



STATE OF DEMOCRACY REPORT: PHILIPPINES

This paper was prepared by the International Center for Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov) for the Asia Democratic Research Network (ADRN) in 2018. Written by Reuben James T. Barrete and Margarita Ana L. Perez. Edited by Teresita Quintos Deles, Dr. Mary Racelis, and Dr. Edilberto C. De Jesus.



Abstract

Rodrigo Duterte capitalized on issues that resounded with the ordinary Filipino in order to win public support during the 2016 presidential election. In the face of his continued popularity with the general public, civil society groups assessed and found his performance in the context of their sectoral concerns lacking. President Duterte was also found culpable for misogyny, violation of human rights, disregard for the due process of law, and creeping authoritarianism. Civil society is now challenged to unify and reinvent itself as a response to the populist leadership of Duterte and the current critical challenges and threats to democracy today.



I. Introduction

The crisis of democracy in the Philippines and the systematic efforts to erode its core values and institutions have come to the fore in the past two years since President Rodrigo Duterte assumed office in June of 2016. Former Davao City Mayor Duterte emerged victorious from the election using a populist frame, couching his campaign promises in a pro-poor and anti-elitist veneer while projecting the image of a "strong man". He charmed his audiences with invective-ridden speeches that were openly misogynistic but also made him appear to be approachable to the masses. That he hailed from Mindanao seemed to make up for the conflicting images of the man of the masses who slept best under a mosquito net who was also the privileged scion of a local political family.

In the time that it took for most Filipinos to realize that Duterte was serious about his campaign promise to eradicate the drug problem through copious amounts of bloodletting, he and his allies had also worked to significantly undermine key democratic institutions in the country. Today, his critics decry Duterte's lack of remorse in enlisting key institutions such as Congress, the Supreme Court, and the police, among others, to do as he bids in complete disregard of the rule of law or constitutional mandate. Critics who have spoken out in defense of democracy and called out President Duterte on his administration's systematic violation of human rights have had to contend with the President's wrath and the vindictiveness with which he has wielded his power over those same institutions.

Despite all this, surveys show that President Duterte's net satisfaction and trust ratings remain high. The public, it seems, continues to favor the President and his avowed War on Drugs, despite the deaths, the rampant violation of human rights and civil liberties, and most surprisingly, even its apparent failure to put an end to the drug problem it had vowed to solve in a matter of months.

In the light of such popular support, civil society groups have had to engage in soul searching even as they confront the urgent challenge of defending democracy. How is it possible that the Philippines, a country that had already engaged in a decades-long struggle against a dictatorship and emerged victorious in its defense of democracy could so easily hand off control of its leadership to such a man as Duterte? How is it that in spite of all that he has done, Duterte can still enjoy support in a country with a civil society long known for pioneering efforts in citizen engagement and people's empowerment? How is it that institutions have crumbled so easily in one of the most vibrant democracies in the Asia?

With these questions in mind, the International Center for Innovation, Transformation, and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov), through the support of the Asia Democratic Research Network (ADRN), would seek to undertake this study.



Objectives

This report attempts to examine how populist rule, as manifested in the leadership style of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, has emerged in the context of the Philippine setting.

In particular, the paper seeks to fulfill the following objectives:

1. To revisit how select sectors in Philippine civil society (labor, urban poor, women, and development non-government organizations/NGOs) initially viewed Duterte as a presidential candidate and their responses to his campaign pronouncements.
2. To look into how these same groups now view Duterte's performance in the context of their sectoral concerns, two years into his administration.

Methodology

The study used several approaches to data gathering which include:

1. *Review of Relevant Literature*

The study would look into published work by government, non-government organizations, and academic institutions alike - on populism and civil society in the global, regional, and national context.

It would also use, as reference, articles from major broadsheets and online publications.

2. *Key Informant Interviews*

Key informant interviews (KII) were conducted with members of civil society in the Philippines including NGO leaders and members of basic sector groups.

3. *Focus Group Discussions*

Focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted with representatives of organized groups representing labor, the urban poor, women, and development NGOs. Development NGOs and women representatives from Marawi were likewise invited to participate in the FGDs with the special intent to draw out the perspectives of organized groups from Muslim Mindanao, an area still reeling from the repercussions of volatile political dynamics.

One FGD group was composed of groups representing the basic sectors, particularly farmers, fisherfolk, labor, and the urban poor. The second FGD group was composed of representatives of Muslim communities, women, and development NGO networks.

The FGDs and KIIs were both utilized to tap into the perspective of organized groups within Philippine society.



II. Conversations on the 2016 Presidential Elections

INCITEGov convened a series of conversations through focus group discussions (FGD) with civil society groups to draw out their perspectives on the presidential elections of 2016 and their views on candidates.

The two FGD would bring together representatives of the basic sectors such as farmers, fisher folk, urban poor, OFWs and labor, as well as other groups representing Muslims, non-Catholic Christians, women, and non-government organizations (NGOs). The FGD would yield a number of key themes.

The Basic Sector Group

One FGD composed of the basic sector groups, would come up with the following themes:

The organized basic sectors upheld **a non-negotiable commitment to a candidate with an expressed bias in favor of workers and the ordinary people**. The group firmly rejected candidates identified with the elite. Sectoral representatives also articulated a **compelling need for drastic change** in the political and social order.

Some participants, on the other hand, favored candidates who represented **continuity of policies and programs** started under the Aquino administration. These candidates, they claimed, **embodied the economic vision necessary to move the country's development forward**.

The Diverse Sectoral Representatives

A second FGD brought together representatives of Muslim Mindanao communities, non-Catholic Christians, women, and development NGO networks. This group found it most helpful to look into the qualities that made several presidential candidates appealing.

This group found candidates that **provided a fresh face, a *tabula rasa* or clean slate** in terms of goals, ideas, and experience to be most attractive. Candidates who **did not fall under any traditional category/notions of a politician** were also seen to be good options.

A second quality that emerged as important was **moral and intellectual excellence**.

Third on the list of qualities was the presidential candidate's **ability to represent Mindanao and bring about change**.

Other candidates were dismissed on the basis of their perceived **incompetence** or acts of **corruption**.



Duterte's Populist Appeal

The groups also identified the qualities that contributed to Mayor Duterte's populist appeal. According to the participants, the idea of having a President from Mindanao for the first time in the country's history gave Duterte enormous appeal from the point of view of the masses. Many perceive that Mindanao has always been relegated to the periphery in terms of the national political and economic scene and Duterte represented the outsider from Mindanao, the rebel who would change this. His candidacy represented an attack against Manila's "imperialism" and composed a significant part of the "change" that he vowed to undertake.

Duterte presented himself as "of the masses" and no different from the common folk. He looked like, spoke and cursed like a man who belonged on the street. For some voters, his appeal stemmed from his rough exterior and coarse language.

Curato and Ong (2018) attribute the popularity of his "emerging moral politics" as evidence of his "illiberal responsiveness" to latent anxieties harbored by silenced or delegitimized constituencies.

In the end, Duterte's uncharacteristic behavior reinforced the perceived preference for a strong-willed President defiant of elite social norms.



III. Civil Society Responses

This study also looked more closely at the experience of organized sectoral groups, particularly for development NGOs, labor, the urban poor, women, and Marawi Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), in the Philippines before during and after the 2016 elections. It sought to draw out, three things: (1) How the sector viewed and engaged with the Aquino administration, (2) How the sector voted during the 2016 elections, and (3) How the sector assessed the Duterte administration's performance vis-a-vis their sectoral issues, two years into its term.

Caucus of Development NGOs (CODE-NGO)


The Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO), an aggrupation of ten development NGO networks in the Philippines, was established in 1990 with the intent to synergize its efforts and scale up its impact. It ratified the Covenant on National Development and Code of Conduct to promote professionalism and expand the reach of social development work. In its efforts to push for development, good governance, political engagement, and sustainability, it maximized its collective skill and synergy to (a) influence public policy, (b) provide leadership in civil society, and (c) increase the effectiveness of social development work.

CODE-NGO pursued constructive engagement with the administration of President Benigno S. Aquino III through various programs such as the Open Government Partnership (OGP), Bottom-Up Budgeting (BUB), and the Civil Society Development Reform Agenda (2016-2019). It aimed to ensure empowerment, democratization, and good governance.

Despite its clear basis of unity and shared value for democracy and good governance, CODE-NGO was divided in its choice of presidential candidate for the 2016 elections. Former Senator and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Secretary Mar Roxas received strong support from CODE-NGO's national networks. Mayor Duterte, on the other hand, received the endorsement of several Visays and Mindanao-based member organizations, whose support was premised on his stand against illegal drugs and his being from Mindanao.

Prior to the elections, CODE-NGOⁱ, published candidate profiles to demonstrate its core commitments toward a Development Reform Agenda: (1) ensuring empowerment, democratization, and good governance, (2) reducing poverty and inequality, (3) building peace, and (4) promoting sustainable economic development and environmental protection. The Change Politics Movement (CPM), which CODE-NGO established in 2010 to organize a reform constituency, endorsed Roxas for the 2016 Presidential elections.

Following the elections, CODE-NGO is still divided on how to address Duterte's policies, many of which contravene its fundamental values. The Mindanao-Visayas bloc rejected any direct criticism of the President and withdrew membership from resistance coalitions and broad fronts like *Alyansa ng Samahang Pantao (ASAP)* and *TINDIG Pilipinas*. Instead it has



assumed leadership and secretariat functions in the government's Open Government Partnership with the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). Since disengaging from national political action, it has redirected its focus to localized governance engagement, educational campaigns and capacity building -- granting its members freedom to pursue their respective advocacies.

Some of its leaders recognize that democracy is threatened, and space for engagement is constricted both nationally and locally. They are aware of the escalation of fear, and that being labeled *Dilawan* (being part of the opposition) exposes them to violence by Duterte supporters. The network continues its "constructive engagement" in order to keep its foothold with government.

Labor Sector

The labor sector, the most "ideological" of all basic sectors, is characterized by deep divisions due to rivalries based on historical, organizational, and ideological rifts. Since the 1990s, organized labor has declined in numbers, due to a host of reasons that include the 1997 financial crisis and the emerging trend of labor contractualization.

Under the Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Benigno S. Aquino administrations, labor group calls for increasing the minimum wage were not addressed.ⁱⁱ This fact coupled with the nagging issue of contractualization provided the impetus for massive labor protests in 2016.

During the 2016 elections, labor groups belonging to the left of the political spectrum such as the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (KMU) and the Alliance of Genuine Labor Organizations (AGLO) supported Duterte in his presidential run. While some supported Poe, Duterte gathered more support from these labor groups through his assurance to abolish contractualizationⁱⁱⁱ as well as his expressed commitment to end drugs, crime, and corruption.

After the elections, a number of labor leaders joined the government. Former Anakpawis partylist representative and KMU leader Joel Maglunsod, for one, was appointed Undersecretary for the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE).^{iv} There were high hopes among this group given the President's promises to do away with contractualization or the practise of "Endo" (end of contract arrangements).

Those hopes were dashed as soon as Duterte became President. He waivered between signing an executive order or simply leaving it to Congress to decide on the issue. In the end, Duterte issued an executive order that merely reiterated existing provisions in the labor code. In protest, the labor movement formed the *Coalition Against Contractualization* which united all rival labor centers and groups in the country for the first time in many years. For the first time in many years the labor groups from all camps came together in a massive protest rally on May 1, 2018. Labor representatives have stopped attending meetings called by Malacañan Palace.



Urban Poor

Following the ouster of the Marcos dictatorship and the restoration of democratic rights and freedoms, the urgency to organize the urban poor became less pronounced. Funding resources dwindled. In the following decade, these resources were diverted to other pressing issues such as climate change and disaster response. And yet, problems such as higher congestion in urban centers, massive relocation to off-city resettlement sites, and the lack of employment continued to plague the urban poor.

In this light, a number of urban poor groups such as the Urban Poor Alliance (UPA), would continue to heavily engage with the Aquino administration on resettlement and other related programs. Several communities, with assistance from Aquino's PhP50 billion housing fund, would be able to initiate and implement their People's Plan which, among other things, paved the way for on-site housing with ease of access to sources of income within the city.


These same groups would support Roxas, Aquino's anointed successor, in the 2016 elections. Other groups, such as the left-leaning Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap (KADAMAY) were less inclined to do so and would, in fact, back candidates Poe and Duterte instead.

With Duterte's victory, the latter group would start off by actively engaging with government through the convener of the National Anti-Poverty Commission and the head of the Presidential Commission for Urban Poor (PCUP). However, relations have visibly soured since then with urban poor communities finding that Duterte is actually far less sympathetic and supportive of their housing needs.

The huge housing backlog remains and a number of urban poor groups, with support from partner NGOs, continue to resist off-city relocation. Political blocs like Kadamay have challenged government regulations by invading long-empty housing viewed unacceptable and discarded by military and police beneficiaries. The Duterte administration, spurred on by its "build, build, build" program, continues to undertake large-scale resettlement while apportioning the smallest budget for housing since 2012. The NAPC convener and PCUP head have since resigned and no further meetings have been convened with the sector.

Urban poor communities have felt the brunt of the inflationary impact of the recently-implemented tax reform law. It has not helped that the generally successful social protection program of the Aquino Administration, the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino conditional cash transfer program was practically shelved by Duterte's appointee for secretary to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).^v Duterte has spoken of an unconditional cash transfer system that remains undefined to date. During his 2016 State of the Nation Address (SONA), Duterte promised 40-kilograms of rice for poor families, a proposal which Pantawid Pamilya beneficiaries have opposed due to the lack of clear guidelines.

In light of the threats to the Pantawid program, a group of parent leaders formed the *Samahan ng mga Nagkakaisang Pamilyang Pantawid* (SNPP) in 2016. The SNPP, now with a roster of 4 million members, empowers communities to engage government on legislation regarding the institutionalization of the conditional cash transfer program. Their advocacy is premised



on the fact that cash grant transfers are the most transparent and effective means for helping the poor help themselves.

The urban poor are also the most heavily affected by Duterte's war on drugs, a campaign which served as the cornerstone of Duterte's campaign for the presidency. He promised the Filipino people that he would be a "dictator", killing the forces of evil in criminality, drugs, and corruption.

The result, two years hence is that 23,983 deaths, mostly among the poor urban communities under inquiry by the Philippine National Police (PNP). As of July 2016, 4,279 of these were noted to have been killed by police forces in "self-defense"^{vi}.


Even children have not been spared, with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) estimating that 18,000 have been orphaned over the conduct of drug operations.^{vii}. The Children's Legal Rights and Development Centre (CLRD) have counted 54 minors dead after being caught in the cross-fire or deliberately hunted down as part of the drug war.^{viii}

Women

In 2016, gender and women's rights groups in the Philippines were enjoying the fruits of their advocacy: the country was ranked 7th in the 2016 Global Gender Gap Index, and had passed landmark legislations such as the Magna Carta of Women in 2009 and the Reproductive Health Act in 2012. At this point, these advocates had set their sights on enforcing local ordinances, undertaking gender and development (GAD) training for the bureaucracy, and promoting women, peace, and security (WPS) focused on the Bangsamoro peace process. However, these efforts would suffer a serious setback and soon require a massive push back against the misogyny that predominated the Duterte administration's views on women.

Early on in his campaign, Mayor Duterte had issued a number of anti-women, misogynistic remarks that drew the ire of a number of women's groups. These groups immediately drew the line against supporting the former mayor's bid for higher office. Only the women's groups associated with the leftist Makabayan bloc who had already opted to support Duterte remained silent about his anti-women statements. The women's vote would be divided primarily between Roxas, Poe, and Duterte, with the latter's women supporters coming primarily from left-leaning Gabriela Alliance of Filipino Women (GABRIELA) and Davao groups.

Women's groups have pushed back through their participation in EveryWoman, which was originally established as the women's flank of *TINDIG Pilipinas*. It was intended to mobilize forces against the slut-shaming of Senator Leila de Lima. Senator de Lima had been illegally and unjustly incarcerated as a result of her critique of the Duterte administration. The group has also actively participated in the defense of Chief Justice Maria Lourdes Sereno whom the President declared as an "enemy" in the midst of an impending impeachment trial against her. On International Women's Day, March 8, 2018, EveryWoman launched an online citizen's watchdog against misogyny. The campaign, called "*Bantay Bastos*," [Watch Bad Mouths] called on the public to report misogynist statements and threats against women made by public officials through a dedicated Facebook Page.



GABRIELA finally spoke out against Duterte, calling him out for being "fascist" and "misogynist" when he ordered the military to shoot women rebels associated with the New People's Army (NPA) in the vagina.^{ix}

Marawi CSOs

During the Aquino administration, the prospects for peace for the Maranaos were characterized by optimism given developments relating to the Comprehensive Agreement for the Bangsamoro (CAB) and the lobby for a Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL). This was coupled with robust partnerships on the ground between and among Bangsamoro communities, government, and civil society groups in preparing the social infrastructure for peace.


Given this, CSOs in Maranao were inclined to support Roxas, the administration nominee, however, they did not openly endorse him as a candidate. While a small segment of the population voted Roxas, an overwhelming majority of Maranaos voted for Duterte. The latter's promise to end drugs and narco-politics, considered by some to be more pressing than peace and social justice issues^x in Lanao provinces, as well as his claims to understand their problems, proved extremely appealing to the Maranaos.^{xi}

Duterte as a candidate, had promised to push for the passage of the Bangsamoro Basic Law.^{xii} It took him a year to certify the bill as urgent.^{xiii} Then he exerted pressure on Congress so that the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) or Republic Act 11054) could be signed into law on August 24, 2018. The BOL would serve as the enabling law of the 2014 landmark peace deal between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) granting greater autonomy to the Bangsamoro region. However, the necessary groundwork and the social preparation for the implementation of such a critical piece of legislation has remained undone.

After the elections, moreover, the Maranao CSOs began to worry about the potential disruption in the peace process, the threat of another war given the rise of armed groups in the area, and the perceived weakening of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's (MILF) hold over their constituency.

A more pressing concern was the damage wrought by the Marawi siege on the people's lives. Livelihood and economic concerns, ongoing displacement, the absence of a clear rehabilitation plan, the imposition of martial law and the repression it institutionalized all caused irreparable harm to the Maranao as a people.

Marawi leaders continue to lobby for the immediate return of the residents to the city. They are angered by the actions of the military during the Marawi siege and have opposed the imposition of martial law and plans to build a military camp which they believe violates the CAB. They have begun to address transitional justice issues involving women, children, youth groups, and the elderly. They have expressed alarm at Chinese involvement in the rehabilitation of the city. The people of Marawi have also fallen prey to drug war-related EJKs.



A growing number of Marawi leaders have begun to articulate their sense of betrayal, in the process struggling to shape forms of protest and resistance in the context of a continuing humanitarian crisis.

IV. Current Critical Challenges

Mayor Duterte, in his campaign for the presidency, appealed to the public using strong words and carefully crafted messages delivered in the coarse, rough-and-tumble language of a man of the streets. He portrayed himself as the populist who would initiate the changes that mattered and would be felt by the ordinary person. Two years hence, his populist approach to governance, continue to present its own set of critical challenges for civil society: the continued assault on institutions, misogynistic attacks on women, and martial law in Mindanao.

Assault on Democratic and International Institutions

Duterte's has continued to attack bastions of democratic values and institutions. For one, he refused to further accept grants from the European Union upon learning of a European Parliament resolution calling for an end to extra-judicial killings in the Philippines through its war on drugs.^{xiv} He slammed the EU after erroneously identifying the foreign mission of parliamentarians and party representatives of the Progressive Alliance, an international network of social democratic and socialist groups as part of the EU's official mission.^{xv} This led him to reject €6.1 million (PhP 382.45 million) and €39 million (PhP2.4 billion) for sustainable energy projects. Nonetheless, the EU has continuously sent humanitarian support to Marawi City through monetary grants of PhP 33 million.^{xvi}

He also criticized the United Nations (UN) for its failure to solve long-standing conflicts in the Middle East and then threatened to slap the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Summary or Arbitrary Executions Agnes Callamard if she investigated his alleged crimes of extrajudicial killings. This led the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner^{xvii} to release a note about attacks made by states against UN human rights experts. .

The increase in drug-related deaths pressed the International Criminal Court (ICC) to begin legal steps to investigate Duterte's crimes against humanity in response to cases filed by Filipino petitioners. Duterte retaliated by insulting ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda by calling her "that black woman",^{xviii} and then initiating the withdrawal of the Philippines' membership in the ICC.

Duterte also verbally assaulted the leader of the Roman Catholic Church, cursing His Holiness Pope Francis when the latter's visit created traffic problems in Manila.^{xix}

Closer to home, Duterte has called the Chairman of the Philippine Commission on Human Rights (CHR)^{xx}, Jose Luis Martin "Chito" Gascon "gay and pedophile"^{xxi} for investigating the drug war-related EJKs. He also worked for the impeachment of Supreme Court Chief Justice Lourdes Sereno, who spoke against Duterte's policies flouting human rights and the rule of law, and replaced her with his own appointee.^{xxii} This direct attacked on the checks and balances between the three branches of government resulted in a Constitutional crisis that, to date, remains unresolved.

Misogynistic Attacks on Women

Duterte, in his years as mayor of Davao City from 1998 to 2015, was alleged to have been involved with summary killings carried out by the Davao Death Squad (DDS). In a consolidated report published by the CBCP^{xxiii}, the total number of persons killed by the DDS came to 1,424, including 132 children. Then CHR Commissioner Leila De Lima conducted an investigation and public hearings on these killings in 2009. Her probe to uncover criminality under Duterte's leadership in Davao cast the former Mayor in a negative light.^{xxiv}

Her probe into the work of the DDS, as well as her critique of President Duterte's drug war, would place Senator De Lima in the crosshairs of the President's sight. A congressional committee was convened to look into her alleged drug-supporting links, leading to her imprisonment without bail while awaiting trial. 'Sex' activities were used to discredit De Lima and Duterte administration to silence her^{xxv}. The House of Representatives "in aid of legislation" attempted to show in the hearings an alleged tape of her illicit sexual activities. The showing of tape was opposed by the Senate through its unanimously approved Resolution No. 184^{xxvi} and therefore not shown.

Duterte's trivialization of sexual violence clearly undermines women.^{xxvii} Earlier on, in a 2016 campaign sortie, he commented on the hostage and eventual murder of Australian missionary Jacqueline Hamill in Davao. He said, *"I thought, they raped her, they lined up to rape her. I was angry that she was raped. That was one thing. But she was really beautiful. The mayor should have gone first. What a waste,"*^{xxviii} His "joke" would spark outrage among citizens.


Following his declaration of Martial Law in Mindanao, Duterte sought to boost the morale of the Philippine military by telling them they could rape up to three women as part of war booty.^{xxix} In another speech, when he learned the New People's Army included females, he instructed the soldiers to shoot female Communist rebels in the vagina, thereby rendering them useless.^{xxx}

Furthermore, speaking before a Filipino community during an official visit to Seoul, South Korea, he invited a woman on stage and asked her to kiss him on the lips. The crowd cheered. This highly inappropriate behavior, however, was met with widespread indignation on social media and cited as yet another abuse of presidential authority.^{xxxi}

Martial Law in Mindanao

Following a clash between the Philippine military and the Maute Group, an ISIL-linked force, in the village of *Basak Malulut*, the latter captured Marawi City. Reacting to the takeover, Duterte declared Martial Law and ordered the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus in Mindanao. This authorized warrantless arrests on the pretext of containing the conflict.^{xxxii}

To recapture the areas penetrated by the Maute group, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) conducted aerial strikes that killed rebels, soldiers, and civilians. The Supreme Court subsequently affirmed Duterte's declaration of Martial Law in Mindanao with 11 justices



voting to uphold his proclamation.^{xxxiii} The destruction of Marawi City through massive bombing raids and urban warfare resulted in the displacement of 77,170 families, as reported by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.^{xxxiv}

On December 13, 2017 lawmakers approved Duterte's request to extend Martial Law for another year to combat the threat of terrorism. The vote was 240 to 27 in favor of extending military rule until the end of 2018.^{xxxv},



V. Conclusion

Duterte's populist approach to leadership influenced his winnability. He put forth a populist agenda and proposed policies which capitalized on the issues that hit close to home with the ordinary Filipino in order to win public support.

Civil society groups that supported Duterte's candidacy are now experiencing frustration and a sense of treachery over his failure to deliver on promises and lackluster performance both on key sectoral concerns as well as on the overarching concerns that challenge the Philippines as a nation today. Duterte's populist appeal has further generated divisions among the general public and polarized segments of civil society. However, emerging responses to creeping authoritarianism under the Duterte administration has also unified formations, leading to the revival and reinvention of sectoral organizing designed to respond to the challenges and threats to democracy that have surfaced today.

Senior members of Philippine civil society who have played leadership roles in the past now join hands with a new generation of young advocates, many of them coming from the ranks of political formations, in the effort to push back against those who would threaten democracy.

These new synergies also raise new questions for civil society to reflect on. Where is the successor generation of development NGOs, fostered through martial Law and EDSA? What kind of formation can nurture and sustain the growth among the ranks of civil society? What role does technology play in this formation in an age where memes and tweets are the conduits of information and communication? How does civil society protect and promote the gains of democracy? Finally, how does civil society ensure that the institutions that embody our democratic values remain resilient in the face of future attacks?

Civil society is now challenged to ponder on these questions and reinvent itself given the current critical challenges and threats to democracy today.

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ⁱ Retrieved from <http://code-ngo.org/2016/04/presidential-candidates-profiles/>

ⁱⁱ Retrieved from <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/240365/human-rights-situation-in-phl-worse-under-pnoy-than-arroyo-rights-groups/story/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Contractualization or "Endo" (end of contract) arrangements in the Philippines is seen as a component of the strategy to cut labor costs by minimizing regular and permanent job arrangements and exposing labor to substandard working conditions. Contractual employees are hired just until they can be considered permanent workers and hence exempt from being accorded benefits and privileges required by law.

^{iv} Retrieved from <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/article/78210>

^v Judy M. Taguiwalo served as DSWD secretary on an ad interim basis from June 30, 2016 to August 16, 2017 when her appointment was rejected by the Commission on Appointments.

^{vi} Retrieved from <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2018/06/11/1823545/pnp-22983-deaths-under-inquiry-drug-war-launched>.

^{vii} Retrieved from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/856376/drug-wars-other-victims-orphans>

^{viii} Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/199598-children-due-process-died-duterte-war-on-drugs-human-rights-group>

^{ix} retrieved from <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2018/02/11/1786825/gabriela-slams-duterte-order-shoot-female-npas-vagina>.

^x interview with Drieza Abato Lininding, 2018.

^{xi} In an event in Marawi City on May 2018, President Duterte claimed to be part Maranao through his maternal grandmother. Retrieved from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/989687/duterte-narrates-his-moro-lineage-during-marawi-event-maranao-duterte-catholic-tausug-muslim>

^{xii} Retrieved from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/768476/1st-presidential-debate-transcript-round-three>

^{xiii} Retrieved from <http://news.abs-cbn.com/news/05/29/18/duterte-certifies-bbl-as-urgent>

^{xiv} Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/200644-eu-parliament-end-extrajudicial-killings-philippines>

^{xv} Retrieved from <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/160964/duterte-ph-will-reject-eu-aid>

^{xvi} Retrieved from <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2018/01/24/6.1-million-euro-aid-rejected.html>

^{xvii} Retrieved from <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=22421&LangID=E>

^{xviii} Retrieved from <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/03/duterte-attacks-rights-officials-callamard-bensouda-180309091927105.html>

^{xxix} Retrieved from <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2015/12/01/Davao-Mayor-Rodrigo-Rody-Duterte-Pope-Francis-traffic-CBCP.html>

^{xx} The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) is an independent body created under the 1987 Philippine Constitution with the expressed mandate to conduct investigations on human rights violations. Duterte allies in the House of Representatives **Representatives**^{xx} would later follow the President's suit and attempt to reduce the Commission's budget to Philippine Pesos 1,000 (the rough equivalent of US Dollars 20) for the year 2018, feigning frustration over the body's bad performance. The CHR budget was restored only after a public outcry.

^{xxi} Retrieved from <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/634002/duterte-to-chr-chair-gascon-di-ko-alam-kung-bakla-ka-sampalin-talaga-kita/story/>

^{xxii} Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/02/world/asia/philippines-chief-justice-duterte.html>

^{xxiii} Fr. Amado Picardal, C. *The Victims of the Davao Death Squad: Consolidated Report 1998-2015*. CBCP. Retrieved from <http://www.cbcnews.com/cbcnews/?p=76531>

^{xxiv} Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/iq/171312-timeline-davao-death-squad-probe-hearing-investigations-rodrigo-duterte>

^{xxv} Retrieved from <https://blogwatch.tv/2018/03/duterte-portrayal-of-women/>

^{xxvi} Retrieved from <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/583774/senate-oks-resolution-vs-showing-of-de-lima-sex-tape/story/>

^{xxvii} Retrieved from <http://www.scmp.com/comment/insight-opinion/article/2096655/rape-jokes-philippines-duterte-trivialise-sexual-violence>

^{xxviii} Retrieved from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/195934-rodrigo-dutertemost-sexist-remarks>

^{xxix} Retrieved from <http://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/2095890/here-duterte-warns-battle-rages-southern-philippines-city>

^{xxx} Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/13/philippines-rodrigo-duterte-orders-soldiers-to-shoot-female-rebels-in-the-vagina>

^{xxxi} Retrieved from <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/06/04/asia/rodrigo-duterte-ofw-kiss-trnd/index.html>

^{xxxii} Retrieved from <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/05/24/1703191/habeas-corpus-suspended-mindanao-says-duterte>

^{xxxiii} Retrieved from <http://news.abs-cbn.com/news/10/17/17/timeline-the-battle-for-marawi>

^{xxxiv} Philippines, U. (2018). IDP Protection Assessment Report, AFP vs Pro-ISIS militants in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, Issue No.07. Retrieved from Protection Cluster Philippines: <http://www.protectionclusterphilippines.org/?p=1510>

^{xxxv} Retrieved from <http://news.abs-cbn.com/news/12/13/17/congress-extends-mindanao-martial-law-until-end-of-2018>