring the opportunities of the blue water economy.

Adept with the expanding notion of security and defense, Dr. Mely Caballero-Anthony highlighted the growing concern on non-traditional security threats, e.g., pandemics and climate change. Her paper “Non-Traditional Security Threats to Peace and Security in the Indo-Pacific,” gives prime consideration to the rapid changes in the global environment which equally causes great or greater impact on the well-being and security of states and societies. Being transnational in nature, these changes compound states’ ability and capacity to manage them.



A New Pivot

During the campaign period, the dismissive tendency of presidential candidate Mr. Marcos Jr. with regard to the 2016 Arbitral Ruling brought more fears in the aspect of continuing Duterte's failure to fortify the Philippines' foreign policy stance.

During his May 26 interview with regard to the WPS issue, however, Marcos Jr. spelled out that "we have a very important ruling in our favor and we will use it to continue to assert our territorial rights. It is not a claim. It is already our territorial right."

With this pronouncement, a clear pivot is being made not only in favor of promoting the country's strategic interests in the disputed waters but also in overcoming the attitude of defeatism and capitulation with respect to foreign policy.

Further, the pronouncement earned commendations from two prominent thought leaders who are very keen on the WPS issue. For one, the former Foreign Affairs Secretary Albert del Rosario expressed: "We are deeply thankful that President-elect Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. declared what Filipinos would like to hear: that the 2016 Arbitral Ruling is not a claim but already a right; that our sovereignty is 'sacred' and that he would not 'allow a single millimeter of our maritime coastal rights to be trampled upon.'"

In addition, del Rosario stated that the following duties are expected from his pronouncement, namely, "Consistently raising the Award at the United Nations General Assembly and other international fora; Consolidating the support of other countries which believe in the Arbitral Ruling and the Rule of Law; Making China accountable for the environmental crimes it committed in the West Philippine Sea; and Building a minimum credible defense posture to protect national territory."

Another statement in support of Mr. Marcos Jr. was provided by retired Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio. He said: "We certainly welcome this new position of Marcos Jr., which is the only correct position that any president of the Philippines can take on the West Philippine Sea issue."

It is "a dramatic and surprising sea change on the West Philippine Sea issue," Carpio added.

On May 31, toward the end of the Duterte administration, the government through the Department of Foreign Affairs filed another diplomatic protest against China's imposition of an annual fishing ban that last for three and half months in the territorial waters of the Philippine exclusive economic zone.

Opportunities for the U.S.-Philippines Alliance

The failure and setbacks of Duterte's appeasement policy lodged the country's foreign and security policy in defeatism. However, with the renewed attention toward the Indo-Pacific region and the role of small states in regional and international relations, various opportunities are presented to the Philippines in promoting and developing its defense and security potentials. In the process, the country will be able to maximize and leverage its position in the region.

As highlighted by the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) report titled "Revitalizing the U.S.-Philippines Alliance to Address Strategic Competition in the Indo-Pacific," the Philippines' "position in the "first island chain" is important to American security and the integrity of the U.S. alliance system in the Indo-Pacific; the Philippines is an ally and friend within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); and lastly, the Philippines is important in shaping regional norms on democracy."

The CNAS report advances the following policy recommendations ranging from security and defense ties, foreign assistance, energy cooperation, and diplomatic ties (Curtis, Fitt and Durkee, 2022).

Under Security and Defense Issues, the courses of action refer to the following: (1) Establish a Strategic and Contingency Planning Process as Part of a 2+2 Dialogue; (2) Restore Bold Vision of the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement; (3) Enhance Alliance Commitments; (4) Prioritize Sale of Asymmetric Defense and Maritime Domain Awareness Equipment; (5) Enhance Cybersecurity Cooperation; (6) Start Minilateral Security Dialogues; and (7) Provide Support to the Peace Process in Mindanao.

For the Foreign Assistance, Economic and Energy Cooperation, and Diplomatic Ties, recommendations cover the following: (1) Explore Opportunities for New Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact; (2) Maximize the Philippines' Role in the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework; (3) Enhance Public Health Cooperation; (4) Support Liquefied Natural Gas Development as a Bridge to Renewable Energy Alternatives; and (5) Establish U.S. Consulates General in Cebu and Davao.

In Legacy Issues, the recommendations are to: (1) Amend Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Act and (2) Construct Peace Monument on Jolo Island.

Forging a Philippine Maritime Framework

As an archipelagic state, the Philippines will be able to maximize alliances, leverage its geostrategic location in the Indo-Pacific and concretize a responsive foreign and security policy stance by embracing a maritime framework.

Protecting its sovereignty and jurisdiction over vast marine resources and developing the economic and security potentials of a maritime environment will be key to managing internal and external complex security concerns.

Crucial to the harnessing of maritime potential, the Philippines needs to invest in and develop its physical, human, technological, and policy capabilities to secure its maritime jurisdiction and enhance its power projection.

With the country's geographical and strategic position, it stands as a balancing actor in the Indo-Pacific. In the process of consolidating and upgrading its maritime capabilities, the country will also be able to effectively deal with the region's evolving security architecture.

The development of Philippine maritime power amid a new age of Indo-Pacific uncertainty in the maritime domain opens up more opportunities in the economic, technological, and political security aspects. In turn, such power will also enable the country to productively engage in multilateral and strategic cooperation.

It is in the sense of a collective realization and concern of the country's comprehensive security that we need to build and embrace a maritime framework, which primarily engages with regional and international like-minded states and work together on major issues and mitigate emergent threats confronting the Indo-Pacific.

The West Philippine Sea Issue

The adoption of a responsive and clear foreign policy and the establishment of a maritime framework are consistent with the public's perception of the West Philippine Sea issue.

At the national level, 89% or nine out of 10 Filipinos agree with the statement that "The incoming Marcos administration must assert our rights over the West Philippine Sea as stipulated in the 2016 Arbitral Ruling

of the Permanent Court of Arbitration.” The same response holds true in the NCR (94%), Visayas (95%), and Mindanao (91%), while it is slightly lower in the Balance of Luzon (85%). In the class category, Class ABC agreed at 95%, while Class D and E respectively registered 88% and 91% agreement ratings. See Table 10

Table 10
Agreement/Disagreement with Test Statement on the West Philippine Sea: PHILIPPINES
In Percent
 (June 24 - 27, 2022)



PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Base: Total Interviews, 100%

TEST STATEMENT: The incoming Marcos administration must assert our rights over the West Philippine Sea as stipulated in the 2016 Arbitral Ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration.	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
AGREE	89	94	85	95	91	95	88	91
Strongly agree	63	65	61	63	66	77	60	65
Somewhat agree	26	29	24	32	25	18	28	26
CANNOT SAY IF AGREE OR DISAGREE	9	4	13	5	5	5	10	7
DISAGREE	1	2	0	0	3	0	1	0
Somewhat disagree	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	0
Strongly disagree	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UNAIDED								
I do not know enough to give an opinion about this	1	0	2	1	1	0	1	1
Refused	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

BABASAHIN KO NGAYON SA INYO ANG ILANG MGA PANGUNGUSAP. PAKISABI LAMANG KUNG KAYO AY (SHOWCARD) SA BAWAT ISA SA MGA PANGUNGUSAP NA ITO. Q22. ANG PAPASOK NA ADMINISTRASYONG MARCOS AY DAPAT IGIIT ANG ATING MGA KARAPATAN SA WEST PHILIPPINE SEA GAYA NG ITINAKDA SA 2016 ARBITRAL RULING NG PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION.

Notes:

- (1) % Agree = % Strongly agree plus % Somewhat agree; % Disagree = % Somewhat disagree plus % Strongly disagree
- (2) Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding off or to Don't Know and Refuse responses.

Further, with the national agreement ratings at 89% in June 2022, 73% in June 2018, and 84% in December 2016, the public perception on “asserting our rights over the West Philippine Sea as stipulated in the 2016 Arbitral Ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration” has consistently been “very good.” See Table 11

Table 11
Agreement/Disagreement with Test Statements on Asserting our Rights Over the West Philippine Sea as Stipulated in the 2016 Arbitral Ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration
In Percent
 (December 2016, June 2018, and June 2022)



PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Base: Total Interviews

TEST STATEMENT (UB JUNE 2022)

"The incoming Marcos administration must assert our rights over the West Philippine Sea as stipulated in the 2016 Arbitral Ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration."

TEST STATEMENT (UB JUNE 2018)

"The Duterte administration should assert our right and protect our territorial sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea as stipulated in the 2016 decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration."

TEST STATEMENT (UB DECEMBER 2016)"

The Philippine government should assert its right on the West Philippine Sea as stipulated in the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration."

	RP	LOCATION				CLASS			
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E	
AGREE	Jun '22	89	94	85	95	91	95	88	91
	Jun '18	73	75	78	63	71	83	74	67
	Dec '16	84	92	83	77	87	81	85	82
Strongly Agree	Jun '22	63	65	61	63	66	77	60	65
	Jun '18	46	43	49	42	46	62	46	41
	Dec '16	44	52	44	36	44	39	46	37
Somewhat agree	Jun '22	26	29	24	32	25	18	28	26
	Jun '18	27	32	29	21	25	22	27	26
	Dec '16	40	40	39	42	42	42	39	45
CANNOT SAY IF AGREE OR DISAGREE	Jun '22	9	4	13	5	5	5	10	7
	Jun '18	17	22	17	20	14	13	17	21
	Dec '16	12	5	14	17	10	16	11	14
DISAGREE	Jun '22	1	2	0	0	3	0	1	
	Jun '18	7	3	2	15	13	3	7	7
	Dec '16	3	2	2	6	3	4	3	3
Somewhat disagree	Jun '22	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	0
	Jun '18	4	2	1	10	4	0	4	5
	Dec '16	2	2	2	4	3	3	2	3
Strongly disagree	Jun '22	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Jun '18	3	0	1	5	9	3	4	2
	Dec '16	1	0	0	2	0	0	1	0
UNDAIDED I do not know enough to give an opinion about this	Jun '22	1	0	2	1	1	0	1	1
	Jun '18	2	1	2	1	3	0	2	5
	Dec '16	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Refused	Jun '22	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
	Jun '18	0.4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Dec '16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

BABASAHIN KO NGAYON SA INYO ANG ILANG MGA PANGUNGUSAP. PAKISABI LAMANG KUNG KAYO AY (SHOWCARD) SA BAWAT ISA SA MGA PANGUNGUSAP NA ITO.
 UB JUN 2022, Q22. ANG PAPASOK NA ADMINISTRASYONG MARCOS AY DAPAT IGIIT ANG ATING MGA KARAPATAN SA WEST PHILIPPINE SEA GAYA NG ITINAKDA SA 2016 ARBITRAL RULING NG PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION.

UB JUN, 2018, Q81. "Dapat igiit ng administrasyong Duterte ang ating karapatan at protektahan ang ating teritoryal na soberanya sa West Philippine Sea na nakatakda sa desisyon ng Permanent Court of Arbitration noong 2016."

UB DEC 2016, Q44. Dapat igiit ng pamahalaan ng Pilipinas ang karapatan nito sa West Philippine Sea batay sa nakasaad sa desisyon ng Permanent Court of Arbitration.

Notes:

(1) % Agree = % Strongly agree plus % Somewhat agree; % Disagree = % Somewhat disagree plus % Strongly disagree

(2) Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding off or to Don't Know and Refuse responses

In the aspect of defending the country’s jurisdiction, nine out of 10 Filipinos agree with the statement that “The incoming Marcos administration must invest in the capability of the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Coast Guard to protecting our territory and marine resources in our Exclusive Economic Zone.” This 90% agreement reverberated through geographic locations and economic classes, while the Visayas and Class ABC registered a higher agreement rating at 95%. See Table 12

Table 12
Agreement/Disagreement with Test Statement on the West Philippine Sea: PHILIPPINES
In Percent
 (June 24 - 27, 2022)



PulseAsia
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Base: Total Interviews, 100%

TEST STATEMENT: The incoming Marcos administration must invest in the capability of the Philippine Navy and the Philippine Coast Guard to protect our territory and marine resources in our Exclusive Economic Zone.	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
AGREE	90	88	89	95	91	95	90	89
Strongly agree	56	56	55	48	67	72	53	57
Somewhat agree	34	33	34	47	24	23	36	32
CANNOT SAY IF AGREE OR DISAGREE	8	11	9	5	6	5	8	10
DISAGREE	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	0
Somewhat disagree	1	1	0	0	2	0	1	0
Strongly disagree	0.03	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UNAIDED								
I do not know enough to give an opinion about this	1	0	2	1	1	0	1	0
Refused	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

BABASAHIN KO NGAYON SA INYO ANG ILANG MGA PANGUNGUSAP. PAKISABI LAMANG KUNG KAYO AY (SHOWCARD) SA BAWAT ISA SA MGA PANGUNGUSAP NA ITO Q23. ANG PAPASOK NA ADMINISTRASYONG MARCOS AY DAPAT MAMUHUNAN SA KAKAYAHAN NG PHILIPPINE NAVY AT PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD NA PROTEKTAHAN ANG ATING TERITORYO AT YAMANG DAGAT SA ATING EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE.

Notes:

(1) % Agree = % Strongly agree plus % Somewhat agree; % Disagree = % Somewhat disagree plus % Strongly disagree

(2) Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding off or to Don't Know and Refuse responses.

With regard to convincing and enjoining other countries to defend the country’s territory, 84% or four out of five Filipinos agree that “The incoming Marcos administration should form alliance with other countries to defend Philippine territorial rights in the West Philippine Sea.” This level of agreement is very similar across geographical locations and economic classes, except for Class E which registered a lower 77% agreement. See Table 13

Table 13
Agreement/Disagreement with Test Statement on the West Philippine Sea: PHILIPPINES
In Percent
 (June 24 - 27, 2022)



PulseAsia
RESEARCH INC.

Base: Total Interviews, 100%

TEST STATEMENT: The incoming Marcos administration should form alliance with other countries to defend Philippine territorial rights in the West Philippine Sea.	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
		AGREE	84	82	83	87	85	84
Strongly agree	54	54	54	47	61	59	55	47
Somewhat agree	30	28	29	40	24	25	30	30
CANNOT SAY IF AGREE OR DISAGREE	11	11	12	8	12	8	11	15
DISAGREE	4	7	3	4	2	8	2	8
Somewhat disagree	3	6	2	4	2	7	2	7
Strongly disagree	0.4	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
UNAIDED								
I do not know enough to give an opinion about this	1	0	2	1	1	0	1	0
Refused	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

BABASAHIN KO NGAYON SA INYO ANG ILANG MGA PANGUNGUSAP. PAKISABI LAMANG KUNG KAYO AY (SHOWCARD) SA BAWAT ISA SA MGA PANGUNGUSAP NA ITO. Q24. ANG PAPASOK NA ADMINISTRASYONG MARCOS AY DAPAT MAKIPAG-ALYANSA SA IBANG MGA BANSA PARA IPAGTANGGOL ANG MGA KARAPATAN SA TERITORYO NG PILIPINAS SA WEST PHILIPPINE SEA.

Notes:

(1) % Agree = % Strongly agree plus % Somewhat agree; % Disagree = % Somewhat disagree plus % Strongly disagree

(2) Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding off or to Don't Know and Refuse responses.

In forming alliances to defend Philippine territory, the public perception on which country to trust is quite indicative. The top-of-mind trustworthy country is still the United States of America at 89%. It is followed by Australia and Japan, respectively at 79% and 78%. The third trusted countries are Germany (69%), South Korea (65%), Great Britain (64%), Indonesia (60%), and India (51%).

The least trusted are Russia and China, garnering a total trust rating of only 38% and 33% respectively, and the highest ratings on “Not too much / No trust” at 62% and 67%. See Chart 7

Table 14
Awareness and Trust Ratings of Selected Countries: PHILIPPINES
 In Percent
 (June 24 - 27, 2022)



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Selected Countries	Aware	Total	Base: Aware					
			A great deal of trust	A fair amount of trust	Total	Not too much trust	No trust at all	Don't know / Refused
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	100	89	31	58	11	9	1	0.5
AUSTRALIA	100	79	15	63	21	16	5	1
JAPAN	100	78	22	55	22	18	3	0.4
GERMANY	100	69	9	60	30	22	8	1
SOUTH KOREA	100	65	10	54	35	26	9	1
GREAT BRITAIN / UNITED KINGDOM	100	64	12	53	35	27	8	1
INDONESIA	99	60	5	55	39	28	12	1
INDIA	100	51	3	48	48	32	17	1
RUSSIA	97	38	7	31	62	36	26	0.1
CHINA	95	33	5	28	67	36	31	0.1

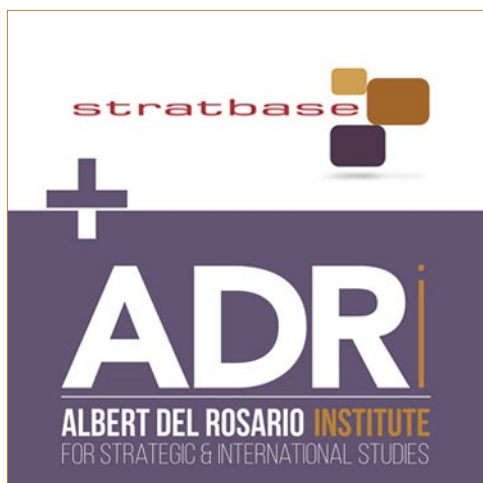
Q19. Sa pangkalahatan, gaano kalaki o kaliit na tiwala ang dapat ibigay o ipakita ng Pilipinas sa (BANSANG) Masasabi ba ninyo na ito ay (SHOWCARD)?

Ferdinand Marcos Jr. begins his presidency at a time when the Philippines, still reeling from the economic effects of the lingering pandemic, faces numerous other problems in various different fronts. In dealing with these domestic and foreign challenges, the new administration must learn from the mistakes of its predecessor, stay true to its word, make decisions based on logic and hard data, and practice transparency in its dealings and encourage participation -- even constructive criticism -- among the people.



POLÍTIKA

CRITICAL ISSUES OF PHILIPPINE POLITY



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