



In the Aftermath of the 2019 Philippine Elections:

A Popular Strongman Gains More Power

By Joseph Purugganan

September 2019

The Philippines concluded a high-stakes midterm elections in May 2019, that many consider a critical turning point in our nation's history. While the Presidency was not on the line, and Rodrigo Duterte himself was not on the ballot, the polls were seen as a referendum on his presidency.

Duterte has drawn flak for his deadly 'War on Drugs' that has taken the lives of over 5,000 suspects according to official police accounts, but the death toll could be as high as 27,000 according to the Philippine *Commission on Human Rights*. The administration has also been criticized for its handling of the maritime conflict with China in the West Philippine Sea.

Going into the polls however, Duterte, despite all the criticisms at home and abroad, has maintained consistently high popularity and trust ratings. The latest survey conducted five months ahead of the elections showed the President having a 76 percent trust score and an 81 percent performance rating in the last quarter of 2018.¹

In midterm elections, voters have historically favored candidates backed by a popular incumbent and rejected those supported by unpopular ones. In the 2013 midterms for instance, the administration supported by former President Benigno Aquino III, won 9 out of 12 Senate seats. Like Duterte, Aquino had a high satisfaction rating heading into the midterms. In contrast, a very unpopular Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, with negative net satisfaction ratings, weighed down the administration ticket. In the Senate race in 2007, the *Genuine Opposition* coalition was able to secure eight out of 12 Senate seats, while Arroyo's *Team Unity* only got two seats and the other two slots went to independent candidates.



Election day on May 13, 2019 in Negros (Photo: philippinenbüro e.V.)

Although the results of the 2019 election continue this tradition, the complete shut out of the opposition in the Senate is a rare phenomenon in the Philippines. As reported in the social news network Rappler, “the last time that the opposition failed to win even a single seat in legislative* elections was in 1938 during the time of then-president Manuel L. Quezon”, and that “in modern history, the zero win for 2019 is worse than in the Marcos years.”²

18,000 positions were contested in the election, including 243 seats for district representatives and 59 for party-list representatives in the lower house of Congress, 81 provincial governors, 145 city mayors and thousands more local government positions from municipal mayors and vice mayors down to counselors. But the 12 Senate seats were clearly in the spotlight. In the Philippines, half of the 24 seats in the Senate are up for re-election every three years. These contested seats could clearly change the configuration of power in the Senate.

With the 12-0 victory by pro-administration candidates in the Senate race, Duterte now gains a supermajority in the upper chamber, with as many as 20 Senators siding with the majority and only four with the minority block. Duterte now holds tremendous control over both houses of Congress.

A number of controversial legislative measures pushed by Duterte are pending before Congress, including the proposals to amend the Constitution, the shift to a federal form of government, the re-imposition of the death penalty and lowering the minimum age of criminal responsibility among others. Another matter in which control of the Senate is crucial are impeachment cases against high ranking government officials. There are murmurs once again about a possible impeachment case against Duterte over possible violations of the Constitution re-

lated to the handling of the maritime dispute with China and in particular the case of Chinese encroachment into Philippine waters and illegal access to fishery resources.

The dangers of a pro-Duterte Senate were raised by civil society groups in a series of peoples' marches and caravans, which culminated in a campaign rally held a few days before the elections. The main message was for voters to support the peoples' agenda and shun proposals for charter change and federalism. The groups also highlighted the importance of having an independent Senate, which would thwart efforts by the government to push for its political and economic agenda and prevent a slide to authoritarian rule.

Election Narratives

There are a number of narratives concerning the 2019 election that can help us to understand the process and the outcomes of the recent election better.

The 'Change' Message: Hugpong ng Pagbabago's Positive Change vs Otso Diretso's Fight for our Future

The administration ticket was carried by *Hugpong ng Pagbabago* (HNP), an erstwhile regional (Mindanao) party led by presidential daughter and Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio. After the election win, HNP is now touted as the country's main political party and its leader Sara Duterte-Carpio, is viewed even now as a presidential contender in the 2022 elections.

HNP fielded a slate of 13 senatorial candidates that was a hodgepodge of re-electionists: Sonny Anggara, Cynthia Villar, Aquilino “Koko” Pimentel III, and Joseph Victor “JV” Ejercito; two former Senators facing graft and plunder charges Jose “Jinggoy” Estrada and Bong Revilla³; Deputy Speaker and Taguig City-Pateros 2nd district Rep. Pia Cayetano; former Ilocos Norte Gov. Imee Marcos; former presidential assistant Bong Go; former Philippine National Police (PNP) chief Director General Bato dela Rosa; Maguindanao Rep. Zajid Mangudadatu; former presidential political adviser Francis Tolentino, and broadcast journalist Jiggy Manicad.

Duterte was the main selling point of HNP. The candidacies of two of his anointed hopefuls, his long-time aide Bong Go, and former Police Chief

Bato dela Rosa affirm this point. What these two candidates mainly offered to the electorate, was their unwavering loyalty and support for Duterte. Once elected, these two were expected to, if not outright lead the charge in the upper house for Duterte's legislative and political agenda, at least toe the line and provide additional muscle to push his agenda forward.

The contenders shied away from the televised electoral debates on issues and their events and campaign rallies were criticized for being high on entertainment value, but short on substance.⁴ HNP chose the message of ‘positive change’, in the style of Duterte's ‘change is coming’ presidential campaign slogan in 2016.

That promise to deliver on social and economic benefits to ordinary Filipinos through strongman, authoritarian-style governance has become the Duterte brand.

In a post on Facebook, HNP stalwart Sara Duterte-Carpio said: “We are pushing a different kind of campaigning, something that does not involve maligning or attacking other candidates, and we think the voters agree with us. The agenda of each of our candidates obviously resonates well with the voters. Our candidates truly value what the voters consider important to their lives and to the country.”

Formed barely a year before the midterm elections, HNP's avowed goals according to Duterte-Carpio were to “pursue the ideals of what we all want, a strong region, a secure life for our constituents, good governance and effective leadership of the members of the party.”⁵ This is consistent with the security and development agenda that catapulted Rodrigo Duterte to the presidency in 2016.

The main challenge to HNP came from the opposition slate under the banner of *Otso Diretso* (Eight Straight). *Otso Diretso* is not a political party but a tactical alliance between the *Liberal Party* and smaller parties *Magdalo* and *Aksyon*, formed exclusively for the 2019 election. The opposition slate included former Senator Manuel Roxas III, who lost the presidential race to Duterte in 2016, re-electionist Senator Bam Aquino, former Representatives Erin Tañada and Gary Alejandro, former Solicitor General Florin Hilbay, election lawyer Romulo Macalintal, human rights lawyer and Law dean Jose Manuel “Chel” Diokno, and Bangsamoro Civic Leader Samira Gutoc.

Otso Diretso ran an issue-based campaign around an 8-point platform anchored on what they called ‘Project Makinig’, a nationwide, volunteer-driven, door-to-door listening campaign conducted between October and December 2018.⁶ From these consultations, an electoral agenda was formed, with each member of the ticket championing a particular issue from peace and security, to education and the economy. Specific concerns of the elderly, people with disabilities, farmers, fishers and workers were included as well as broader issues of justice and equality.

With this platform-centered campaign, the opposition was hoping that policies would trump popularity in the eyes of the voters. Re-electionist Senator Bam Aquino was quoted in news reports as saying: “the narrative has already shifted, they [the voters] have moved on from party competition and from colors. The nation has moved on from that because their needs are immediate.”⁷ In hindsight, this statement seems more like wishful thinking on the part of Aquino, in the light of the devastating defeat of *Otso Diretso*.



Former PNP Chief Bato dela Rosa won a senate seat (Photo: Hannah Wolf)

So what went wrong for the opposition?

According to Focus on the *Global South's* Senior Analyst and former *Akbayan* representative Walden Bello, the opposition senatorial slate *Otso Diretso* ran a “defensive” campaign, which was weighed down from the start by the challenge of going against a ticket supported by a hugely popular incumbent.

In an interview, Bello said that the *Otso Diretso* ticket was “not willing to be aggressively in support of the values that they should have been standing for” during the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte.⁸

While the opposition slate tried to advance positions on key issues and presented solutions to problems, this strategy according to political science instructor Arjan Aguirre “proved ineffective to counter a president who continues to enjoy high satisfaction ratings despite the controversies hounding his administration.”⁹

The strategy, Aguirre noted, “should have been to attack that narrative of Duterte, that myth, that people cannot just rely on a strongman politician to get what they want in our country.”¹⁰

The election results show that for the time being, people seemed to, as Bello pointed out “be willing to hold in abeyance their critical faculties because they believe in a father or leader figure.”

Thus, the electorate has given Duterte and his administration the benefit of the doubt to deliver on their promise of change for the remainder of his term. For the time being, the myth of the strongman has not only prevailed, but has ushered in what Bello called “the brave new world of charismatic politics or the politics of faith.”¹¹

Workers Unite for Labor Win Ticket

One positive development was the emergence of *Labor Win*, a united ballot coming from a coalition of trade unionists. *Labor Win* represented a broad alliance among labor groups and was the electoral counterpart to the labor unity that led to the coming together of forces on the issue of contractualization in the months leading up to the polls. While itself composed of a mix of political colors and tendencies, *Labor Win* articulated a clearer pro-working class message anchored on the demand for jobs and just wages and waged a campaign that Bello described as “appealing to basic humanity and basic values despite a lack of money and resources.”¹²

A fight over democratic values

More than a question of whose campaign strategies worked, or which campaign message resonated more loudly with the voters, the 2019 elections can also be seen as a fight over values.¹³

As Bello explained: “[On one hand we have people standing up] for democratic values of

respect for human rights, free debate and free press in a situation where a large sector of the mass citizens are not in synch with these values.” “To a great extent,” Bello adds, “it is a set of values associated with personal security and order which has become more prominent and more important. Duterte has been able to appeal to this other set of values.”

It is interesting to note that these battles over values are happening across the globe, with debates covering very similar issues. A recent article in the *Guardian* newspaper citing a 2014 *World Values Survey*¹⁴ reported that “nearly 92% of those surveyed thought of democracy as a good way to govern.”¹⁵ But that same survey also found that in the past ten years, there has been a considerable increase in calls around the world for a strong leader “who does not have to bother with parliament and elections” – and that trust in governments and political parties has reached a historical low.¹⁶ The report noted, that it “would appear that people like the idea of democracy but loathe the reality.”¹⁷

Focusing on the Philippines, the same survey showed that 19.2 percent of Filipinos have a ‘very good’ view of having a strong leader. This is the highest percentage in the Asian countries surveyed. Furthermore, close to 40 percent (39.9) had a ‘fairly good’ view.¹⁸ In other words Filipinos, at least based on this survey, had a fairly positive view of having strong leaders.

Big Spending and Vote Buying

Money talked loudly in the elections. Partial reports from the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) on campaign spending reveal the staggering amount spent by candidates.¹⁹ Based on Nielsen data on amounts spent on political ads, which were compiled and reported by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ), opposition candidate Mar Roxas spent a whopping 463 Million pesos or roughly 8 million euros in his losing bid to regain a Senate seat.²⁰ The top vote getter, re-elected Senator Cynthia Villar, is reported to have spent a little over 400 million, mostly on television ads.²¹ While the amounts are staggering, they are hardly surprising especially for Villar and Roxas, who belong to rich and powerful political families and have built up reputations as big-time campaign spenders.



President Duterte supports Francis Tolentino on the *Hugpong ng Pagbabago* ticket (Photo: Mirjam Overhoff)

Long time presidential aide Bong Go attracted the most attention when it came to election spending. He is reported to have spent 213 million pesos, mostly coming from supporters, according to his report to the COMELEC.

These reported figures are for expenses incurred during the official 90-day campaign period for national positions, which started on February 12. A closer look at pre-campaign period spending can reveal a more complete picture of the amount of cash that flowed during these elections. Bong Go is reported to have spent over 422 million pesos from January 2018-January 2019.²²

PCIJ noted the case of Bong Go: “The mystery is stark: Go – formerly Special Assistant to the President – is the poorest of the top ad spenders with a declared net worth of only PhP12.85 million, and cash on hand/in bank of only PhP3.9 million, as of his December 2017 SALN. His PhP422-million total ad buys amount to 3,287 percent of his net worth. Put another way, he bought political ads 32.9 times in value compared to his total personal wealth. Minus all that he owns, PhP409.6 million was the unfunded balance of his ad buys that Go might have paid using money from either public or private sources.”²³

PCIJ also noted that Roxas’s political ads, as well as six HNP candidates (Villar, Tolentino, Angara, Estrada, Marcos and Go) were close to

Neri Colmenares run on the *Labor Win* ticket (Photo: Mirjam Overhoff)





Vote Buying in Negros
(Photo: philippinenbüro
e.V.)

breaching the legal spending caps. “If Nielsen’s data were to be used to audit candidates’ advertising expenditure, by the published rate cards of media agencies, at least seven senatorial candidates – one from the *Otsa Diretso* slate of the Liberal Party and the rest from the administration-backed *Hugpong ng Pagbabago* – would already be in trouble with the *Commission on Elections* (COMELEC) for apparent over-spending”.²⁴

Vote Buying

A number of high-profile cases of vote buying were reported in the media. The COMELEC said it got 32 reports of vote buying incidents nationwide, with 174 arrests conducted by the police in connection with these incidents during the election, ranging from January 13 until May 10.

But President Duterte himself downplayed these incidents and seems to have condoned vote buying when he said in a campaign speech it was “OK for voters to accept fare money, criticizing the Comelec for its ‘unrealistic’ rules on financial assistance of candidates to their leaders and supporters.”²⁵

There are anecdotal accounts from campaigners on the ground that describe how vote buying operations were carried out in a systematic way. There were reports of certain party-list groups distributing money to voters in three tranches,

each tranche amounting to a handout of 1000 pesos for each voter. Reportedly, people lined up to receive these election payments.

Party-list Elections: Hijacked by traditional politics

The party-list elections also had some major surprises and setbacks and the results reflect how traditional politics have hijacked the system aimed at supporting greater representation of marginalized groups and sectors.

At least half of the groups in the winning column during the 2019 election have “either aligned with the Duterte administration during the campaign or whose advocacies have been questioned by poll watchdogs”.²⁶

The top vote getter for the party-list elections was the ACT-CIS (Anti-Crime and Terrorism Community Involvement and Support) party-list, which is closely associated with Die-hard Duterte Supporters (DDS) Tulfo brothers,²⁷ who have gained notoriety for their hard-hitting radio programs that have attacked opponents and critics of the administration on air. ACT-CIS got over 2 million votes or 9.45 percent of the total votes cast for the party-list elections. It won in Metro Manila and five other regions and got a substantial percentage of the overseas votes.

Initial overseas absentee vote (OAV) results from the Asia Pacific and Middle East regions also show ACT-CIS with a combined 33,774 votes or 36.70% of the partial, unofficial OAV votes.²⁸ ACT-CIS was one of the top ad-spenders as well, having spent over 76 million pesos on political advertisements.²⁹

The other party-list story is the poor showing of progressive parties. *Bayan Muna* lost the top spot to ACT-CIS, and despite an orchestrated negative campaign against it by the administration, *Bayan Muna* was able to secure 1.1 million votes or 4 percent of the votes cast for the party-list, enough to gain three seats in the House of Representatives.

Akbayan was unable to secure even one seat for the first time since 1998. From getting a little over 600,000 votes in 2016, *Akbayan*’s votes went down to 171,000.

While still able to secure one seat in the 2019 election, the women’s party *Gabriela* saw its votes reduced significantly as well, from 1.37 million in 2016 to around 445,000 in 2019. *ACT teachers* also lost two thirds of its vote count, dropping from 1.1 million in 2016 to 393,000 in 2019.

There are a number of factors that could explain the dismal performance of progressive groups in the party-list elections. These groups were effectively crowded out by pseudo parties established or backed by traditional politicians with access to resources and machinery that progressive groups do not have. Traditional politicians have found a more cost-effective route to power and they have capitalized on their tremendous advantage in money and influence on secure Congressional seats by way of the party-list system.

The usurpation of the party-list system by traditional parties has been happening for some time now. Many point to the landmark Supreme Court decision in 2013 that relaxed the qualifications of parties seeking to run in party-list elections and ruled that national and regional parties and organizations do not need to organize along sectoral lines and do not need to represent ‘any marginalized and underrepresented’ sector in order to participate in these elections.

It is also apparent, particularly in the cases of *Akbayan*, *Gabriela*, and *ACT Teachers*, that there was a serious erosion of their own base. Walden Bello attributes this to compromises



Election Poster of
opposition candidate
Manuel Roxas III in
Quezon City (Photo:
Mirjam Overhoff)

done in the name of political alliances, which alienated even party members and supporters: “We need to make sure that progressive parties enter [alliances] with their eyes wide open and know when to leave.”³⁰ The tragedy of *Akbayan* according to Bello is that it didn’t know when to leave the alliance with Aquino, and in the case of the *Makabayan* bloc the mistake was entering into an alliance with Duterte in the first place.

Conclusion

Duterte was clearly the big winner in the 2019 midterm polls. The victory represents a fresh mandate for Duterte to press on with his strongman approach to governance. His popularity and trust ratings have been validated by the electorate and his narrative of change seems to resonate still with a segment of the population that has embraced his security and order agenda as taking precedence over another set of values that gives primacy to human rights and fundamental freedoms.

As Bello clearly underscores: “Many valid issues from *tokhang* [‘War on Drugs’] to inflation were put on the election agenda by the opposition, but it seemed like they didn’t make much of a difference” and “a significant part of the electorate still went for the president, giving him the benefit of the doubt.”³¹

The resounding 12-0 victory of the administration ticket for the Senate has significantly changed the configuration in the Upper House, paving the way for a supermajority that could advance Duterte’s political and economic agenda.

In a statement released prior to the midterm elections in the Philippines, *Focus on the Global South* saw stopping Duterte’s authoritarian agenda as the primary election challenge: “Over



the last three years, Duterte has taken major steps towards entrenching neoliberalism and consolidating authoritarian rule.”³² The election victory and his consolidation of power could now propel his economic and political agenda even further.

Faced with this huge democratic challenge, how should Philippine progressives and the left respond?

Stopping the Slide

The *Stop the Slide* system in the United States can be a possible guide to addressing the decline of democracy and human rights in the Philippines; it is a new set of “indications and warning system”³³ designed to monitor the risk of authoritarianism in the United States. Therefore *Stop the Slide* identifies “seven important categories of rights and freedoms that safeguard American democracy against encroachment by authoritarianism: Freedom of the Press and Transparency; Freedom of Speech and Assembly; Free and Fair Elections; Freedom of Religion and Worship; the Criminal Justice System; Security Services; and Government Checks and Balances.”³⁴

While there are obvious differences in terms of the level of development of democratic institutions between the US and the Philippines, examining these categories and how Duterte’s

strongman rule erodes and undermines these rights and freedoms could be a good guide and starting point in defining a way forward.

As articulated by proponents of the *Stop the Slide* system, “the first step to safeguarding our rights and freedoms against authoritarian encroachment is a well-informed and alert citizenry who knows what signals to look for amongst the noise.”³⁵

And finally, another important element is building a strong and broad peoples movement at home with strong international solidarity support, ready and able to resist and push back the agenda of authoritarianism.



Endnotes

- 1 December 2018 Nationwide Survey on the Performance and Trust Ratings of Key Government Officials and Institutions. Pulse Asia. Accessed at <http://www.pulseasia.ph/december-2018-nationwide-survey-on-the-performance-and-trust-ratings-of-key-government-officials-and-institutions/>
- 2 Buan, L. Last time opposition didn’t win any legislative seat was 80 years ago. Rappler. 21 May 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/iq/230612-last-time-opposition-did-not-win-senate-elections-years-ago>
- 3 Revilla was acquitted of the plunder charge stemming from the misuse of 224.5 million pesos (S\$5.8 million) worth of “pork barrel” funds that went through his office.
- 4 Bordadora, N. Sara Duterte defends song-and-dance at Hugpong sorties. GMA News Online. March 2019. Accessed at <https://www.msn.com/en-ph/kids/other/sara-duterte-defends-song-and-dance-at-hugpong-sorties/ar-BBU0j69?i=AAb280R&%3Bocid=DELLDHP>
- 5 Aquino, L. A. Comelec grants petition for accreditation of Sara Duterte’s regional political party. Manila Bulletin. 2 July 2018. Accessed at <https://news.mb.com.ph/2018/07/02/comelec-grants-petition-for-accreditation-of-sara-dutertes-regional-political-party/>
- 6 Otso Diretso Website: <https://www.otsodiretso.ph/makinig.php>
- 7 Buan, L. Otso Diretso slate offers 8-point platform. Rappler. 03 April 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2019/223322-otso-diretso-slate-8-point-platform>
- 8 Bueza, M. Otso Diretso ran ‘defensive’ campaign in 2019 – Walden Bello. Rappler. 25 May 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2019/231521-otso-diretso-labor-win-campaign-assessment-walden-bello-rappler-talk>
- 9 Opposition bets failed to counter Duterte strongman myth – analyst. Rappler. 14 May 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2019/230539-opposition-failed-counter-duterte-strongman-myth>
- 10 ibid

- 11 Rappler Talk: Making sense of the 2019 party-list race with Walden Bello. Rappler. 27 May 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/nation/231405-interview-walden-bello-making-sense-party-list-race-elections-2019>
- 12 Bueza, M. Otso Diretso ran ‘defensive’ campaign in 2019 – Walden Bello. Rappler. 25 May 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2019/231521-otso-diretso-labor-win-campaign-assessment-walden-bello-rappler-talk>
- 13 Rappler Talk: Making sense of the 2019 party-list race with Walden Bello. Rappler. 27 May 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/nation/231405-interview-walden-bello-making-sense-party-list-race-elections-2019>
- 14 World Values Survey. WVS Wave 6. (2010–2014). Accessed at <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVS-DocumentationWV6.jsp>
- 15 Van Reybrouck, D. Why Elections are Bad for Democracy, The Guardian. June 2016. Accessed at <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/29/why-elections-are-bad-for-democracy>
- 16 ibid
- 17 ibid
- 18 World Values Survey. WVS Wave 6. (2010–2014). Accessed at <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVS-DocumentationWV6.jsp>
- 19 Jaymalin, M. Mar tops Senate campaign spending with P179 M. Philippine Star. 14 June 2019. Accessed at <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2019/06/14/1926380/mar-tops-senate-campaign-spending-p179-m#M-myKOodoZTxcP3mq.99>
- 20 Ilagan, K.A. Pol ads of Roxas, 6 Hugpong bets near breach of spending caps in law. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ). Accessed at <https://pcij.org/article/1671/pol-ads-of-roxas-6-hugpong-bets-br-near-breach-of-spending-caps-in-law>
- 21 ibid
- 22 Rivas, R. Political ads of top spenders worth more than their declared wealth. Rappler. February 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2019/223413-political-ads-senatorial-candidates-top-spenders-more-than-declared-wealth-pcij-report>
- 23 P2.4-B pre-campaign ads: Bong Go, Marcos, Roxas, Roque top spenders. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ). Stop the Slide Website. Accessed at <https://pcij.org/article/1379/p2.4-b-pre-campaign-ads-bong-gobrmarcos-roxas-roque-top-spenders>
- 24 Ilagan, K.A. Pol ads of Roxas, 6 Hugpong bets near breach of spending caps in law. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ). Accessed at <https://pcij.org/article/1671/pol-ads-of-roxas-6-hugpong-bets-br-near-breach-of-spending-caps-in-law>
- 25 Romero, A., and Regalado, E. Vote buying an integral part of Philippine elections – Duterte. Philippine Star. 14 May 2019. Accessed at <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2019/05/14/1917698/vote-buying-integral-part-philippine-elections-duterte#AM24wLd-6S3OSj7it.99>
- 26 Yee, J. Party list elections: Pro-Duterte groups in winning circle. Philippine Daily Inquirer. 15 May 2019. Accessed at <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1119067/party-list-elections-pro-duterte-groups-in-winning-circle#ixzz5sZt8zKeg>
- 27 The Tulfo brothers are radio commentators anchoring their own programs that feature direct, fast responses to issues and problems.

- 28 Bueza, M. ACT-CIS tops party-list race in Metro Manila, 5 regions. Rappler. 14 May 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2019/230584-act-cis-party-list-tops-metro-manila-regions>
- 29 Ilagan, K.A. Pol ads of Roxas, 6 Hugpong bets near breach of spending caps in law. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ). Accessed at <https://pcij.org/article/1671/pol-ads-of-roxas-6-hugpong-bets-br-near-breach-of-spending-caps-in-law>
- 30 Rappler Talk: Making sense of the 2019 party-list race with Walden Bello. Rappler. 27 May 2019. Accessed at <https://www.rappler.com/nation/231405-interview-walden-bello-making-sense-party-list-race-elections-2019>
- 31 ibid
- 32 Focus on the Global South Statement on the 2019 Elections. Focus on the Global South. May 2019. Accessed at <https://focusweb.org/the-election-challenge-stopping-dutertes-authoritarian-agenda/>
- 33 Stop the Slide Website. Accessed at <https://www.stoptheslide.org/>
- 34 ibid
- 35 ibid

About the author

Joseph Purugganan is the Philippines Program Coordinator of *Focus on the Global South*.

About philippinenbüro e.V.

philippinenbüro e.V. is an independent, socio-political information center. Our task is to provide interested parties with current socio-political and development policy background and connections in the Philippines. In addition to providing information and education on current issues, the office arranges contacts in the Philippines.

About Stiftung Asienhaus

Stiftung Asienhaus follows the mission statement „Connecting people, promoting insights, shaping the future“ and contributes to building bridges between civil societies in Asia and Europe. The organisation is committed to the implementation of human rights, the strengthening of social and political participation, as well as the protection of social justice and the environment.

Impressum

V. i. S. d. P.:

Mirjam Overhoff
philippinenbüro e.V.
Hohenzollernring 52
50672 Köln (Germany)
Tel.: +49-221-716121-21
philippinenbuero@asienhaus.de
www.philippinenbuero.de

Gesamtausstattung:

Zaadstra Design
(www.zaadstra.design)

Dieses Werk ist unter der Creative-Commons-Lizenz 4.0 (CC BY-SA 4.0) veröffentlicht.

Gefördert von Engagement Global im Auftrag von:



Bundesministerium für
wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit
und Entwicklung

MISEREOR
IHR HILFSWERK

Brot mit Mitteln des
für die Welt Kirchlichen
Entwicklungsdienstes

Für den Inhalt dieser Publikation ist allein das philippinenbüro verantwortlich; die hier dargestellten Positionen geben nicht den Standpunkt von Engagement Global gGmbH und dem Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung wieder.