National Security Priorities and Agenda of the Philippines

Perceptions from the Filipino Strategic Community

AMADOR
ARUGAY
MISALUCHA-WILLOUGHBY
BAQUISAL

About the Amador Research Services

Amador Research Services (ARS) is an independent advisory firm for companies, international organizations, non-profit organizations, and governments seeking to understand and invest in the Philippines. ARS seeks to provide insights on the country and its international affairs from a Filipino perspective. The company connects stakeholders, provides expert consultants to advise on technical issues, and conduct rigorous studies to understand political and market risks in the Philippines.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

A country's national security agenda is of paramount importance, primarily because it is the foundation of the nation's foreign policy. Likewise, it anchors the country's strategic direction. As such, a strong national security agenda greatly contributes to a state's ability to provide leadership and protection to its domestic constituents, at the same time that it is able to exercise prudent and harmonious relations with other members of the international system.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the issues surrounding the South China Sea, the need to strike a balance between maintaining good relations with China and improving the alliance with the United States, it is imperative for the Philippines to consolidate its national security agenda, especially with the 2022 Philippine presidential elections coming up. Considering the multiplicity of stakeholders in the crafting of a national security agenda, the project identifies, organizes, and analyzes the insights of the members of the Philippine strategic community regarding the national security priorities of the country. The strategic community in the context of this study is composed of academics, researchers, and practitioners engaged in security research and practice, writ large, from both the civilian and security sectors.

The main research questions of the study are as follows:
1. What are the national security priorities as envisioned by members of the Philippine strategic community?
2. What are the factors behind the variation of the identified national security priorities of national security issues by members of the Philippine strategic community?
3. What are recommendations of the Philippine strategic community for a future national security agenda for the country?

A supporting motivation for this study is the many policy pronouncements of the Duterte administration on issues of national security and foreign policy that have been perceived as divergent from orthodox, traditional positions of the country on these policies. These changes are often mainly expressed through rhetoric by the president but finds its expression later in actual policy. It remains to be seen whether the members of the national defense and security establishment of the Philippines agree to these radical shifts in policy. Apart from anecdotal and sporadic evidence, there has been no systematic effort to find out whether the members of the country's security community share the perspective of the country's current political leadership. This study is an attempt to provide empirical evidence on the points of convergence and divergence within the country's national security apparatus.

There has been prior work by the authors on this research topic (Arugay et al 2020). This project is a continuation of collecting individual data regarding perceptions, opinions, and insights from those who are at the forefront of strategic policy research and practice. This also means that this project can determine whether there have been changes in opinions and attitudes over a period of time and

whether these changes can be explained by significant political developments at the domestic and foreign frontiers.

This project consisted of two surveys. The first was conducted with both previous and new respondents. Previous respondents from the 2018 survey were asked again to accomplish the same set of questions regarding Philippine strategic issues (Arugay et al 2020). This is important in establishing change or continuity. This same set of previous respondents were asked to accomplish the second survey with a wider sample of N= 663. This second survey has a more comprehensive scope and comprises cognitive (to test knowledge), affective (sentiments, attitudes), and evaluative (assessment of the Duterte administration's performance and the policies of external actors) components.

The surveys collected a series of personal and demographic data that were used to correlate with survey responses. This is to identify the determinants of specific responses and their varying strengths or intensity across survey respondents. To validate, confirm, and enrich the survey insights as well as help in crafting the components of a national security agenda, Delphi sessions with experts will be proposed.

The results of the surveys reveal two things. First, while the Philippines has sound policy doctrines that identify the national security agenda and priorities, the crux of the matter is on their implementation and the challenges thereof. This suggests that if the Philippines were to succeed in its pursuit of national security, strengthening domestic structures in the process is crucial. This also casts a spotlight on the critical role of domestic factors in shaping foreign policies.

Second, with the myriad of security threats that the Philippines needs to confront, the prioritization of internal and external security issues seems arbitrary, which leads to confusion in terms of policy making and inconsistencies from one administration to another. Ideally, the prioritization needs to be anchored in clear, strategic thinking. In practice, however, the decisions are mostly based on instrumentality and patronage politics.

Both these arguments form the basis for shaping the national security conversation. Ultimately, the extrapolated perceptions of the Philippine strategic community from the surveys in this study can be the foundation of policy recommendations for the new administration in 2022. This may also ensure the continuity of the Philippines' policies in pursuit of its national security agenda regardless of changes in leadership.

By way of conclusion, this report summarizes the main findings and provides a set of policy recommendations for the enhancement of national security policy in the Philippines

II. Philippine National Security Studies: A Literature Review

A. The Linkages between National and International Security

The security-insecurity nexus is a thin, fine line. States broadly define security as the protection of their territorial and sovereign integrity (Krause and Williams 2018). The assumption is that securing the state is seen as the best way of protecting other referent objects. If the state's territorial and sovereign integrity is upheld, it can offer protection to its constituents. This is no less true today, but this principle is largely the purview of what is generally known as "traditional" security studies (Nye and Lynn-Jones 1988; Walt 1991). The question here, however, is the extent to which the state should be protected, considering that some states are the very source of insecurity of their own people (Kolodziej 1992). One only needs to look at Syria as an example: the massive flows of refugees in the last couple of years are indicative of high levels of insecurity therein (Human Rights Watch 2019).

This and other examples notwithstanding, security with territoriality. A well-defined territory is one of the elements of statehood. Drawing lines, no matter how arbitrary, is tied up with notions of what can – and conversely, what cannot – be done within specified areas. Drawing lines likewise delineates ownership: what is relegated as ours, for instance, translates to the rights that we can exercise therein. Security, as is often equated with territoriality and ownership, is also tied with identities. Consequently, notions of identities as a people, as a nation, and as a region, form the very foundations of ontological security. A question of identity is synonymous to a challenge of territoriality.

This nexus between security and insecurity is also deeply embedded in the discipline of International Relations (IR). IR, after all, is built around the certainty of uncertainty. In an international system that only recognizes impermanence, the potential for contestations - violence, if extreme - becomes high. A prominent school of thought in the IR discipline is realism. Realism forwards that in the socialization of states, international anarchy - that is, the asymmetrical balances of power - reigns supreme. Very much like the Hobbesian view, where the state of nature is nasty, brutish, and short, tendencies towards conflict and war run the risk of unleashing the 'Leviathan,' merely because of insecurities. Hence, the discipline of realist IR not only advances the security-insecurity nexus in its analysis, but also places the centrality of the state.

The pursuit of security is rife with externalities: the zero-sum nature of security highlights how one state's security often comes at the cost of another state's insecurity. The concept of the security dilemma treads between inescapable and manageable (Jervis 1978; Snyder 1983; Collins 2004; Stevens 2020). For instance, the South China Sea is a classic depiction of the security dilemma. What makes the case interesting is the asymmetric power capabilities of China on one hand, and the Southeast Asian claimant states on the other.

Great powers project their clout globally and shape the international agenda (Mearsheimer 2001). Meanwhile, small states are more concerned with consolidating their statehood. The dilemma facing small powers is best captured by the notion of a security predicament (Ayoob 1995). This predicament describes members of the Third World who have not had sufficient time for state-making in the same way that Western states did in their formative phase. In effect, small powers face domestic challenges that limit their maneuverability in international relations. The logic behind the notion of a security predicament prevails in small states like the Philippines.

The survey results of this study validate this predicament. The dilemmas of security are more pronounced and magnified for states that have inadequate resources to address both internal and external security threats. Likewise, if the predicaments of small states were to be used as a point of departure as it highlights the yet unconsolidated statehood of these small powers, then it is no wonder that the strategic community in the Philippines sees the discrepancy between sound security doctrines and its weak implementation. The ultimate objective of this endeavor is to identify policy-relevant recommendations to overcome the abovementioned security dilemmas that the Philippines faces. This is all the more crucial in the context of the upcoming 2022 Presidential elections.

B. Expert Survey Methodology

One major development in social science research in the Philippines is the increased prominence of public opinion polling since the 1990s, particularly in reporting public satisfaction with the administration, trust ratings, candidate preferences during elections, and independent pre-election and exit poll surveys to validate the integrity of government-proclaimed electoral results (Miranda in Morada and Tadem 2006; Abad and Ramirez 2008). As Hedman (2010) argues, public opinion has emerged as a social fact or political discourse in itself in the Philippines.

However, much less has been said about large-N "national elite surveys" which are used to directly source the perceptions of elites on a given topic, often with the goal of differentiating sentiments, beliefs, and knowledge by elite groups (e.g., professions and economic class) and those of the public-at-large (Grøholt and Higley 1972; Durch 1999). More importantly, elite surveys reveal "prevailing attitudes among those in position to inform or influence policy" (ISEAS 2020). In political contexts such as the Philippines', an elite survey is informative as to policy views or preferences held by a more informed group.

Similar national security experts surveys had been conducted on topics such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Le Thu 2018), strategic policy opinions in Southeast Asia (Tang et. S 2020), American civilian military experts (Crosbie and Kleykamp 2020), and US-China security elites (Pew Research Center 2012). Often times, these surveys are limited by low-response rates and thus tempers their ability to express findings as definitively representative of the opinion of the elite in general or its subsections, but that they are useful nonetheless in enhancing our understanding of the strategic landscape (Green and Szechenyi 2014; Rolfe 2007).

This survey was conducted from October to November 2020 through an online survey disseminated to academics, public sector employees, and particularly the graduate classes of key defense learning institutions such as the National Defense College of the Philippines and the Philippine Public Safety College, which is a good representative sample of emerging leaders of the security sector given entrance qualifications and requisite recommendations from their respective officers.

III. Survey Analysis

A. The Philippine Strategic Community: Sample Description

The survey was able to collect data from 663 respondents using an online non-random survey of Filipino members of the country's strategic community, comprised of members of the (a) academe, (b) government agencies outside the security sector, (c) civilian personnel in the security sector, (d) military and uniformed personnel in the security sector, and the (e) private sector. Military and uniformed personnel comprise 60% (N=398) of the persons surveyed and were mostly sampled from key security officials undertaking advanced or graduate studies in key defense and security learning institutions such as the National Defense College of the Philippines, AFP Command and General Staff College, and the Philippine Public Safety College. The breakdown of respondents by professional background is as follows:
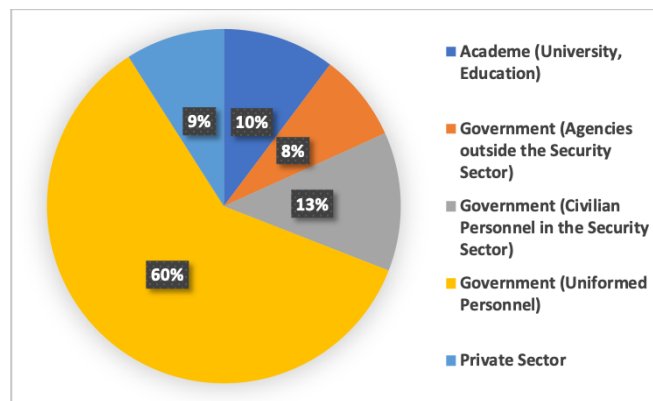
Figure 1*: Professional Background of Respondents*

Given the sampling skew toward mid to senior level security officials and experts, the modal age category of respondents is from 41-50 years old, which accounts for 62% of the sample. Meanwhile, the 21-30, 31-40, and 51-60 are roughly equal at within 11-13% of the sample.
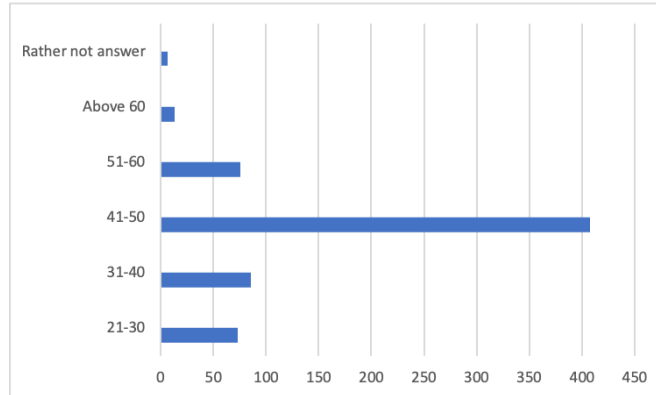
Figure 2*: Age Demographic of Respondents*

491 (74%) respondents identified as male, 156 (24%) as female and 16 (2%) as not preferring to answer. As for educational attainment, 60% (401) possessed master's degrees, 31% (203) with an undergraduate or bachelor's degree, and 7% (47) with a doctorate. Moreover, given the sample profile of respondents who are normally mid to senior level in their respective careers, 58% (386) obtained overseas training.
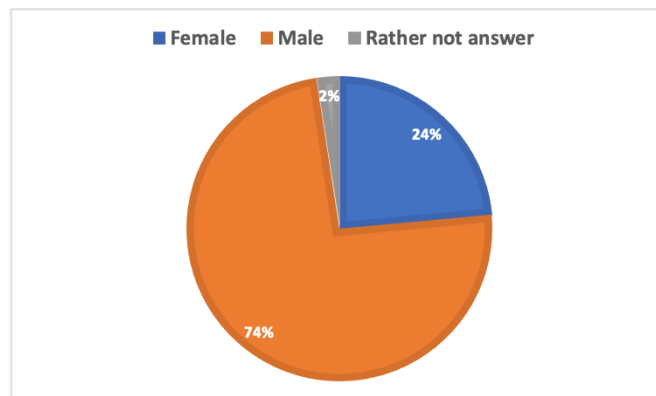
Figure 3*: Gender Profile*
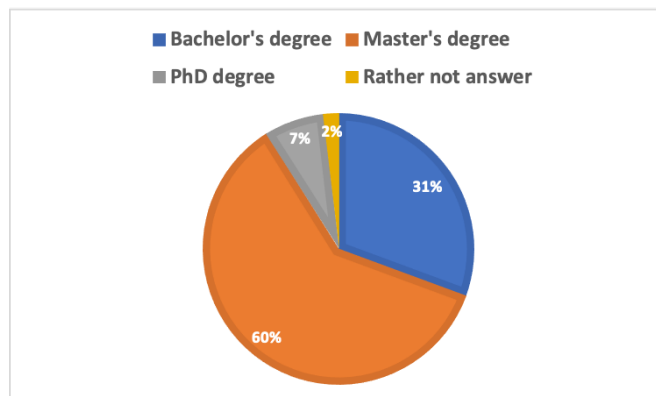
Figure 4*: Educational Attainment*

B. National Security: Key Policy Documents and Strategic Approaches

The first part of the survey asked the respondents on their awareness of key national security documents such as the National Security Policy (NSP), the National Security Strategy (NSS), the National Defense Strategy (NDS), the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, and Ambisyon 2040.

The National Security Strategy 2017-2022 underscores a 12-point national security agenda that covers, national territorial defense, public safety, economic development, infrastructure development and security, cybersecurity, energy security, food and water security, and mitigation of health threats.

The National Defense Strategy identifies key defense sector challenges, namely: (a) territorial integrity and maritime domain, particularly the SCS, Sulu maritime zone; (b) ethnic, political, sectarian, and religious conflict (rogue elements of MILF, MNLF, the BIFF, ASG, and communists (Internal Security Operations); (c) Cyberspace threats, recognizing crisscrossing functional area because this is where espionage, terrorist radicalization, and conventional attack take place; (d) climate change and natural disasters; (e) proliferation of chemical, biological, radioactive, and nuclear explosive materials (CBRNE).

The NDS reflected the policy shift of the Duterte administration, by labelling China and Russia as "emerging security partners", whilst still naming the US, Australia, South Korea, and Japan as traditional partners for areas such as logistics cooperation, materiel and equipment transfer and procurement, education exchange, and maritime security cooperation.

The document also identified key national security goals such as 1) public safety from internal threats to stability (terrorism and transnational crime), 2) the development of strategic defense industries, 3) territorial defense (defense modernization and passage of priority national legislation such as mandatory ROTC, revision of the Human Security Act, revision of the National Defense Act), 4) human ecological security (humanitarian assistance and disaster response), and 5) the strengthening of international relations to promote security cooperation arrangements. It has likewise identified Strategic Priorities including internal stability, capability and preparedness for disasters, territorial defense, and support of global peace. These are divided as external and internal defense missions.
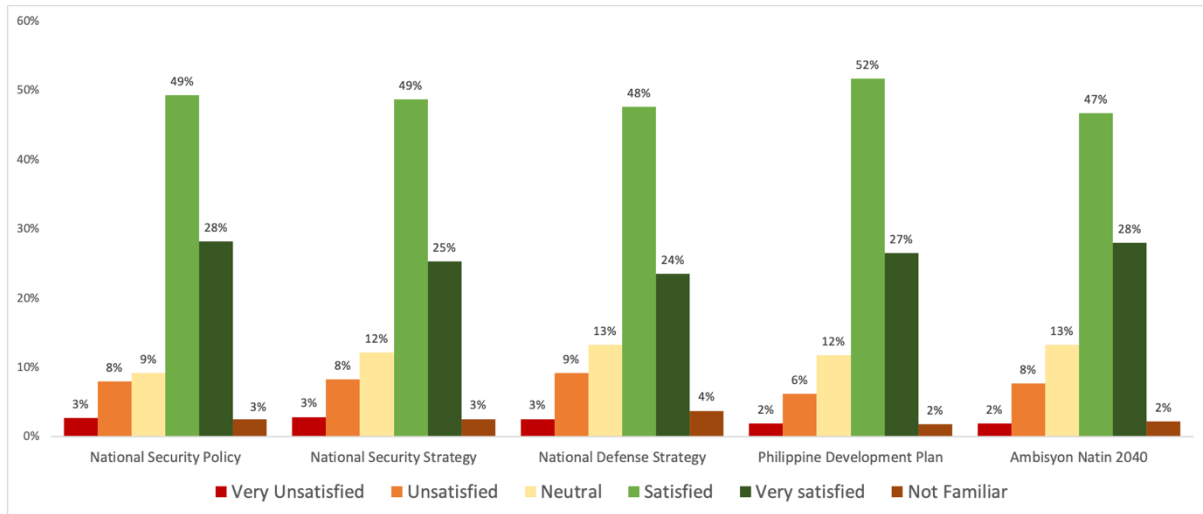
Figure 5. *Satisfaction with Key National Security Policy Documents*

As indicated in Figure 5 above, satisfaction with key national security policy documents is high and that the distribution patterns of responses are consistent. In a scale where scores upwards of 3 point to general satisfaction of respondents, mean ratings are as follows: 3.95 for the National Security Policy, 3.88 for the National Security Strategy, 3.84 for the National Defense Strategy, 3.96 for the Philippine Development Plan, and 3.93 for the Ambisyon Natin 2040, the latter two of which include security goals as part of the broader development agenda of the incumbent Administration.

The general agreement with the policy documents is not surprising given that strategic assessments in these documents are part of "establishment knowledge" for the traditionalist security sector employee: the respect for ASEAN centrality as a dispute settlement mechanism, emphasis on the need for force capability build-up to undertake external territorial defense, the primacy of bipolar US-China strategic competition as a foreign policy consideration, and the continuing internal security role of the military.

As Galang (2019) observes, the logical flow from the national security policy to the national defense strategy is consistent, with the only major new talking point arguably being the pursuit of an "independent foreign policy" under the Duterte administration which is an omni-directional, non-aligned diplomatic posture. This contrasts with the traditional reliance of the previous Aquino III administration (2010-2016) on the US-Philippine military alliance and its policy preference for geopolitical belligerence to China over the West Philippine Sea / South China Sea territorial disputes.

Disaggregated Mean Satisfaction Ratings NATIONAL SECURITY PRIORITIES												
	TOTAL	SECTOR					EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			GENDER	
		Academe	Government (Outside Security Sector)	Government (Civilian in Security Sector)	Government (Uniformed Personnel)	Private Sector	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate	Male	Female
KEY POLICY DOCUMENTS											
1 National Security Policy	3.95	3.23	3.40	4.20	4.22	2.85	3.93	4.00	3.75	4.04	3.67
2 National Security Strategy	3.88	3.09	3.34	4.00	4.17	2.90	3.90	3.91	3.65	3.98	3.56
3 National Defense Strategy	3.84	3.03	3.20	4.09	4.13	2.75	3.88	3.86	3.60	3.94	3.47
4 Philippine Development Plan	3.96	3.31	3.75	4.17	4.19	3.09	3.90	4.03	3.76	4.06	3.68
5 Ambisyon Natin 2040	3.93	3.48	3.81	4.09	4.13	2.95	3.89	3.99	3.76	4.01	3.68

Table 1. *Disaggregated Mean Satisfaction Ratings for Key Security Policy Document*

In order to easily facilitate readers' understanding of the general trends identified in the narrative report, disaggregated satisfaction ratings shall be shown visually through a color gradient and is done by looking at whether there is relative uniformity across an identified category (e.g., professional background, educational attainment, and gender). This is done for brevity to avoid reporting the minutiae such as precise figures for each item.

Displayed in Table 1 are the mean satisfaction ratings for key national security policy documents broken down based on sector or professional background, educational attainment, and gender. First, there is a considerable "proximity gradient" of satisfaction with these policies based on sectoral or professional background. Bureaucrats in government agencies outside the security and defense sector exhibit lower levels of satisfaction with these documents than counterpart civilians and uniformed personnel in the defense establishment. Satisfaction levels are even less so in the academe and become more pronounced for those in the private sector. Another is that females are generally less satisfied than male counterparts. Second, higher levels of educational attainment also figure in lowering satisfaction, but the effect is not as pronounced.[1]

Security Priorities

After assessing these national security documents, the next set of survey questions dealt with the security priorities according to members of the Filipino security community. As the Duterte administration has put the highest premium in security and order, this study is interested in whether the political leadership's priorities are similar to those who are doing security studies and are in the practical or policy field.

---

[1] For analysis of gender, those who reported non-binary categories are excluded from the analysis by virtue of the small sample size which makes inter-category comparisons misleading and within-category validity unrepresentative.

TOP 3 PRESSING NATIONAL SECURITY ISSUES	
	Percentage of respondents who picked the Issue
1 COVID-19 Pandemic	53.4%
2 Terrorism and Violent Extremism	48.0%
3 Communist Insurgency	46.0%
4 Natural and Human Disasters	44.0%
5 External Territorial Defense	43.4%
6 Cybersecurity	24.1%
7 Disinformation and Fake News	20.1%
8 US-China Competition	14.0%
9 Regional Secessionism	3.6%
10 Others	5.20%

Table 2. *Perceived National Security Issues*

Respondents were asked to identify what they perceive as the top three (3) pressing national security issues confronting the Philippines. The COVID-19 pandemic, a non-traditional security issue, occupies the top place of the national consciousness. Observers, however, have raised the Duterte administration's militarized response in non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g. lockdown, mobility restrictions) and medical supply distribution, as well as the more contentious stewardship of interagency initiatives by former generals, notably the Secretary of National Defense being head of the National Task Force COVID-19, and the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity - a former general - being the "Chief Implementer" of the pandemic response and its vaccination efforts (Dizon 2020; Beltran 2020).

Subsequent security priorities, namely Terrorism and Violent Extremism (48.0%), Communist Insurgency (46%), Natural and Human Disasters (44.0%), and External Territorial Defense (43.4%) are practically on equal footing based on this survey.

Further, regional secessionism is registered at the bottom of the list of pressing issues, with only 3.6% of respondents rating it as a top security concern. This is consistent with the dwindling of secessionist violence due to headways under the landmark peace deal with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) called the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) in 2014 and its operationalization under the Bangsamoro Organic Law in 2018 which provided for more local autonomy (Deinla 2019). The Moro National Liberation Front has also been invited to join the new regional transition authority (Ranada 2019).

According to the latest internal security plan of the AFP, "DSSP Kapayapaan (2017-2022)", the MILF and MNLF have become "peace inclined armed groups" in view of the substantial political settlement and subsequent opening of electoral contestation as a strategy for these two major armed actors in Mindanao (AFP 2017, 6). While not entirely de-securitized, the issue may be perceived as a lower-risk, lower-urgency security threat. It could be hypothesized that the security sector has relaxed over the Southern Mindanao security situation. Significant milestones such as these are volatile. Greater caution and preparation must be taken in the event that the decommissioning of

MILF combatants is derailed or falls apart. Stakeholders must bank on the successful implementation of the Annex on Normalization of the CAB and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Mindanao.

Another interesting observation of the survey points to the "US-China competition" (14%) and the "external territorial defense" (43.4%). Both security priorities entail superpower contests. One of the two, however, registers relatively higher. It is possible that external territorial redresses, and therefore its defense, hits closely home to a considerable number of the respondents. Ever since the 2012 Scarborough Shoal standoff took place, concerns over territorial integrity and maritime domain protection never dissipated. The awarding of the Arbitral Tribunal ruling in favor of the Philippines would have mitigated national concerns, but this took a back seat under the Duterte administration in efforts to normalize bilateral relations with China (PCA 2016; Perlez 2016).

The strategic reality of the US-China competition, on the other hand, specifically covers industrial-economic issues such as trade deficits, forced technology transfers by China, and doubts over security safeguards of its commercial products. This means that the two biggest economies of the world will revert to "trade redirection" as their respective firms seek to diversify portfolios where tariffs are not significantly high (Punongbayan 2019). This is a critical silver-lining for the Philippines and the rest of ASEAN as this allows for greater flexibility in generating new *free trade* arrangements (ADB 2019, 28). This may, perhaps, explain why only 14% of the respondents attributed urgency to the US-China competition.

Lastly, 24.1% of respondents identified cybersecurity as a top security concern. More aptly, cybersecurity is a defense mission under the National Defense Strategy (2018-2022) of the Department of National Defense (2018). Cybersecurity is also among the 12-point agenda found in the National Security Strategy (2018). What this could indicate is that cybersecurity as a topic is lost in focus when placed vis-a-vis variegated and equally pressing issues such as terrorism or the communist insurgency.

Given that the cyber domain is an added dimension to national security, the infrastructure needed to support this is just as equally important as sustaining ground operations. Apart from the conventional understanding of fraudulent and illegal activities, the manner of waging war has also taken to the cyber domain (Engstrom 2018, 12). The general Filipino public is aware of these instances (Malig 2012; Santos 2015; Lyngaas 2019). However, the contrasting importance of national security dimensions between the geospatial and the cyber domain, and which of the two is the weightier, may explain why more respondents are concerned with the former.

Viewed with the lens of securitization theory, the results above highlight the need to increase the salience and concern of the public and policy makers with emerging security issues such as cybersecurity and planning for the often-cited inevitable return to a bipolar world order. It is well established in threat perception literature that the ability of critical actors and decision-makers to perceive a security issue affects the ability of states to effectively respond (Stengel 2019; Stein 2013). In the final analysis, prioritization is an important component of defense preparedness because

future force planning (e.g., structure, capability, doctrine, and human resource development) is contingent on the political will in order to pursue and implement the necessary security arrangements.

C. Performance of the National Administration

Respondents were also asked on their perceptions about the performance of the current presidential administration (2016-2022) regarding ten (10) key security areas pertaining to the following: (a) the accomplishment of key defense area missions (e.g. internal and external defense); (b) harmonization of policy lines of effort within the bureaucracy (cohesion) and the consistency of said policies over time; (c) whether national security goals are appropriately safeguarded in relation to the economic and political policies of the Duterte administration; and (d) special topics satisfaction on the size of the security sector and efficacy of the administration's response to COVID-19 as a health security threat. Summative information on these parameters is shown below.
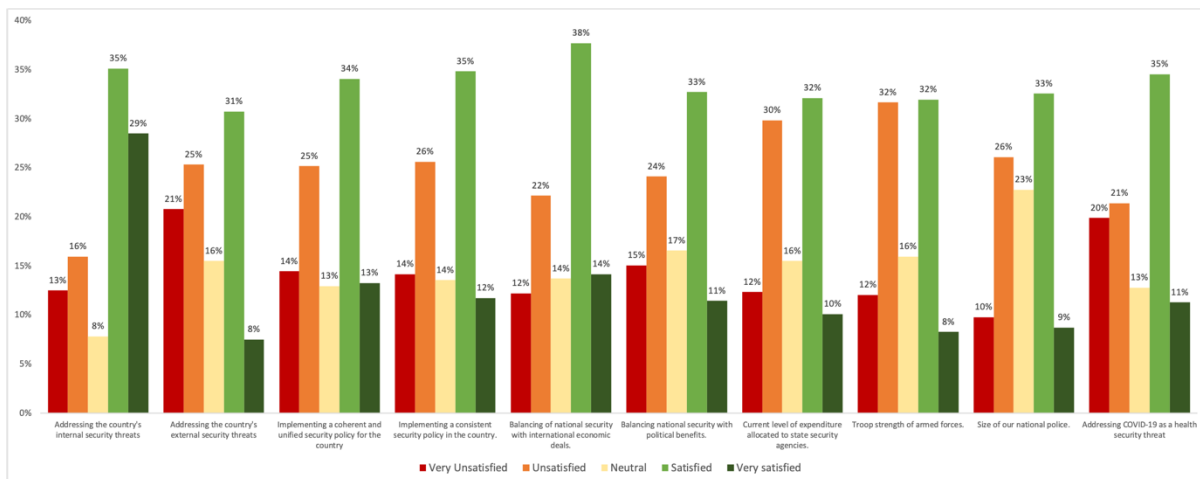
Figure 6. *Satisfaction ratings on the Administration's Performance on Key Security Issues*

It is apparent that while satisfaction with key policy documents is high, security experts are more guarded and less positive about the performance of the Duterte administration in key policy issues. The important caveat however is that these generally lukewarm (within range of "3" or "neutral") appraisal is due to the considerable polarization of opinion by security experts. This is evident in the general distribution patterns shown in Figure 6. For example, in addressing external or foreign security threats (question no. 2 of this section), even while the modal response is "satisfied" or 31% of respondents and another 8% are very satisfied – a total of 42% satisfied respondents – another 46% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction on the same issue.

The mixed ratings are reflected in mean satisfaction scores per item, as seen in Table 3, where whole-sample averages are only within "neutral" satisfaction range. The lowest average satisfaction rating is on addressing external security threats (2.79) while there is generally positive assessment in

addressing internal security threats such as the communist insurgency, terrorism, and armed regional groups like the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Moro National Liberation Front (3.51).

Disaggregated Mean Satisfaction Ratings
PERFORMANCE OF THE ADMINISTRATION

		TOTAL	SECTOR					EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			GENDER	
			Academe	Government (Outside Security Sector)	Government (Civilian in Security Sector)	Government (Uniformed Personnel)	Private Sector	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate	Male	Female
1	Addressing the country's internal security threats	3.51	2.26	2.70	3.54	4.00	2.37	3.59	3.52	3.15	3.73	2.86
2	Addressing the country's external security threats	2.79	1.66	2.08	2.94	3.22	1.65	2.89	2.77	2.62	2.92	2.35
3	Implementing a coherent and unified security policy for the country	3.06	1.93	2.30	3.17	3.52	1.90	3.19	3.04	2.74	3.24	2.51
4	Implementing a consistent security policy in the country.	3.04	1.90	2.32	3.08	3.48	2.02	3.14	3.04	2.74	3.21	2.49
5	Balancing of national security with international economic deals.	3.19	2.13	2.58	3.29	3.60	2.13	3.22	3.22	2.83	3.36	2.7
6	Balancing national security with political benefits.	3.01	1.94	2.49	3.04	3.43	1.92	3.09	3.01	2.66	3.18	2.49
7	Current level of expenditure allocated to state security agencies.	2.98	2.47	2.57	2.99	3.22	2.28	3.00	2.97	3.02	3.05	2.74
8	Troop strength of armed forces.	2.93	2.40	2.57	2.95	3.12	2.55	2.90	2.94	2.94	3.02	2.65
9	Size of our national police.	3.04	2.72	2.77	2.93	3.23	2.58	3.09	3.02	3.04	3.11	2.83
10	Addressing COVID-19 as a health security threat	2.96	1.53	2.28	2.96	3.43	2.07	2.96	3.02	2.38	3.17	2.34

Table 3. *Disaggregated ratings on the Administration's Performance on Key Security Issues*

Consistent with previously reported satisfaction patterns in this report, there is a "proximity gradient" on satisfaction with presidential performance in key policy issues: uniformed personnel have a positive disposition, with all mean ratings clearly in the "satisfied" range (upwards of 3). However, more critically, unlike satisfaction with key policy documents, *clear positive performance evaluations do not extend beyond military and uniformed personnel*. Even civilians in the security sector report an across-the-board lukewarm rating of "neutral" for nine (9) issues, with only internal security being reported as a clear positive slant in opinion. Albeit with a less within-group representative sample, bureaucrats outside the security sector, scholars of the academe, and members of the private sector that were sampled in this survey report a clear general dissatisfaction in national security performance.

There is significant dissatisfaction by academics and bureaucrats outside the security sector on issues such as implementing a coherent and unified security policy, balancing national security with political gains and accomplishment of economic gains, as well as policy consistency.

Moreover, academics and civilian government employees are also less satisfied than military and uniformed personnel in terms of the current troop strength of our armed forces and the size of the national police. The human complement capability build-up may be further fleshed out in subsequent studies, such as whether the dissatisfaction is rooted in the professional backgrounds and competencies of the personnel, the force structure vis-a-vis security threats, and the like. Another aspect of this issue worth highlighting is that any further increase in state armed agents must contend with the bloating pension costs of military and uniformed personnel, where the pension cost for 2020 is PhP 114.7 billion as against PhP 71.8 billion for active-service MUP.

As for the sway of educational attainment in performance satisfaction ratings, it appears only terminal degrees (doctorate) significantly shift opinions in the negative. Differences between bachelors' and masters' degrees are negligible, indicating that educational background has less of an explanatory power in explaining the sample's variance than professional background. Similarly, women on average also tend to be dissatisfied with the administration's performance as compared to men.

D. International Security

	INTERNATIONAL SECURITY	TOTAL	SECTOR					EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			GENDER	
			Academe	Government (Outside Security Sector)	Government (Civilian in Security Sector)	Government (Uniformed Personnel)	Private Sector	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate	Male	Female
	QUADRILATERAL SECURITY											
1	The Quad undermines the role of ASEAN in enhancing regional security.	2.98	2.71	2.60	3.04	3.13	2.50	2.92	3.02	3.00	3.02	2.81
2	The Quad can help manage tensions in the South China Sea.	3.95	3.78	3.70	3.87	4.01	4.03	3.98	3.91	4.06	4.01	3.74
3	Philippine participation in the activities of the Quad can improve its national security.	4.11	4.03	3.91	4.04	4.13	4.35	4.13	4.09	4.15	4.12	4.08
4	China will resent Philippine participation in the activities of the Quad.	3.82	3.74	3.87	3.82	3.80	3.93	3.86	3.80	3.72	3.86	3.74

Table 4: *Perceptions on the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue*

Respondents are generally neutral on the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or the "Quad".[2] Filipino security experts surveyed are generally "neutral" (2.98) on whether the Quad undermines the centrality of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a regional security mechanism where disputes are resolved or settled. This is consistent with the results of a 2019 survey of security experts on the same topic. It was found that while the Quad does not compete with the ASEAN-led regional security architecture, respondents were ambivalent about whether it undermines ASEAN centrality (Arugay, Willoughby, Amador 2019). Across the board, respondents also positively affirmed the Quad's role in managing tensions in the South China Sea and its positive benefit to the Philippines' geopolitical position and national security. Notably, Filipino security experts affirmed that Philippine participation in the Quad's activities will generate animosity with China. The high willingness to support Quad initiatives, despite opposition from China, may therefore be viewed as a community consensus of the need to actively stem China's expanding military footprint and to openly do so if necessary.

The foregoing assessment is consistent with the view of the respondents on international strategic partnerships. On the question of which countries should the Philippines forge security partnerships with, survey results indicate the embeddedness of traditional security partners in strategic thinking across respondents: Japan (91.10%), the United States (85.20%), and Australia (80.20%) – the latter two of which have respective visiting or status of forces agreements in the country. Interestingly,

---

[2] The Quadrilateral Security Dialogue or "Quad" is a strategic dialogue between the United States, Japan, India, and Australia originally launched in 2007 to advance maritime security from East Asia to the Indian Ocean Region. After the sudden withdrawal of Australia in 2008, the post-2017 revival of the Quad and the promulgation of the United States' Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) strategy was viewed by regional observers as a counterweight to China's growing military power and assertiveness in the region.

support for forging security linkages with ASEAN neighbor countries is not as pronounced, notably for Vietnam (48.70%), Indonesia (53.80%), and Malaysia (42.40%) who are the geographically important partners in ensuring freedom of navigation in regional waters and safeguard sea lines of communication.
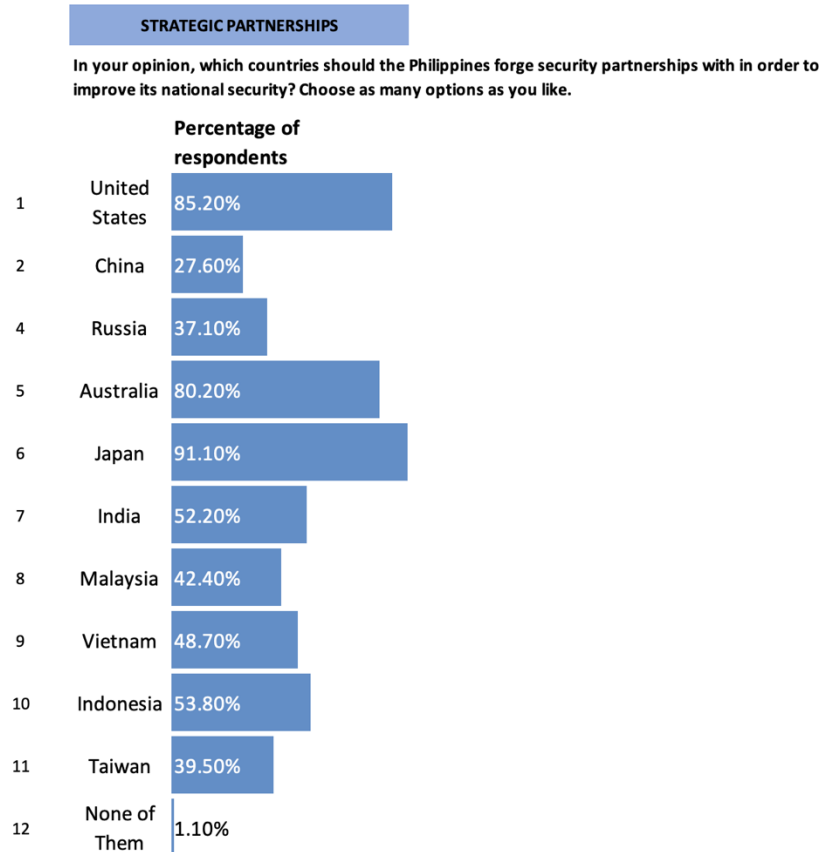
STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

In your opinion, which countries should the Philippines forge security partnerships with in order to improve its national security? Choose as many options as you like.

		Percentage of respondents
1	United States	85.20%
2	China	27.60%
4	Russia	37.10%
5	Australia	80.20%
6	Japan	91.10%
7	India	52.20%
8	Malaysia	42.40%
9	Vietnam	48.70%
10	Indonesia	53.80%
11	Taiwan	39.50%
12	None of Them	1.10%

Figure 7. *Preferred Security Partner-Countries*

These results may indicate the non-automaticity of balance-of-power against China, given that there are historic conflicts between these states as well, such as on Sabah between the Philippines and Malaysia, or the ideological peculiarity of Vietnam vis-a-vis the traditionally anti-Communist Filipino defense establishment. Nevertheless, this highlights that while there is a professed adherence to ASEAN centrality, deep security engagements are still directed out of the region, namely to the United States hubs-and-spokes partners, Australia and Japan.

There also seems to be a sizeable but still minority opinion that the Philippines should begin to tap emerging non-traditional security partners. Cooperation with Russia appears to on the table, while China trails in a far last given territorial conflict. The hesitancy of the security sector experts in the country to break away from orthodox international relations positions should be weighed heavily in light of the administration's policy push for an independent foreign policy characterized as being "friend to all, enemy to none" and the President's ideological disagreement with the United States-led alliance politics.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY											
	TOTAL	SECTOR					EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			GENDER	
INDEPENDENT FOREIGN		Academe	Government (Outside Security Sector)	Government (Civilian in Security Sector)	Government (Uniformed Personnel)	Private Sector	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate	Male	Female
1. The Duterte administration initiated the process of abrogating the Visiting Forces Agreement with the US based on the country's national	3.11	2.19	2.55	3.06	3.51	2.05	2.97	3.21	2.94	3.23	2.72
2. President Duterte's statement in the UN invoking of the arbitral award was based on the country's national security interests.	4.07	3.41	3.85	4.02	4.41	2.78	3.95	4.19	3.57	4.22	3.67
3. ASEAN is a useful avenue for advancing the Philippines' national interests.	4.22	3.90	4.09	4.25	4.33	3.90	4.24	4.24	3.98	4.24	4.15
4. The Philippines should cooperate with China in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.	3.54	3.22	3.43	3.44	3.74	2.85	3.53	3.58	3.53	3.71	3.07
5. The Philippines should cooperate with the United States and the European Union in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.	4.17	4.04	4.06	4.07	4.22	4.23	4.27	4.11	4.21	4.22	4.03

Table 5: *Mean Satisfaction ratings for key Foreign Policy Issues*

Shown in the table above are the opinions of respondents on key foreign policy issues. First, there is evident polarization in sentiments about the President's initiation (and present suspension) of the process to abrogate the Visiting Forces Agreement with the United States. Contrary to common explanations of a defense establishment serving as a guardrail against the collapse of the US-Philippine alliance or its significant weakening, military and uniformed personnel (3.51) fell in line with their Commander-in-Chief on the issue, while it is the civilians (3.06) within the security sector that are more tempered and divided. This should cause concern for the United States that it could not afford to be complacent that the Philippine defense establishment will not strive to renegotiate or engage in alliance management actions that will disturb the status quo.

Second, respondents uniformly positively receive the invocation of the PCA award in international fora such as the United Nations and ASEAN's utility in advancing Philippine national interests. Third, Filipino security experts are also open to cooperation with China, in addition to the United States and the European Union, in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic (3.54), albeit the usual skepticism of academia and the civilian bureaucracy.

E. Security Sector Governance and Reform

In simple terms, Security Sector Reform pertains to a country's institutionalization of systems and observance of practices that pursue national security objectives "in a manner consistent with democratic norms and sound principles of governance, transparency, and the rule of law" (OECD 2004). Functional security sectors require not just administrative efficiency and results-orientation, but also accountability of deputized armed state institutions to the public and its constitutionally guaranteed freedoms and due processes. Some of these mechanisms include (a) substantive civilian oversight and control over security agencies through clear lines of accountability and responsibility and (b) cultivation of reform commitments and doctrines on professionalism such as non-intervention in politics and respect for human rights (ISDS 2011).

The organic link between democratic politics and security sector reform is accentuated in the aftermath of the military-dependent Marcos dictatorship (1972-1986) when the restoration of

democratic norms and institutions required putting the military "back to barracks", preventing the recurrence of military coups d'etat, and civilianization of top government posts (delos Reyes and Layador 2014; De Castro 2010).

		TOTAL	SECTOR					EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			GENDER	
			Academe	Government (Outside Security Sector)	Government (Civilian in Security Sector)	Government (Uniformed Personnel)	Private Sector	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate	Male	Female
1	The supremacy of duly constituted civilian authority is respected by the security sector.	4.09	2.91	2.94	3.98	4.60	3.2	4.02	4.18	3.53	4.31	3.45
2	The Duterte administration is more effective in promoting national security by appointing retired military generals to civilian positions.	3.55	1.90	2.00	3.23	3.99	2.13	3.46	3.39	2.64	3.61	2.60
3	The military is capable of defeating the country's communist insurgency by the end of the Duterte administration in 2022.	3.01	1.74	2.21	3.07	3.47	2.03	3.14	3.03	2.38	3.22	2.38
4	The military enjoys the public's trust and confidence.	3.98	2.74	2.75	4.02	4.50	2.97	3.96	4.08	3.28	4.25	3.20
5	The Duterte administration has sufficiently provided for the means for military modernization and capability-building.	3.66	2.75	2.96	3.73	4.02	2.80	3.71	3.68	3.34	3.82	3.20
6	The military should be more externally-oriented toward external defense than internal security or peace and order.	4.05	3.68	3.79	4.19	4.21	3.47	4.09	4.08	3.72	4.14	3.82

Table with heading: **SECURITY SECTOR REFORM**

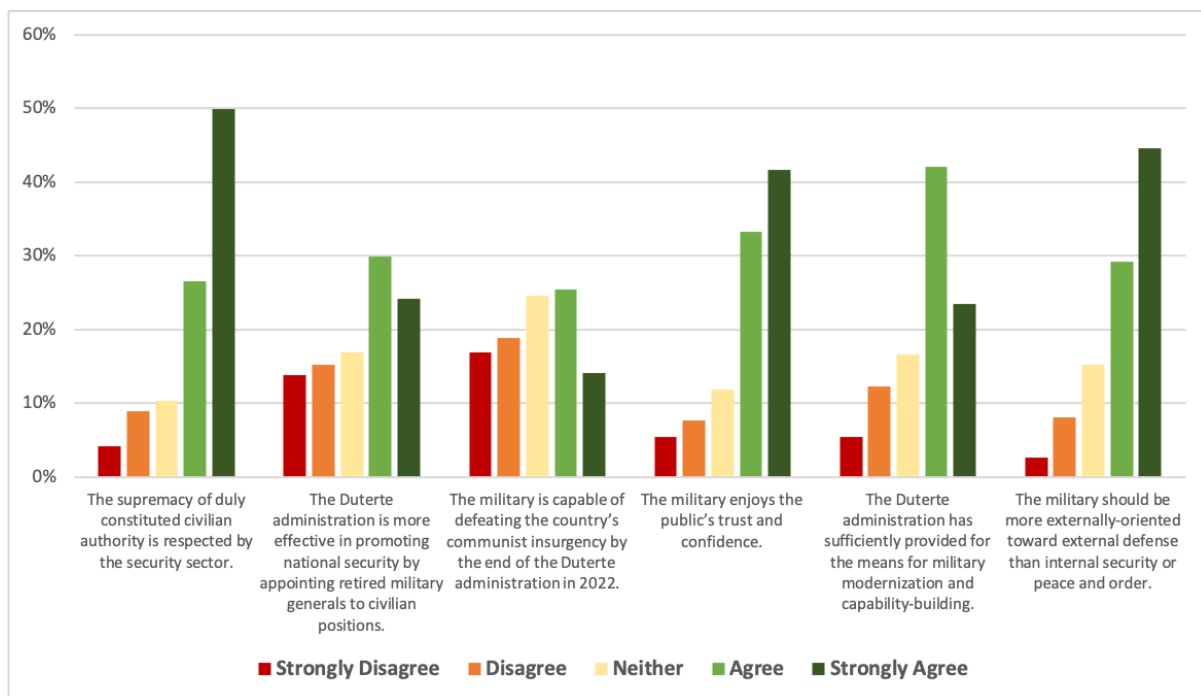**Table 6.** *Security Sector Reform (Mean Satisfaction Ratings)*

Figure 8. *Security Sector Reform (Distribution)*

1. Civilian Control

On the question of whether the supremacy of the duly constituted civilian authority is respected by the security sector, the whole sample average rating is 4.09 or "agree". However, as noted in Table 6 above, the opinion is polarized when disaggregated by sector. Uniformed personnel had a high self-rating of 4.60 (strongly agree) on the matter – an evaluation that is not shared by the academe (2.91) or even civil servants outside the security sector (2.94). This finding is consistent with another

2019 survey by the authors of this report, which found that only 36% of surveyed civilian security experts outside the Defense establishment agreed that the AFP has successfully undertaken security sector reform, while an overwhelming 75% of security sector personnel believed so (Willoughby, Arugay, Amador 2019).

As Croissant (2011, 1) notes, "in the Philippines, consecutive civilian governments forged their symbiotic relationship with military elites, which allows civilian rule to survive. At the same time, however, military officers demand material rewards, political influence on the government, and expanded decision-making powers". The military continues to play a major role especially in areas beset by non-state armed actors. Such was the case of Mindanao which was in a state of Martial Law from 2017 to 2019 following the Daesh-linked terrorist rebellion in Marawi City.

In this context, absent the definitive settlements of domestic peace and order situation, the Philippines is a textbook example of an insufficient *de jure* civilian control over the military through the commander-in-chief. As Alagappa (2001 in Croissant et. al. 2013) notes, the "weight and role of coercion in governance" influences civil-military relations and consequent control of the former over the latter.

Views however become diametrically opposed in items no. 2 and 3 for this subsection. First, on the question of whether the Duterte administration is more effective in promoting national security by appointing retired military generals to civilian positions, both civilian and uniformed personnel in the security sector leaned in the affirmative, with 3.23 and 3.99 average scores respectively ("agree"). Such a view is opposed by government officials outside of the security sector, the academe, and the private sector, all within 1.90-2.13 average rating or "strongly disagree". On the whole, the extent of polarization is visualized in Figure 8 above: 54% agree that retired generals in civilian posts promote national security and 46% do not or are neutral on the topic.

This finding above may warrant further study given the worrisome implications of potential complacency of armed state agents as to what constitutes as proper "respect" to the duly constituted civilian authority, and whether this is accorded not just to the President as commander-in-chief, but to other civilian government instrumentalities and representatives.

Secondly, as seen in Table 6, experts outside the security sector are highly skeptical if the military can defeat the Communist Party of the Philippines-New Peoples' Army by 2022, in lockstep with the target of the administration. The polarization in opinion is also evident in Figure 8. Belief within the security sector is also tempered. At 3.07 average rating, civilian employees of the defense establishment are neutral on the question, while the military's expectations – although still positive – are more guarded when contrasted with answers to other questions. In contrast, according to a public opinion poll, 79% of Filipinos believe that the military can defeat the CPP-NPA (Social Weather Stations 2020a). Whether unmet expectations will affect public confidence in the AFP is yet to be determined.

On both subsection questions 2 and 3, females are significantly opposed to the appointment of military generals in civilian posts and are less optimistic in terms of the feasibility of defeating the communist insurgency by 2022.

2. Trust and Confidence in the Military

This survey also provided evidence on the misperception of academics, members of the private sector, and civilian public servants when reading the public mood: they are likely to believe that the Armed Forces do not enjoy the trust and confidence of the public (2.74 to 2.97 or "disagree"). Here, the negatively slanted perceptions of these sectors become a liability since the question is a purely empirical one.

According to latest surveys from the Social Weather Stations (2020a), the net satisfaction rating of the Armed Forces of the Philippines is +74 ("excellent"), of which only 5% are dissatisfied. This finding is uniform across income class and sex. Further, since 2007, there has been a steady increase in satisfaction with the AFP, and a concomitant decrease in dissatisfaction – all these led to historic highs in 2017-2019. Consequently, the self-perception of the security sector that they are trusted by the public is accurate, whether by civilians (4.05, "agree") and uniformed personnel (4.50, "strongly agree).

The popularity of the military should be strongly considered when it comes to the inability of political opposition to muster broad public support for policy and strategized criticisms against the undoing of SSR under the present administration. President Duterte has withstood the flak he drew relating to the militarization of the government, which was on full display particularly in the country's COVID-19 response effort. Interestingly, local polling firm Pulse Asia reported that 8 in 10 Filipinos have positive opinions on the administration's handling of the crisis, with only 6% dissatisfied and 10% ambivalent on the issue (Gavilan 2020).

In the final analysis, the public itself may impose no electoral or popularity costs to the President for his Caesarism and general dependence on the military. Connected to the rising placement of retired military men in high civilian office (e.g., Cabinet-level positions) is the political environment of high public support for the military and lack of clear electoral signals expressing dissatisfaction for the present direction.

3. Mission-Orientation

	TOTAL	SECTOR					EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT			GENDER	
SECURITY SECTOR REFORM											
		Academe	Government (Outside Security Sector)	Government (Civilian in Security Sector)	Government (Uniformed Personnel)	Private Sector	Bachelor's	Master's	Doctorate	Male	Female
The Duterte administration has sufficiently provided for the means for military modernization and capability-building.	3.66	2.75	2.96	3.73	4.02	2.80	3.71	3.68	3.34	3.82	3.20
The military should be more oriented toward external defense than internal security or peace and order.	4.05	3.68	3.79	4.19	4.21	3.47	4.09	4.08	3.72	4.14	3.82

Table 7. *Perceptions on military modernization and mission thrust*

Modernization of the Armed Forces

As summarized in Table 7, the distribution of responses to satisfaction with the modernization and capability build-up of the armed forces is skewed positively for security sector insiders, while academics and bureaucrats in civilian agencies are more skeptical. Pursuant to Republic Act 7898 of 1995, the Armed Forces of the Philippines undertook a 15-year AFP Modernization Program with five components, namely organizational development, material and technology development, base development, human resource development, and doctrines development. It has been documented however that the implementation of the first modernization attempt has been severely limited by the lack of multi-year financial planning, acquisition planning, and absorptive capacity of the procuring entities (Habulan 2002). Moreover, only PhP 33.9 billion was released under the modernization program and had to be supplemented with additional funding in 2012 with the Revised AFP Modernization Program (Republic Act 10349) (David et. al. 2017).

The revised modernization program has met more success from a procurement perspective, since PhP 133 billion has so far been appropriated from 2012 to 2020, far exceeding the 17 years of its preceding modernization program. Notable procurement of assets includes anti-submarine helicopters, multi-purpose attack crafts, amphibious assault vehicles, force protection equipment, and the much-publicized BRP Jose Rizal and BRP Antonio Luna missile-armed frigates for territorial defense operations (Nepomuceno 2019; Department of National Defense 2020). However, as pointed out by senators in the 2021 budget deliberations, the AFP still suffers from procurement delays given that the abovementioned amount is only half of the programmed PhP 375 billion until 2022 (Talabong 2020). It is also notable that President Duterte has secured solid support from military and uniformed personnel (MUP) by running on a law-and-order platform as well as by increasing their monthly base compensation to an average of 58.7% increase across all MUP ranks in 2018 (Department of Budget and Management 2018)

As previously noted, outsiders of the security sector are generally not satisfied, posting a borderline "disagree" and "neutral" response for the academe, government employees outside the security sector, and the private sector. The contrasting opinions between the military as security providers and private citizens as security clients is noteworthy. For one thing, the AFP is in a better position to assess the sufficiency of equipment, infrastructure, and materiel upgrades they have received under the ongoing Revised AFP Modernization Program in order to perform their mandate. On the other hand, dissatisfaction with the modernization by outsiders can also be influenced by a "usage

problem", rather than lack of equipment per se, given the administration's perceived soft stance toward China (Mogato 2017). It was not lost on observers in 2019 that Indonesia and Vietnam have physically deployed maritime assets to confront Chinese intrusions in their territorial waters (Asia Sentinel 2019).

This may indicate either that the public information campaign of the AFP needs improvement in order to showcase taxes well-spent on capability upgrades, or that present procurement priorities are not proceeding at a satisfactory pace to the public. In any case, the Armed Forces would do well to mind external engagements and relationships, chief of which is public opinion which will be a deciding factor in legislative support to bankroll costly big-ticket modernization projects in the future, as opposed to other budgetary priorities. Failure to communicate the benefits and strategic direction of the modernization program will jeopardize the creation of a credible defense posture.

Further, the meteoric rise of China in regional geopolitics and its ongoing territorial dispute with the Philippines in the West Philippine Sea/South China Sea weighs heavily in the public consciousness.[3] With frequent incursions in its contested territory (fishing, Chinese-government militarization of the area), 2019 survey results show that the 4th most mentioned priority topic that should be discussed by the President in his annual State of the Nation Address is the "issue with China-Philippine Sovereignty", which is also alarmingly the *top* concern of the leading income groups (Class ABC) given they are not generally hit by recurring bread-and-butter issues of Class D and E (Pulse Asia 2019).

External Defense Mission

Anent to this, on the question of whether the military should focus more on external defense than internal security, a resounding 73.91 percent of security experts believe that it is high time for the shift. As disclosed by the Department of National Defense (2020), the future-years defense program of the AFP shifts the focus of capability upgrades from internal security operations to territorial defense operations. As envisioned, the "credible defense posture" of the country covers the acquisition of territorial defense capabilities, particularly for air and maritime defense in the West Philippine Sea and the Philippine Rise.

What is worth noting however is that while this transition appears to be a conventional wisdom, a Pew Research Study found that Filipinos held internal security and non-traditional concerns at the top of their agenda, namely terrorism and violent extremism, and climate change (Pushter and Manevich 2017). Public opinion may actually be a centrifugal force which nudges the military leadership to be entangled in development support (e.g., humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, post-conflict or calamity infrastructure and development), as well as internal security functions (e.g., against local terrorist groups). It is insiders of the security sector who favor a recalibration to external

---

[3] Notably, the 2019 Reed Bank incident where a Philippine fishing boat sank after being allegedly rammed by a Chinese vessel.

defense missions (4.21 "strongly agree"), while the private sector (3.47, "agree") and academe (3.68, "agree") reported lower average ratings.

In addition to this, it may be argued that the targeted focus on external security can be derailed when one considers the gravity of counterterrorism problems in Mindanao especially in the aftermath of the 2017 Marawi siege and since Martial Law was just lifted in year-end 2019. Furthermore, security concerns vis-à-vis China are hitting closer to home. 70% of Filipinos reported concern about the increasing number of foreign Chinese workers in the country, and a simple majority of 52% thought of the rapid migration as a national security threat (Social Weather Stations 2020b). There are also serious ongoing public discussions particularly on the security and privacy of imported information and communications technology (e.g. 5G technology). All things considered, like the United States' National Defense Strategy, a "whole-of-nation" approach to appropriately address security concerns with China may lean toward a balance between external and internal defense, rather than clear-cut focus on external defense.

Nevertheless, given the geopolitical unrest brewing in the region and increase media coverage and salience of territorial defense, the AFP will need to adjust to the reality of external defense missions that are more Navy and Air Force-centric given the logical precedence of air and maritime defense zones in archipelagic defense. This too may prove cumbersome, given the historical primacy of the land forces and the Army in AFP leadership roles which are geared toward internal security operations. Important reforms can include the institutionalization of joint forces operations and command structures, reduction of inter-service rivalry, and lessening of reliance on area commands in favor of strategic multi-purpose commands that can be redeployed to different areas, as needed.

Ultimately, the foregoing could mean that long-held advocacies to prioritize external defense missions may be overtaken by the changing nature of warfare and the security environment itself. Relatedly, serious thought must be put in the "full-spectrum" acquisition of capabilities responsive to a broad set of traditional and nontraditional threats, as revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Hedging will therefore be an important concept not just for foreign policy but in defense acquisition and force structuring, and the dispersal of modernization efforts to security agencies beyond the Armed Forces. An example of this is the much-needed modernization of intelligence and cyber capabilities of security agencies outside the ambit of the Department of National Defense, such as the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, Department of Information and Communications Technology, National Bureau of Investigation, and the Philippine National Police.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations

This report is based on a comprehensive survey on the perceptions of the members of the Filipino security community composed of academics, researchers, uniformed officials from the security sector, and other members of the civilian bureaucracy regarding issues on Philippine national security. This survey covered important strategic topics such as awareness and evaluation of national

security policy, the performance of the national administration on providing security, international security partnerships, and security sector reform and governance.

Firstly, the survey found that the Philippine strategic community is aware of the critical role of a coherent national security policy. They are mostly familiar with the set of policies and recognizes their necessary value in realizing national security goals. However, satisfaction ratings for the present set of national security documents vary between the private and public sector varies. Expectedly, uniformed personnel registers some of the highest ratings across all national security documents.

Secondly, the Philippine strategic community continues to value internal security threats with high degree and deems these as the most important security issues faced by the country. The COVID-19 pandemic, violent extremism, and the communist insurgency are the top security concerns. It is also noteworthy that the Duterte administration has emphasized the need of stemming out internal insecurities. The pandemic may have exacerbated this. Precisely, the pandemic may have contributed to the Philippine strategic community's continued valuation of internal security threats as non-medical interventions and preventive measures and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) operations became key policy solutions for the pandemic.

Thirdly, the Philippine strategic community are not fully convinced that the national government has made strides in addressing national security issues. As the incumbent administration closes on the fourth year of its tenure, it seems that many still await results in the accounting of national security objectives. According to the survey, highest ratings were registered in the administration's performance in addressing internal security threats. This points to the more inward-looking perspective adopted by the government in its pursuit of security goals.

Fourthly, the Philippine strategic community continues to place significant valuation in the country's traditional allies for security partnerships. Despite the national administration's desire and motivation to diversify its security portfolio beyond the ambit of traditional alliances – such as China and Russia – survey respondents remain conservative in the pursuit of alliances. This finding is also supported by overall public opinion that generally enjoys continued trust in countries seeking to preserve the international order, mainly Japan, the US, and Australia.

Lastly, the Philippine strategic community remains convinced of the reformist stance of the AFP but prefers for the armed forces to fully commit to an externally oriented defense management. There has been a successful diffusion of the perception that the country's security sector continues to embark on reforms and transformation processes. There is also confidence in the potential of the ongoing modernization process to fully professionalize the military. However, survey respondents seem to believe that the culmination of this process means a de-politicized security sector whose mission is focused on external defense and the protection of the country from external threats.

Given these findings, this report makes the following policy recommendations in the areas of policy consistency, non-traditional concerns, transparency and accountability, external relations, and doctrines.

Firstly, a single, coherent National Security Policy transcending party lines, personality and transactional politics, as well as elections cycles needs to be produced. Succeeding administrations must give emphasis to this in the same fashion it gives importance to development and reform agenda in the public sector. The presence of a single, coherent document not only prompts the government, as a whole, to strategize with foresight and anticipation, it also determines area priorities requiring much needed funding. On the accountability side, a single, coherent document makes it easier for the security community to follow the government's aims and strategies.

Further on the note of non-traditional concerns, the pandemic will have to be considered in the crafting of a new national security policy. Responding through a whole-of-nation approach is crucial because it balances and complements the roles of the military and the civilian security sector. The next administration will also have to evaluate whether completely shifting its focus from internal security to external defense can find strong support within the security sector.

Inwardly, given the checklist of priorities found in official security-related documents, it is important that the Administration must show the gains in other areas beside internal security. Strides toward achieving internal security goals are recognized in the survey but this mostly reflects the views of the majority (military respondents).

Outwardly, managing relations with allies and partner states need to be prioritized as the survey shows that there is no moving away yet from these countries. In particular, while improving relations with China is important, the messaging must not be that it is to the detriment of existing relations with countries. It is important to take note that traditional allies and partners continues to enjoy positive reception within the Philippines since there is convergence in the views of the security community and the general public.

Lastly, the AFP must accept that it must start focusing on external defense and security and move doctrines and resources toward this strategic goal. Trust in the AFP, as an institution, among respondents remain. This, however, is coupled with the view that external security needs to be taken seriously. Reforming and modernizing the military must also be toward the end goal of defending the state from external aggression and breach of territorial integrity.

V. References

___. 2018. National Security Strategy (2018-2022): Security and Development for Transformational Change and Well-Being of the Filipino People. Quezon City: National Security Council.

___. 2017. National Security Policy (2017-2022): For Change and Well-Being of the Filipino People. Quezon City: National Security Council.

Abad, Mercedes and Ophelia Ramirez. 2008. "Polling in Developing Democracies- The Case of the Philippines". In Public Opinion Polling in a Globalized World, edited by Carballo M. and Hjelmar U. Berlin: Springer.

Abiad, Abdul, et. al. 2018. "The Impact of Trade Conflict in Developing Asia". ADB Economics Working Paper No. 566. Mandaluyong City: Asian Development Bank.

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). 2017. "Development Support and Security Plan: Kapayapaan (2017-2022)". Quezon City: AFP. Accessed at https://www.afp.mil.ph/images/AFP-Development-Support-and--Security-Plan-Kapayapaan-2017-2022.pdf

Arugay, A, C. Misalucha-Willoughby, J. Amador III. 2020. Quad to Zero: Filipino Perceptions of the Quad, the Indo-Pacific, and the Alliance System. Quezon City: KAS and APPFI.

Asia Sentinel. 2019. "As Other South China Sea Nations Defy China, Duterte Capitulates". July 25, 2019. Accessed at https://www.asiasentinel.com/p/as-other-south-china-sea-nations-defy-china-duterte-capitulates

Ayoob, M. 1995. The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict, and the International System. Boulder: Lynne Rienner.

Beltran, Michael. 2020. "The Philippines' Pandemic Response: A Tragedy of Errors". The Diplomat. May 12, 2020. Accessed here: https://thediplomat.com/2020/05/the-philippines-pandemic-response-a-tragedy-of-errors/

Castro, Renato Cruz. 2010. "The twenty-first century Armed Forces of the Philippines: orphans of counter-insurgency or military geared for the long war of the century?". Contemporary Politics 16 (2): 153-171.

Collins, Alan. 2004. "State-Induced Security Dilemma: Maintaining the Tragedy." Cooperation and Conflict 39, 1: 27-44.

Croissant, Aurel. 2011. "Civilian Control over the Military in East Asia". Seoul: East Asia Institute.

Croissant, Aurel, David Kuehn, Philip Lorenz, and Paul Chambers. 2013. "Explaining Civilian Control of the Military in New Democracies: In: Democratization and Civilian Control in Asia. Critical Studies of the Asia Pacific Series. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Crosbie, Thomas, and Meredith Kleykamp. 2020. "Civilian Military Experts: Findings from the 2017 Survey of American Military Experts". In Rethinking Military Professionalism for the

Changing Armed Forces, edited by Krustal Hachey, Tamir Libel, and Waylon Dean. Canada: Springer.

Deinla, Imelda. 2019. "Hopes and tempered promises for the Bangsamoro Organic law". The Interpreter, Lowy Institute. Accessed at https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/hopes-and-tempered-promises-bangsamoro-organic-law

Department of Budget and Management. 2018. "President Duterte fulfills campaign promise, doubles salaries of cops, soldiers".

Department of National Defense. 2020. "2019 Accomplishment Report". Quezon City: Department of National Defense. Accessed at https://www.dnd.gov.ph/PDF2020/Accomplishment/AR%202019.pdf

Dizon, Nikko. 2020. "Duterte and his generals: a shock and awe response to the pandemic". Rappler. July 31, 2020. Accessed at https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/in-depth/duterte-shock-and-awe-coronavirus-pandemic-response-generals

Durch, William. 1999. "Searching for National Security: Threat and Response in the Age of Vulnerability". Washington DC: The Henry Stimson Center.

Engstrom, Jeffrey. 2018. "Systems Confrontation and System Destruction Warfare: How Chinese People's Liberation Army Seeks to Wage Modern Warfare". Santa Monica, California: RAND Corporation.

Galang, Mico. 2019. The Philippines' National Defense Strategy- Analysis. Eurasia Review. December 20, 2019. Accessed at https://www.eurasiareview.com/20122019-the-philippines-national-defense-strategy-analysis/

Gavilan, Jodesz. 2020. "Pulse Asia: 8 in 10 Filipinos approve of Duterte gov't's coronavirus response". Rappler. Accessed at https://www.rappler.com/nation/filipinos-approval-duterte-government-covid-19-response-pulse-asia-survey-september-2020

Green, Michael, and Nicholas Szechenyi. 2014. Power and Order in Asia: A Survey of Regional Expectations. Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Grøholt, Knut and John Higley. 1972. National Elite Surveys: Some Experience from Norway. Acta Sociologica 15(2): 168-183.

Habulan, Antonio Atanacio Jr. 2002. "Acquisition planning for the Armed Forces of the Philippines modernization program". Thesis. United States Naval Postgraduate School.

Hedman, Eva-Lotta. 2010. "The Politics of Public Opinion in the Philippines". Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs 29 (4): 97-118.

Human Rights Watch. 2019. "World Report 2019: Syria, Events of 2018." https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/syria.

Jervis, R. 1978. "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma." World Politics 30, 2: 167-214.

Kolodziej, E. 1992. "Renaissance in Security Studies? Caveat Lector!" International Studies Quarterly 36, 4: 421-438.

Krause, K., M.C. Williams. 2018. "Security and 'Security Studies': Conceptual Evolution and Historical Transformation." In The Oxford Handbook of International Security, edited by Alexandra Gheciu and William C. Wohlforth, 14-28. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lyngaas, Sean. 2019. "Chinese-linked APT10 has been active in the Philippines, researchers say". Cyberscoop. May 24, 2019.

Malig, Jojo. 2012. "Chinese hackers attack more Philippine websites". ABS-CBN News. May 12, 2012. Accessed at https://news.abs-cbn.com/nation/05/12/12/chinese-hackers-attack-more-philippine-websites

Mearsheimer, J.J. 2001. The Tragedy of Great Power Politics. New York: W.W. Norton.

Mogato, Manuel. "Duterte says China's Xi threatened war if Philippines drills for oil". Reuters. May 19, 2017. Accessed at https://www.reuters.com/article/us-southchinasea-philippines-china-idUSKCN18F1DJ

Nepomuceno, Priam. 2019. "BRP Jose Rizal, BRP Antonio Luna first real combat ships for PH". Philippine News Agency, May 21, 2019.

Nye, J. Jr., S.M. Lynn Jones. 1988. "International Security Studies: A Report of a Conference on the State of the Field." International Security 12, 4: 5-27.

OECD. 2004. "Security System Reform and Governance: Policy and Good Practice," Accessed at http://www.oecd.org/development/incaf/31785288.pdf.

Perlez, Jane. 2016. "Rodrigo Duterte and Xi Jinping Agree to Reopen South China Sea Talks". The New York Times. October 20, 2016.

Permanent Court of Arbitration. 2016. "The South China Sea Arbitration (The Republic of the Philippines v. The People's Republic of China)". Accessed at https://pca-cpa.org/en/news/pca-press-release-the-south-china-sea-arbitration-the-republic-of-the-philippines-v-the-peoples-republic-of-china/

Pew Research Center. 2012. "US public, experts differ on China policies". Washington DC: Pew Research Center.

Pulse Asia. 2019. "June 2019 Nationwide Survey on the State of the Nation Address (SONA) of President Rodrigo R. Duterte". http://www.pulseasia.ph/june-2019-nationwide-survey-on-the-state-of-the-nation-address-sona-of-president-rodrigo-r-duterte/

Punongbayan, JC. 2019. "The US-China trade war: where does the Philippines stand?". Rappler. June 4, 2019. Accessed at https://www.rappler.com/voices/thought-leaders/where-does-philippines-stand-us-china-trade-war

Poushter, Jaco and Dorothy Manevich. 2017. "Globally, People Point to ISIS and Climate Change as Leading Security Threats". Pew Research Center,

https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2017/08/01/globally-people-point-to-isis-and-climate-change-as-leading-security-threats/

Ranada, Pia. 2019. "Duterte orders creation of MNLF, gov't coordinating committee". Rappler. August 27, 2019. Accessed at https://www.rappler.com/nation/duterte-creates-mnlf-government-coordinating-committee

Reyes, Allan and Maria Anna Rowena Luz Layador. 2014. "Security Sector Reform in the Philippines". Middle East Institute. Accessed at https://www.mei.edu/publications/security-sector-reform-philippines#_ftn4

Rolfe, Jim. 2007. Asia Pacific Security Survey. Honolulu, hawai'i: East-West Center

Santos, Matikas. 2015. "Chinese hackers stealing digital info from PH gov't agencies". Philippine Daily Inquirer. Accessed at https://technology.inquirer.net/42228/chinese-hackers-stealing-digital-info-from-ph-govt-agencies

Severino, Vincente, Aaron Taliaferro, and Wade Hinkle. 2017. Defense Governance and Management: Implementing the Philippine Defense Reform Program through the Defense System of Management. Virginia: Institute for Defense Analyses.

Snyder, G.H. 1984. "The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics." World Politics 36, 4: 461-495.

Stevens, F.M.S. 2020. "The Great Analogy and the Sino-American Security Dilemma: Foreboding or Fallacious?" Asian Perspective 44, 4: 677-699.

Social Weather Stations. 201a9. "Third Quarter 2019 Social Weather Survey". https://www.sws.org.ph/swsmain/artcldisppage/?artcsyscode=ART-20191205180550

Social Weather Stations. 2020b. "SWS July 3-6, 2020 National Mobile Phone Survey- Report No.4". https://www.sws.org.ph/swsmain/artcldisppage/?artcsyscode=ART-20200719141007

Talabong, Rambo. 2020. "Senators flag snail's pace implementation of AFP modernization". Rapper. October 12, 2020. Accessed at https://www.rappler.com/nation/senators-flag-slow-afp-modernization-program

Tang, Siew Mun, et. al. 2020. "The State of Southeast Asia: 2020". Singapore: ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute.

Walt, S. 1991. "The Renaissance of Security Studies." International Studies Quarterly 35, 2: 211-239.

VI. About the Authors

Julio S. Amador III
Julio S. Amador III is CEO and Founder of the Amador Research Services. He was a former government official specializing in foreign policy and national security. He lectures in different professional schools and serves as resource person on international issues. He was a Fulbright scholar at Syracuse University where he earned his master's degree in International Relations and a certificate in security studies. He was also a member of the inaugural cohort of the KAS Network of Young Asian Security Experts.

Aries A. Arugay, PhD
Dr. Aries A. Arugay is Senior Advisor of the Amador Research Services. He is Professor of Political Science and Associate Dean for Research, Extension, & Publications, College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, University of the Philippines-Diliman. Dr. Arugay is also Editor-in-Chief of *Asian Politics & Policy*, a journal published by Wiley on behalf of the Policy Studies Organization.

Charmaine Misalucha-Willoughby, PhD
Dr. Charmaine Misalucha-Willoughby is Senior Advisor of the Amador Research Services. She is Assistant Professor in the International Studies Department of De La Salle university in Manila, Philippines. Dr. Misalucha-Willoughby was a Visiting Research Fellow under a Japan Foundation grant in the Osaka School of International Public Policy at Osaka University in Japan, as well as a recipient of the inaugural US-ASEAN Fulbright Program.

Justin Keith A. Baquisal
Justin Keith A. Baquisal is a former research associate for regional security at the Asia Pacific Pathways to Progress Foundation. He is currently taking his master's degree in political science at the University of the Philippines Diliman, where he also obtained his bachelor's degree (magna cum laude).