

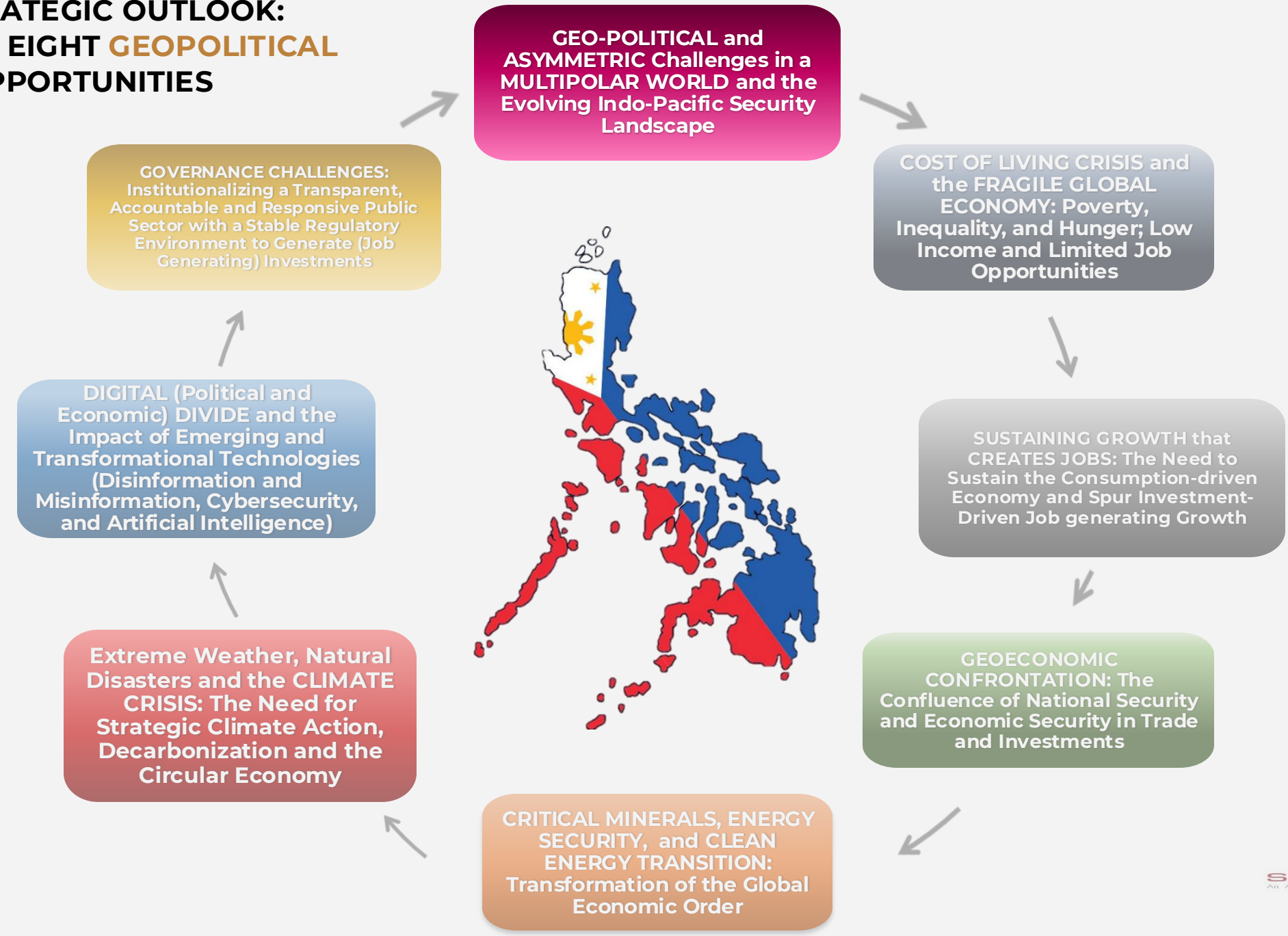
The State of the Philippines in the World in 2025

Prof. Victor Andres “Dindo” Manhit

Founder and CEO

Stratbase Group

2025 GEOSTRATEGIC OUTLOOK: PHILIPPINES' EIGHT **GEOPOLITICAL** RISKS and OPPORTUNITIES



GEOPOLITICAL and ASYMMETRIC Challenges in a MULTIPOLAR WORLD and the Evolving Indo-Pacific Security Landscape

*The Philippines, as a **rising middle power in the Indo-Pacific**, possessing **critical geostrategic value** in the regional security landscape.*

*The peace and stability of the area regularly face persistent challenges and further complicated by the **growth of asymmetric security threats** in the multipolar world.*

Traditional

Geopolitical shifts

Rules-based international order

Defense capacity-building

Alliance building

Multilateral cooperation

Foreign policy integrity

Non-Traditional

Health and emerging infectious diseases

Climate change and environmental resilience

Sustainability goals

Energy security

Critical infrastructures

Critical Minerals

Asymmetric

Gray zone operations

Political warfare and democratic decline

Digital transformation and readiness

Cyberwarfare

Economic security

Disinformation and misinformation

THE WORLD IN 2025

*Rise of Populism, Illiberal
Democracy, and Anti-
Immigration Sentiments*

*Continuing Wars in the
Middle East, Russia's
Invasion of Ukraine,
China's Hegemonic
Aspirations, and North
Korea's Nuclear Threat*



The World in 2025

Global Dis-order or a Complex and Competitive Geopolitical Architecture:
China's aggressive rise and Russia's violent disruptions, aggressive rogue
states: Iran and North Korea



Strategic Importance of the Philippines in the Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific:
Maritime Security and Rise of the QUAD +, AUKUS, and the Trilaterals, Supply Chains Diversification, Data Connectivity, Critical Minerals and the Green Transition

2025 GDP Projection



Rank	Country
1	United States
2	China
3	Germany
4	Japan
5	India
6	United Kingdom
7	France
8	Italy
9	Canada
10	Brazil
11	Russia
12	South Korea
13	Australia
14	Spain
15	Mexico
16	Indonesia
17	Turkey
18	Netherlands
19	Saudi Arabia
20	Switzerland
21	Poland
22	Taiwan
23	Belgium
24	Sweden
25	Ireland
26	Argentina
27	United Arab Emirates
28	Singapore
29	Austria
30	Israel
31	Thailand
32	Philippines
33	Norway
34	Vietnam
35	Malaysia

Source: International Monetary Fund (as of January 2025)

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Philippines is expected to become the **28th largest economy by 2029**, from the **32nd largest economy today**.

S&P Global Market Intelligence says that the Philippines GDP is forecast to reach **USD 1 trillion in 2033**.

The G7 Countries + EU and its Allies.

The Expansion of BRICS and its Evolution into a Geopolitical Bloc but with India and Indonesia Playing a Neutral Role

2016 Arbitral Ruling

China's claims to historic rights, or other sovereign rights or jurisdiction, with respect to the maritime areas of the South China Sea encompassed by the relevant part of the 'nine-dash line' are **contrary to the Convention** and without lawful effect to the extent that they exceed the geographic and substantive limits of China's maritime entitlements under the Convention. The Tribunal also declares that the **Convention superseded any historic rights, or other sovereign rights or jurisdiction**, in excess of the limits imposed therein.

On China's historic rights claim, the Arbitral Tribunal upheld the Philippine position that the **nine-dashed line cannot serve as legal basis to claim any maritime entitlement** (territorial sea, EEZ or ECS) under UNCLOS. In short, **"there is no legal basis for any Chinese historic rights, or sovereign rights and jurisdiction beyond those provided for in the Convention in the waters of the South China Sea encompassed by the 'nine-dash line.'"**

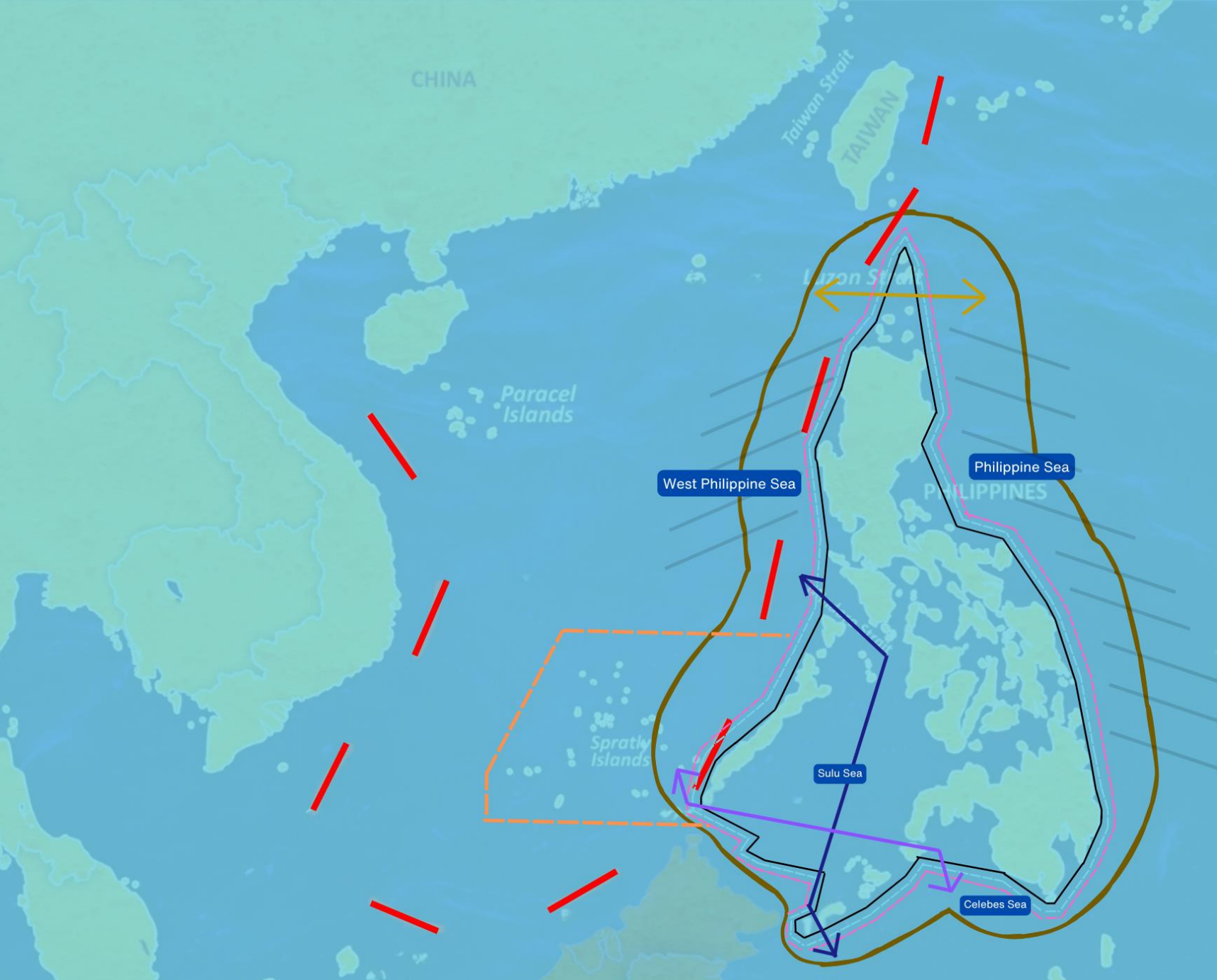
A photograph of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. speaking at a podium. He is wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. The background is a light blue wall with a large, faint graphic of a Philippine flag. The podium has a sign that reads "IISS Shangri-La Dialogue".

“

We have on our side the 1982 UNCLOS and the binding 2016 arbitral award, which affirms what is ours by legal right. In this solid footing and through our clear moral ascendancy, we find the strength to **do whatever it takes to protect our sovereign home to the last square inch, to the last square millimetre.**

The life-giving waters of the West Philippine Sea flow in the blood of every Filipino. We **cannot allow anyone to detach it from the totality of the maritime domain that renders our nation whole.**

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr
Keynote Address for the 21st IISS Shangri-La Dialogue
May 31, 2024



LEGEND

- China's 10-Dash Line
- Philippine EEZ (200 NM)
- Philippine Archipelagic Baselines (RA)
- Territorial Sea (12 NM)
- Contiguous Zone (24 NM)
- Kalayaan Group of Islands

ARCHIPELAGIC SEA LANES ACT

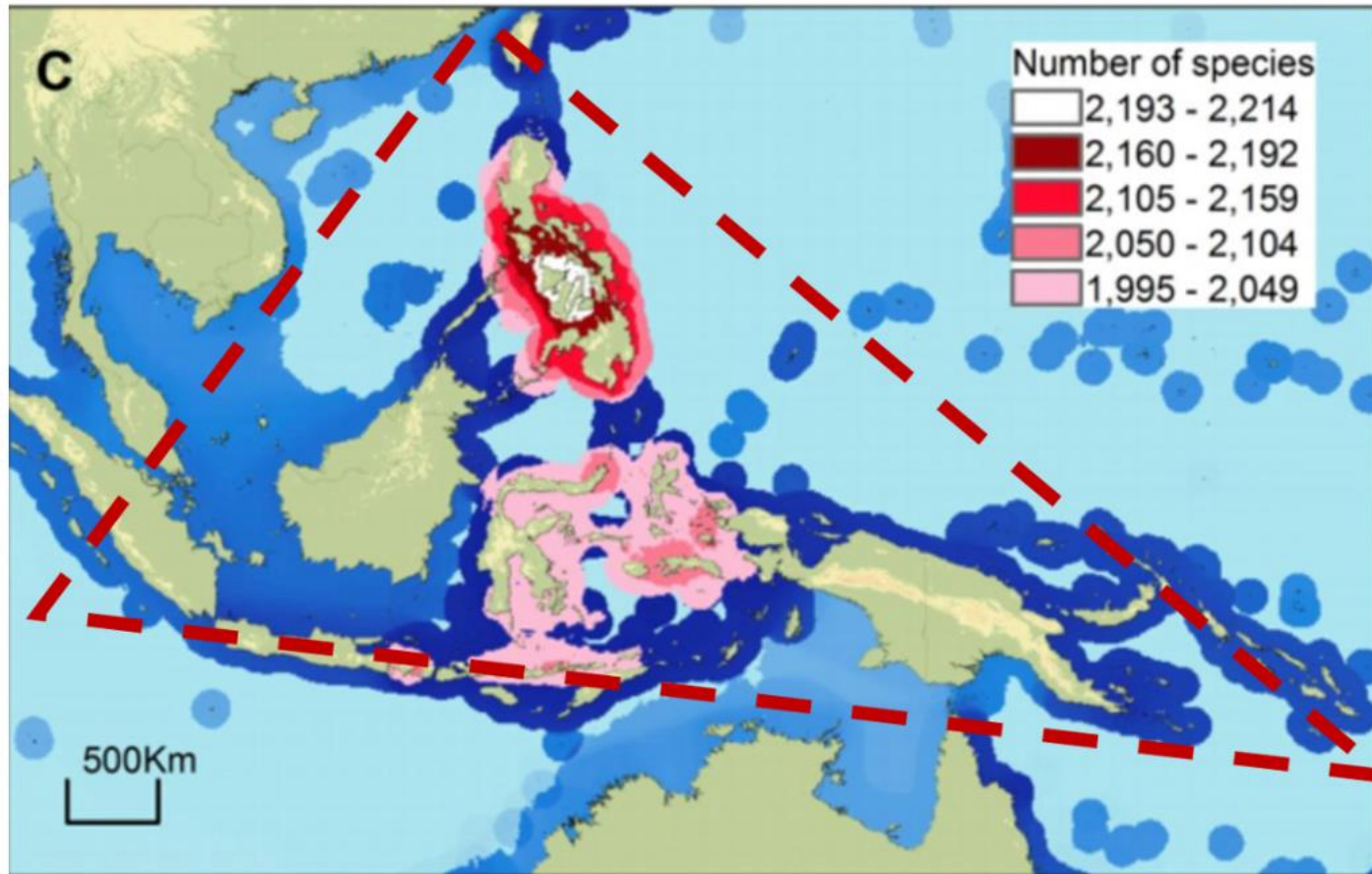
- Philippine Sea - Balintang Channel - West Philippine Sea
- Celebes Sea - Sibutu Passage - Sulu Sea - Cuyo East Pass - Mindoro Strait - West Philippine Sea
- Celebes Sea - Basilan Strait - Sulu Sea - Nasubata Channel - Balabac Strait - West Philippine Sea

MARITIME ZONES ACT

- West Philippine Sea
- Philippine Sea
- Sulu Sea
- Celebes Sea

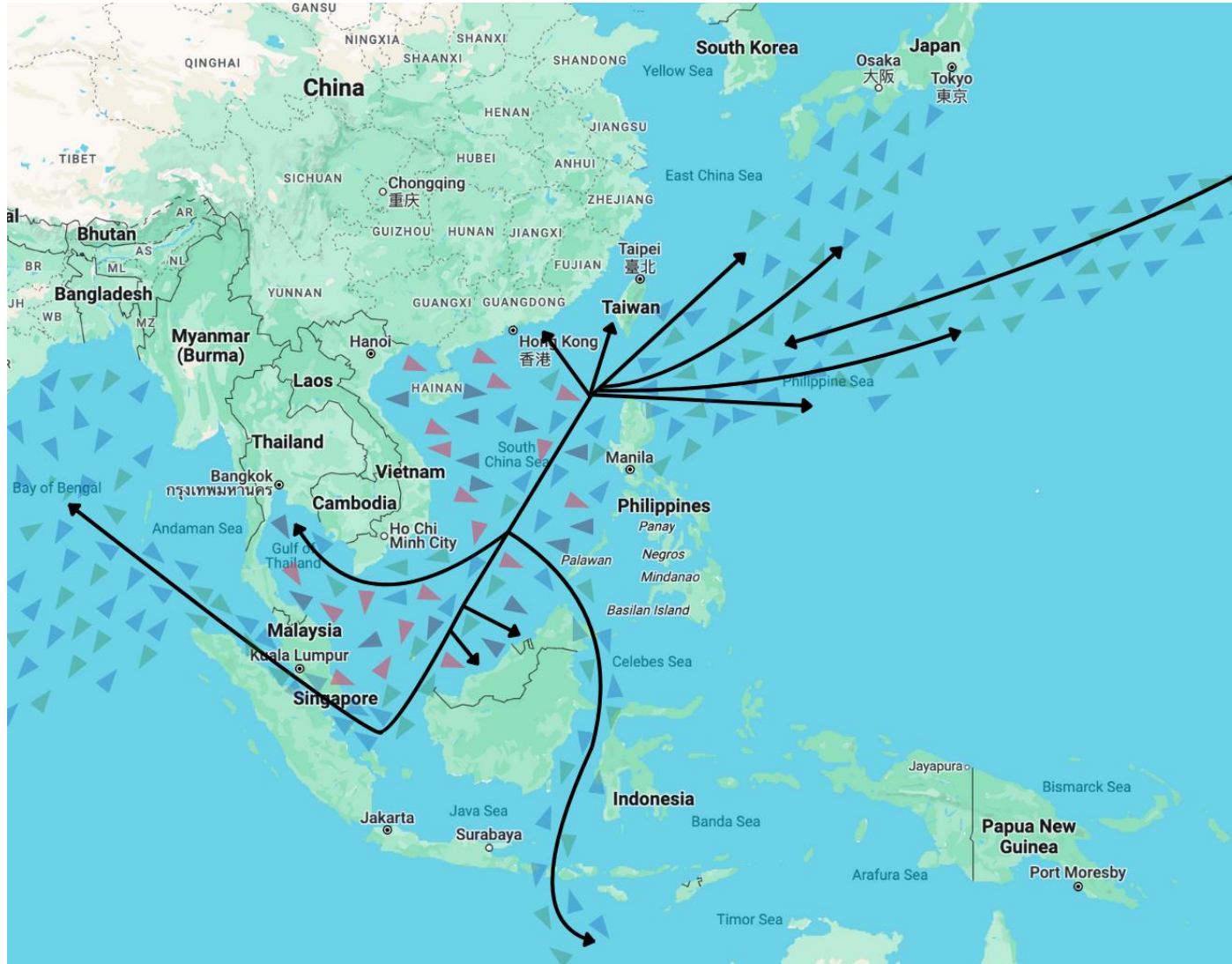
The Maritime Zones Act covers the four main bodies of water in the Philippines.

The Philippines in context: An archipelagic, megadiverse country



- 7,641 islands
- ~37,000 km coastline – 6th longest in the World
- **Territorial Sea (up to 12km): 679,800 sq km**
- Exclusive Economic Zone: 2.2 Million sq km
- Up to 78% of our provinces and 56% of cities/municipalities lie in our coasts
- **Apex of the Coral Triangle Region (biggest location of biodiversity specimen)**
- Part of 17 megadiverse countries in the World
- One of the 36 biodiversity hotspots in the World (Conservation International)





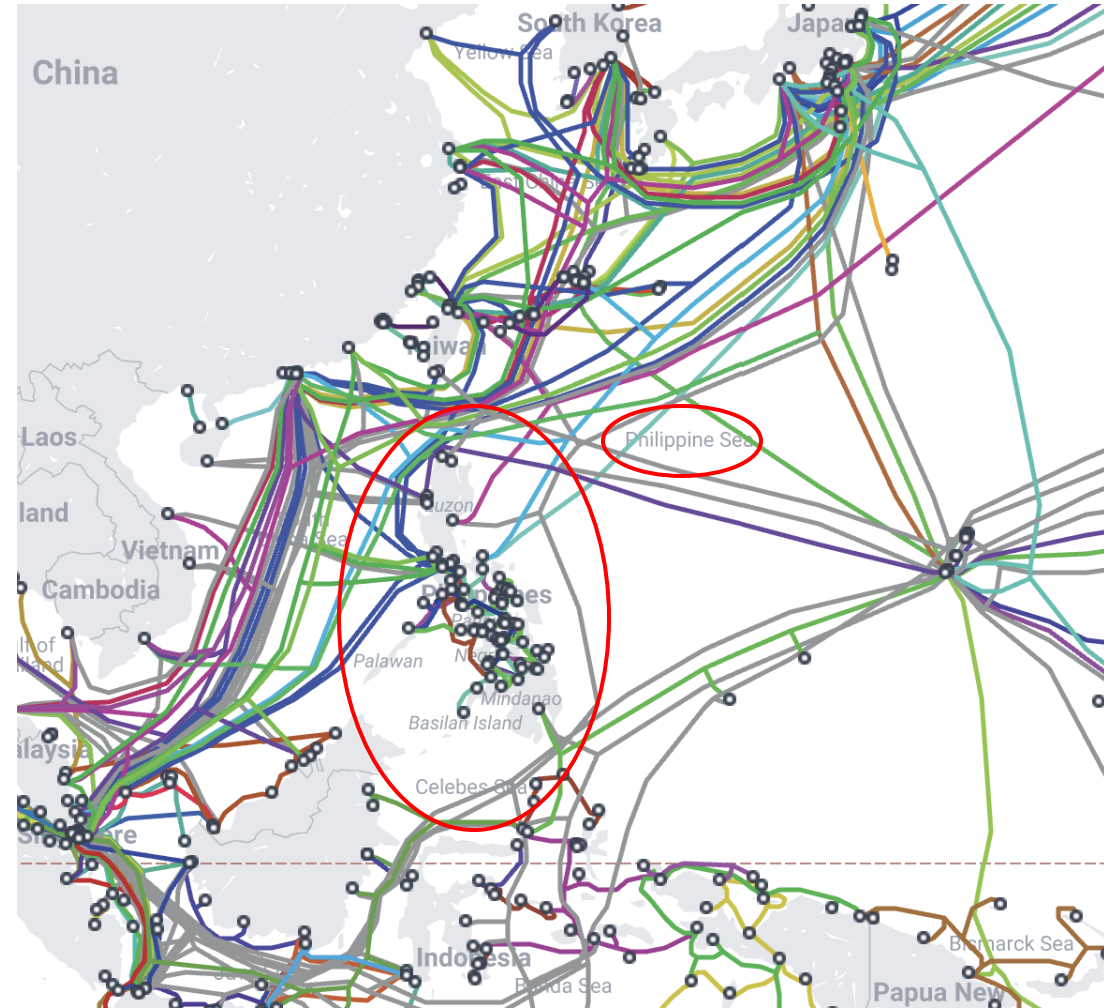
Asia remained the world-leading maritime freight area with Asian ports, in both developed and developing regions, loading around 4.6 billion tons of goods, or about 42% of total goods loaded in ports worldwide and receiving 7.1 billion tons, equivalent to 64% of total goods discharged worldwide. A significant portion of trade passes through the **Malacca Strait, South China Sea and West Philippine Sea**, which makes these strategic waterways vital for the economy of the Indo-Pacific region. More than \$5 trillion in trade flows through its waters each year, one-third of all global maritime commerce.

Map: Generated by Stratbase ADR Institute from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Handbook of Statistics 2023. Retrieved from https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/tdstat48_en.pdf

The **Philippine Seas** serve as a **home to submarine cables** that connect major economic players such as the **United States, European Union, and Japan** among others. Any **disruptions or instability in the West Philippine Sea** not only jeopardize the country's connectivity but also **hinder the seamless flow of information and trade**, impeding economic development and cooperation in the region.

Geopolitical tensions and climate imperatives (energy-intensive nature of submarine cables) are complicating the laying of cost-effective **subsea cable routes** in the Indo-Pacific.

They **imperil the physical backbone of the internet** that underlies trade and the modern interconnected economy.



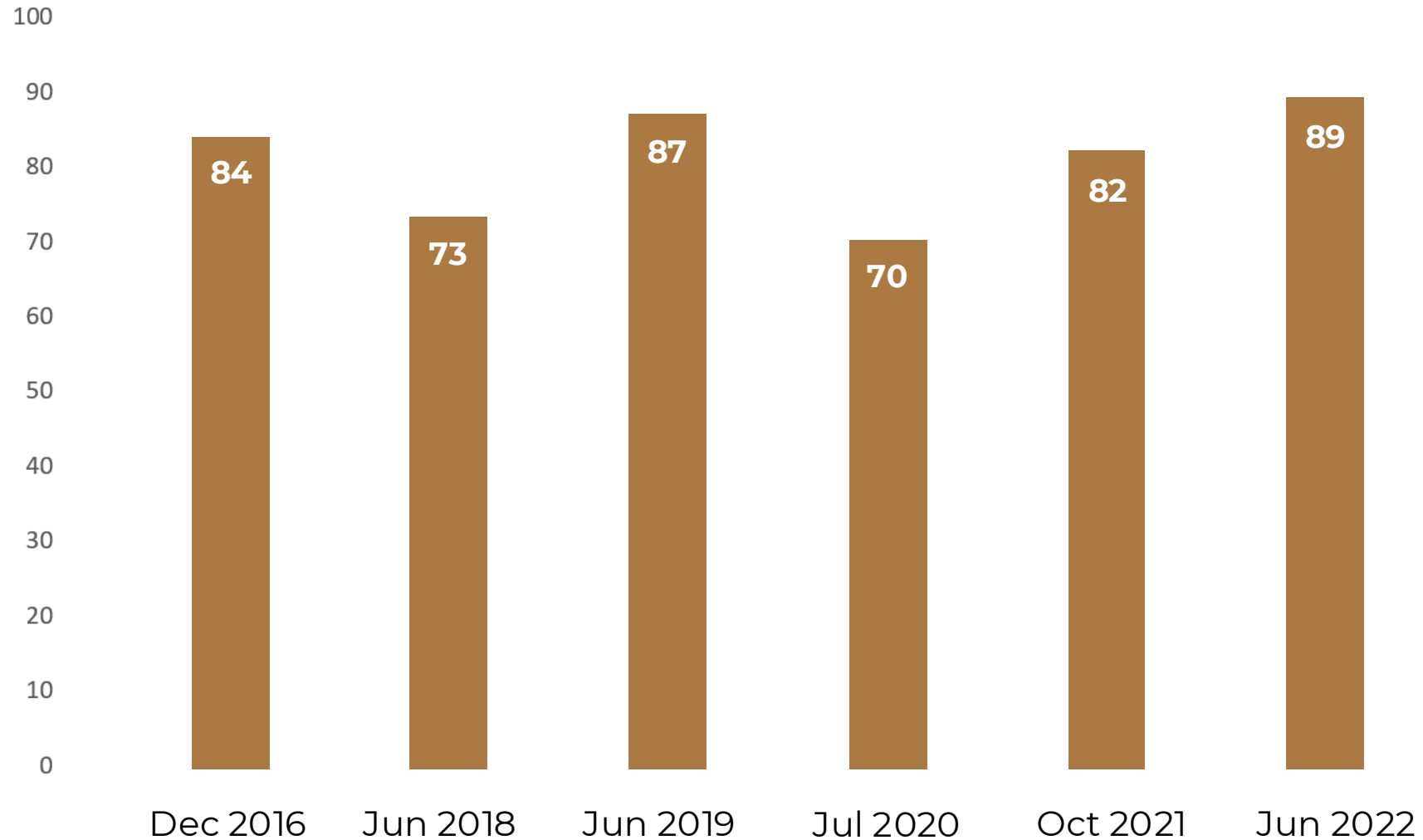
Source: TeleGeography – Submarine Cable Map (as of December 2024)

Asymmetric security challenges include the **GRAY ZONE TACTICS** in **the West Philippine Sea and provocation by state-controlled forces** (relates to the use of non-military means – **BELOW THE THRESHOLD OF ARMED CONFLICT** – to achieve political objectives. Grey zone confrontation is the dangerous 'grey' area between peace and war), that seek to **destabilize our rules-based international order.**

The scope **gray zone operations**, as the name suggests, varies widely. This also includes: **1) political and economic coercion, 2) disinformation and misinformation, 3) malign influence, and 4) provocation by state-controlled forces.**



Agreement on the statement that “The Philippine government should assert its rights in the West Philippine Sea as stipulated in the decision of the Permanent Court of Arbitration”



Source: National surveys commissioned by Stratbase ADRI, conducted by Pulse Asia Research Inc and Social Weather Stations from 2016 to 2022.

AGREE/DISAGREE: “The Philippine government should form an alliance with other countries in defending the Philippines’ territorial and economic rights in the West Philippine Sea”, PHILIPPINES, JUN 2021 AND JUL 2024

Column percentages	<u>Jun '21</u>	<u>Jul '24</u>
Agree	68%	72%
Undecided	22	14
Disagree	9	12
Net*	+59	+60

“

In recent months, the Philippines has seen China firing water cannons, directing lasers to crews, and blocking and ramming Philippine ships. These acts have **jeopardized the safety of the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), and national security.**

In response, the Marcos administration has demonstrated its commitment to addressing these external security challenges. Likewise, the **Philippines is actively investing in its naval capacities**, including **diversifying its defense strategic cooperation with like-minded partners.**

As the Philippines strives to address its maritime challenges, both in the areas of defense and economic security, it looks to like-minded partners for solidarity and mutual assistance.

“...Philippines at maritime crossroads”

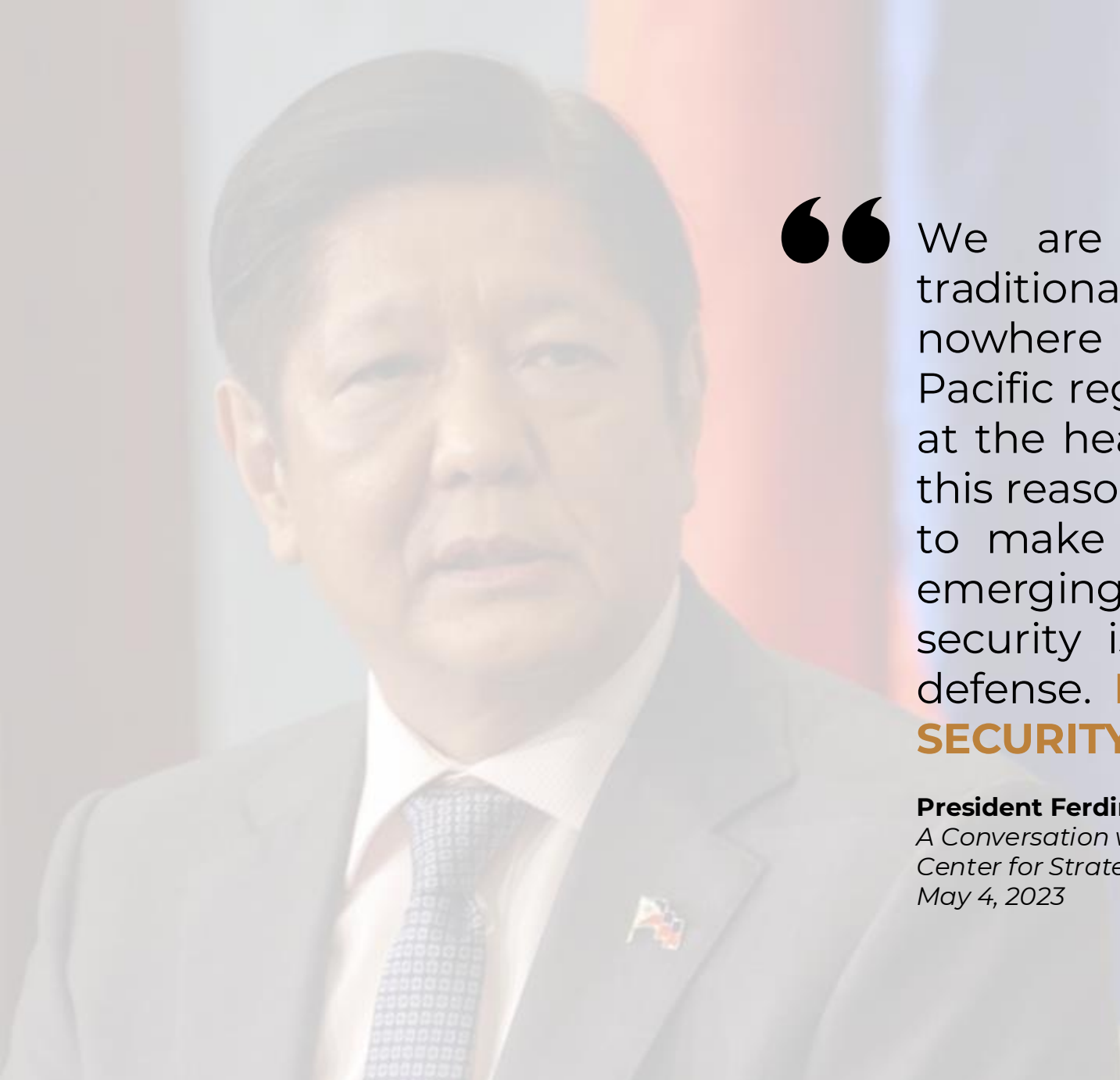
Prof. Dindo Manhit

Philippine Daily Inquirer (January 27, 2025)

**ENTITIES WITH WHOM THE MARCOS ADMINISTRATION SHOULD WORK
WITH AMIDST CONTINUING TENSION IN THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA**

June 17 - 24, 2024 / Philippines
(In Percent / Multiple Response, Up to 3)

Base: Total Interviews, 100%								
Which of the following countries or organizations should the Philippines continue to work with in asserting its rights in the West Philippine Sea? You may choose up to three.	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
		UNITED STATES	74	81	72	78	73	71
JAPAN	44	57	49	25	41	34	44	51
CANADA	41	32	48	40	32	55	39	44
AUSTRALIA	36	29	31	51	40	43	35	36
GREAT BRITAIN / UNITED KINGDOM (UK)	27	23	24	36	27	35	28	14
RUSSIA	17	21	13	14	28	11	18	19
EUROPEAN UNION OR EU	16	14	17	17	15	28	15	16
SOUTH KOREA	15	13	14	20	13	8	14	22
CHINA	5	8	4	8	1	1	6	2
INDIA	3	3	5	2	0	1	4	3
<u>UNAIDED</u>								
Cannot say / Refused / None	5	5	5	1	8	2	6	3

A faded portrait of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of the Philippines, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. He is looking slightly to the right of the camera.

“ We are grappling with both new and traditional threats to our people’s security, nowhere more acutely felt than in the Indo-Pacific region. And the Philippines sits squarely at the heart of the Indo-Pacific region. It is for this reason that I called for evolving our alliance to make it more responsive to present and emerging challenges. It is because national security is no longer simply about territorial defense. **ECONOMIC SECURITY IS NATIONAL SECURITY.**”

President Ferdinand Marcos Jr

A Conversation with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. of the Philippines

Center for Strategic and International Studies

May 4, 2023

GEOECONOMIC CONFRONTATION: The Confluence of National Security and Economics Intensifies the Geopolitics of Trade and Investments



MOST BENEFICIAL ECONOMIC PARTNERS OF THE PHILIPPINES

September 6 - 13, 2024 / Philippines
(In Percent / Multiple Response, Up to 3)

Base: Total Interviews, 100%

Among the following countries, who do you think are the most beneficial economic partners of the Philippines? You may choose up to three.

	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
UNITED STATES	66	74	75	63	46	59	66	67
JAPAN	43	58	52	37	21	44	43	42
AUSTRALIA	32	36	32	27	32	26	34	24
CANADA	31	23	33	27	36	28	31	30
GREAT BRITAIN / UNITED KINGDOM (UK)	16	9	17	22	11	15	16	14
SOUTH KOREA	15	13	15	12	20	13	15	16
EUROPEAN UNION OR EU	12	11	8	12	22	17	12	12
RUSSIA	11	7	4	19	20	13	11	9
INDIA	8	3	1	19	14	4	8	10
CHINA	7	4	0	14	18	13	7	5
UNAIDED								
Cannot say / Refused / None	7	9	10	3	2	8	6	12
Cannot say	3	3	4	0	1	0	3	4
Refused	0.4	1	0	2	0	6	0	0
None	4	5	6	1	1	2	3	9

The **United States** is the **most beneficial economic partner** of the **Philippines (66%)**, followed by **Japan (43%)**, **Australia (32%)**, **Canada (31%)**, and the **United Kingdom (16%)**.

MOST TRUSTED PARTNERS IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

September 6 - 13, 2024 / Philippines
(In Percent / Multiple Response, Up to 3)

The **United States** remains the **most trusted partner of Filipinos for national development** at **79%**. This is followed by **Japan (50%)**, **Canada (43%)**, and **Australia (42%)**. It is also worth noting that **99% of Filipinos do not trust China**.

Base: Total Interviews, 100%

*Among the following, who are the most trusted partners in national development of the Philippines?
You may choose up to three.*

	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
UNITED STATES	79	79	81	88	69	64	82	74
JAPAN	50	61	54	41	41	47	50	47
CANADA	43	32	46	49	37	50	43	37
AUSTRALIA	42	43	33	44	61	42	43	40
GREAT BRITAIN / UNITED KINGDOM (UK)	18	14	15	20	25	15	16	30
EUROPEAN UNION OR EU	15	12	14	21	15	16	16	11
SOUTH KOREA	13	11	14	12	14	15	14	11
RUSSIA	7	7	5	5	11	12	6	5
INDIA	2	4	0	3	4	1	1	5
CHINA	1	1	0	2	1	0	1	0
UNAIDED								
Cannot say / Refused / None	6	7	8	3	2	10	5	7
Cannot say	3	3	5	0	1	0	3	3
Refused	0.4	1	0	2	0	6	0	0
None	2	4	3	1	2	4	2	5

WHETHER OR NOT THEY ARE GOING TO SUPPORT A PRO-CHINA CANDIDATE IN THE MAY 2025 NATIONAL ELECTIONS

September 6 - 13, 2024 / Philippines
(In Percent)

Base: Those who are registered voters in their city/municipality, 91%								
Are you going to support a candidate in the May 2025 national elections who is PRO-CHINA at present or in the past?	RP	LOCATION				CLASS		
		NCR	BL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
Will support	5	3	3	2	10	10	5	2
Will not support	73	83	65	85	74	72	73	74
Cannot say	23	14	32	14	16	18	23	24

Contextualized by the persistent aggression perpetrated by China in the West Philippine Sea and its penetration into the various domains of Philippine society, the **rejection of pro-China candidates** in the **May 2025 national elections** are at **73%**. Only 5% of Filipinos say they "will support" a pro-China candidate, while 23% are ambivalent.

In a SWS national survey, as of **January 2025**, **83% of Filipinos would vote** for a candidate that advocates for **defending national security and sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea**.



Maritime security transcends physically securing boundaries. It is also about **ensuring the economic security of nations.** This larger sphere includes the environment, biodiversity, and the blue economy. It is about the efficient functioning of **maritime trade** and **shipping routes**, which are vital to global trade and are an important aspect of the Philippine economy.

These enable us to **ensure sovereignty, prosperity,** and **security,** and **to uphold the rules-based order.** To achieve these, only **collaboration** will set in motion a broad range of initiatives to address the multifaceted challenges facing the global maritime domain.

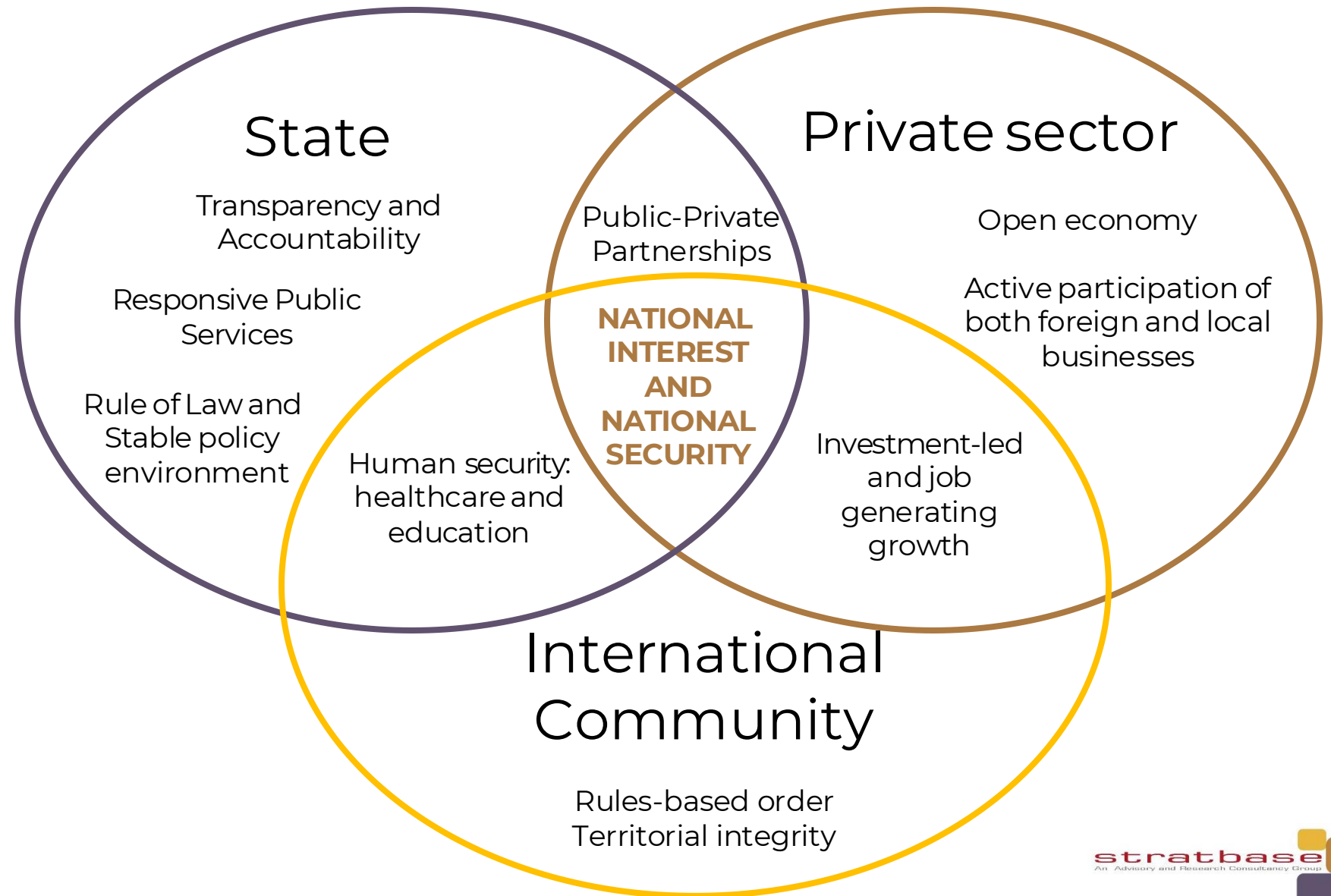
The vast potential of maritime cooperation, from security to economic

Prof. Dindo Manhit


BusinessWorld (January 27, 2025)

Geostrategic Opportunities and the Need for Strategic Collaboration to Navigate the Geostrategic Landscape in 2025

**Navigating
an Increasingly
Complex
Geostrategic
Landscape:
Derisking,
Diversifying and
Deglobalization**



2022

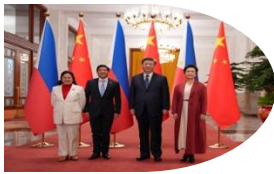


September 21: President Marcos Jr. gave a speech at the **UN General Assembly** where he met with **US President Joe Biden, France President Emmanuel Macron, British Prime Minister Liz Truss, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida** at the sidelines.




November 20-22: **US Vice President Kamala Harris** visited the Philippines and did a **historic visit to Palawan** as the **first US official to visit** the area. She **reaffirmed the US' commitment** to stand with the Philippines.


2023




January 3-5: President Marcos Jr.'s state visit to **China**, where he met with **President Xi Jinping** who agreed to establish **direct communications channel** between their foreign ministries to handle South China Sea disputes peacefully




July 31: President Marcos Jr. received **European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen**, who pledged **European Union's** enhanced cooperation on maritime security in the Indo-Pacific




February 2: President Marcos Jr. received **US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin** for a courtesy call to discuss and sign the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA)




August 29: President Marcos Jr. received **UK Foreign Secretary James Cleverly** to discuss the new UK-Philippines Enhanced Partnership, which covers deepening defense and security ties



February 8-12: President Marcos Jr.'s state visit to **Japan**, where he signed terms of reference on **humanitarian** assistance and disaster relief activities between the Japan Self-Defense Forces and the Armed Forces of the Philippines



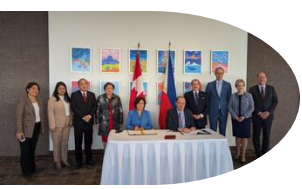
September 8: President Marcos Jr. received **Prime Minister Anthony Albanese** and signed a strategic partnership agreement to expand existing defense and maritime cooperation with **Australia**



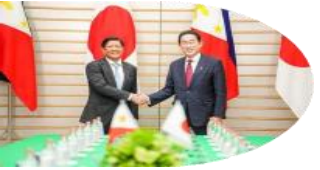
April 30-May 4: President Marcos Jr.'s state visit to the **United States**, where he met **President Biden**, who reaffirmed their ironclad alliance commitments to the Philippines



September 28: President Marcos Jr. and **French President Emmanuel Macron** tackled West Philippine Sea security issues in a phone call



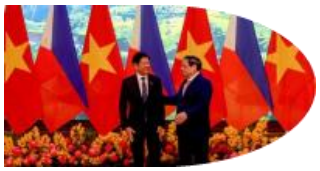
October 16: Canada agreed to lend its dark vessel detection system to the **Philippines** for free for 5 years to enhance the Philippines' maritime domain awareness in its EEZ.



December 15-18: President Marcos Jr. attended the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit in **Japan**, where he met with **Prime Minister Kishida**. Both agreed to fast-track conclusion of the Reciprocal Access Agreement negotiations and signed a memorandum of cooperation between the two nations' coast guards.



January 10: President Marcos Jr. received **Indonesian President Joko Widodo**. During this bilateral meeting, both leaders agreed to strengthen border and defense cooperation, including the buying and selling of defense equipment.



January 29-30: President Marcos Jr.'s state visit to **Vietnam**, where he signed agreements on incident prevention and management in the South China Sea and maritime cooperation between the two nations' coast guards



February 28-29: President Marcos Jr.'s state visit to **Australia**, where he signed with **Prime Minister Anthony Albanese** agreements focused on enhancing cyber and maritime security cooperation



March 4-6: President Marcos Jr. attended the **ASEAN-Australia Special Summit**, where he urged state leaders to address security challenges collectively and respect the rules-based international order

November 3: President Marcos Jr. received **Japanese Prime Minister Kishida**, who assured **Japan's** continued cooperation on defense equipment and technology and maritime security capacity building

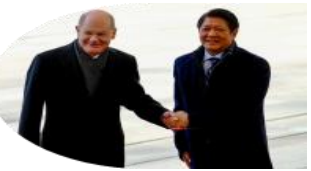


November 20: President Marcos Jr. visited the **US Indo-Pacific Command** and met with **Admiral John Aquilino** who provided a **base operational overview** and discussed regional security cooperation



2024

March 11-13: President Marcos Jr.'s working visit to **Germany**, where he met with **Chancellor Olaf Scholz**, who assured Germany's continued support and commitment to bolstering maritime cooperation with the Philippines



March 14-15: President Marcos Jr.'s state visit to the **Czech Republic** where he met with **President Petr Pavel**, who expressed continued support for the AFP modernization program



March 19: President Marcos Jr. received **Secretary of State Antony Blinken**, who assured the **United States'** commitment to the Mutual Defense Treaty and expressed confidence in the future of Philippines-US relations under the Marcos administration





March 24: India's External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar firmly reiterated India's support to the Philippines during his trip to the Philippines.



April 18: President Marcos Jr. received **New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon** with both agreeing to elevate the countries' bilateral ties to a Comprehensive Partnership by 2026, deepening their defense and trade relationship



May 16: Norwegian State Secretary Andreas Motzfeldt Kravik visited Manila and had a closed-door luncheon with government and military officials. He affirmed that **Norway supports a rules-based international order.**



June 3: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the Philippines and met with President Marcos Jr. where he thanked country's support following Russia's invasion of Ukraine then announced the **opening of a Ukrainian embassy in the capital.**



June 6: Sweden's Defense Minister Pål Jonson engaged in bilateral discussions with Sec. Teodoro. He also highlighted the **interconnectedness of Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific security** and Sweden's increased involvement in the latter region.



July 8: Japan and the Philippines' Foreign and Defense Ministers met for the **Second Japan-Philippines Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2")**. The Ministers reviewed progress in security and defense cooperation, including the **Japan-Philippines Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA)**.

July 30: The US and the Philippines' Foreign and Defense Ministers met in Manila for the **4th Philippine-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue**. Discussions included the US' commitment to **increase investments in EDCA locations** and **allocation of USD500 million in foreign military financing** to the Philippines, which will support the **modernization of the Philippines' Armed Forces and Coast Guard.**



August 4: German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius and Philippine Defense Minister Gilberto Teodoro committed to signing a **defense cooperation arrangement** this year, vowing to uphold international rules-based order in the region as tensions flare over in the West Philippine Sea.



September 5: Polish Foreign Minister and Former Defense Minister Radosław Tomasz Sikorski visits the Philippines and gives a statement officially supporting the rules-based international order with the Philippines.



September 6: The Italian Navy's carrier strike group shared naval aviation best practices with the Philippine Navy during a goodwill visit to Manila.



September 14: The Italian Navy's Amerigo Vespucci, a 93-year old training ship on a global voyage, **docked in Manila for a five-day goodwill visit.**



September 17: Two German naval ships, FGS Baden-Württemberg and FGS Frankfurt am Main, docked in the ports of Manila for a four-day visit, the **first in over 20 years**, as part of their **Indo-Pacific Deployment 2024.**





September 25: American and Philippine officials have agreed to indefinitely station a **US mid-range missile system in northern Philippines** to enhance deterrence against China. The system includes Tomahawk and Standard Missile-6 missiles capable of reaching over 1,000 miles.



September 28: Combined armed and defense forces from the **Philippines, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States** conducted a **maritime patrol in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of Manila** the same day that China announced it was holding a naval drill near Bajo de Masinloc (Scarborough or Panatag Shoal).



October 7: South Korean President **Yoon Suk Yeol** conducts a state visit to Manila, the first by a South Korean president since 2011. He signed a **maritime cooperation agreement** and vowed to aid with the modernization of the military.



October 8: President **Ferdinand Marcos Jr.** signed the **Self-Reliant Defense Posture (SRDP) Revitalization Act** to boost the Philippines' defense capabilities through a sustainable national defense industry driven by research, innovation, and public-private collaboration.



October 8: The **US Navy, Philippine Navy, and allied forces including Australia, Japan, Canada, and France, commenced Exercise Sama Sama 2024** near Subic Bay to strengthen maritime security and interoperability in the Indo-Pacific.



October 24: During the culminating activity of KAMANDAG 2024, **US and Philippine Marines successfully simulated the defense of Palawan's Apuwaran Beach against a West Philippine Sea landing force.**

November 15: The **Armed Forces of the Philippines concluded the 8th AJEX "DAGIT-PA,"** showcasing enhanced interoperability through multi-domain exercises, including the first unilateral training in the West Philippine Sea.



November 18: The **Philippines and the US signed the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)** enabling real-time sharing of classified intelligence to strengthen their defense alliance.



November 19: **US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin emphasized the ironclad US-Philippine mutual defense treaty** and strengthened defense ties during his fourth visit to the Philippines.



November 21: The **Philippines and New Zealand reaffirmed their defense cooperation** on regional security, disaster response, and upholding a rules-based international order, particularly concerning the West Philippine Sea.



November 21: Defense chiefs from the **Philippines, United States, Australia, Japan and South Korea met in their first five-way dialogue**, where they **vowed to continue upholding respect for "international law and sovereignty"** in the region.




November 23: **Three U.S. aircraft carriers will be in Asia** by next week after months of absence amid **concerns of Chinese activity** in the lead up to the inauguration of **President-elect Donal Trump**. The **USS Carl Vinson was deployed to the Pacific** while the **USS George Washington** was deployed to Japan.



November 28: The **G7 countries' foreign ministers have intensified their criticism of China's "dangerous" maritime behavior**, naming the **Philippines as a target of Chinese vessels' aggression** for the first time in their annual joint statement.



2025




December 1: Japan will provide the Philippines with a **coastal surveillance radar** to enhance ship monitoring amid South China Sea tensions with China. Under the Official Security Assistance framework, Japan will also deliver defense equipment to Mongolia, Djibouti, and Indonesia.




December 4: The European Union and the Philippines have agreed to strengthen cooperation in maritime, defense, and cybersecurity through initiatives like the **IORIS platform** and **ESIWA project**, while also emphasizing adherence to international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. This marks a step towards addressing hybrid threats and enhancing regional security in the Indo-Pacific.




December 10: Japan hosted the inaugural **United States-Japan-Philippines Maritime Dialogue in Tokyo**, where the three countries discussed regional maritime issues, expressed concerns over China's unlawful behavior in the South China Sea, and **reaffirmed their commitment to enhancing trilateral cooperation on maritime security.**



December 11: **Senate Bill 2903, sponsored by Senate President Chiz Escudero, has reached the Senate plenary.** It seeks to modernize the Philippine Coast Guard by enhancing capabilities, stabilizing ranks, providing additional benefits, and proposing a fixed three-year term for the commandant to ensure leadership continuity.




December 16: The Philippine Senate ratified the **Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) with Japan**, enabling enhanced military cooperation, joint training, and disaster response efforts, while strengthening defense ties amid shared security challenges in the Indo-Pacific region.



January 5: Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. and AFP chief Gen. Romeo Brawner Jr. emphasized **prioritizing territorial defense and strengthening military capabilities.** They also reaffirmed their commitment to protecting national sovereignty and enhancing defense across various platforms.



January 15: President Marcos Jr. welcomed Japan's Foreign Minister Iwaya Takeshi at Malacañang, where Iwaya called for **stronger security and economic cooperation.** Their meeting followed Marcos' recent trilateral call with Japan and the US, reinforcing commitments to a free and rules-based Indo-Pacific.



January 21: The **US, Australia, India, and Japan reaffirmed their Quad alliance** to counter China's influence, strengthen a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, and address regional security, including Taiwan, the South China Sea, and North Korea, while advancing cybersecurity and defense initiatives like AUKUS.



January 22: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio reaffirmed America's "ironclad" defense commitment to the Philippines during a call with Foreign Minister Enrique Manalo, condemning China's "dangerous" actions in the South China Sea. This follows increased US-Philippines security cooperation under President Marcos Jr., including expanded military bases and joint maritime exercises, amid growing regional tensions with China.



January 23: Department of National Defense (DND) Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr., together with Philippine Ambassador to the US Babe Romualdez, and newly appointed US National Security Adviser (NSA) Mike Waltz met where they reaffirmed the Philippines' and the US' long-standing alliance and security cooperation.



January 23: The French aircraft carrier *Charles de Gaulle* and its escorts will visit the Philippines in February, highlighting growing maritime security ties between the two nations. Ahead of the visit, the carrier is participating in the Le Perouse 2025 exercise, reinforcing France's commitment to regional stability and defense cooperation with Manila.



January 27: The Philippines will participate in Talisman Sabre 2025, the largest military exercise in the southern hemisphere, alongside 19 nations to enhance regional defense cooperation. This move reflects the Philippines' growing defense ties with Australia and the U.S., complemented by continued involvement in exercises like ALON and Balikatan.



January 28: The Philippine Army will use the US Mid-Range Capability missile system in the upcoming Combined Arms Training Exercise (CATEX) Katihan in February, focusing on training and familiarization. Despite China's concerns, the Philippine military emphasized its right to deploy defense assets as needed.



February 5: The Philippines and New Zealand are finalizing a visiting forces agreement, expected to be completed by year-end, amid rising tensions in the South China Sea. This would be the Philippines' fourth such pact, following agreements with the US, Australia, and Japan, as part of efforts to strengthen defense partnerships and address regional security concerns.



February 5: Australia, Japan, the Philippines, and the US conducted a Multilateral Maritime Cooperative Activity within the Philippines' Exclusive Economic Zone to enhance cooperation, interoperability, and support for a free and open Indo-Pacific, in line with international law and UNCLOS.



February 6: Philippine Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro and the United States Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth held a call to align with defense and security priorities for both the US and the Philippines.



February 7: U.S. President Donald Trump and Japan Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba reiterated their strong opposition to any attempts by the People's Republic of China (PRC) to change the status quo by force or coercion in the East China Sea. The two leaders reaffirmed their strong opposition to the PRC's unlawful maritime claims, militarization of reclaimed features, and threatening and provocative activities in the South China Sea.



February 9: The Philippines and Canada are finalizing a defense pact for troop deployments and joint training, with signing expected by 2025, strengthening military ties amid West Philippine Sea tensions.

Thank you!

The State of the Philippines and the World in 2025

