



Final Report of the Philippine Elections 2022

International Observer Mission

28 June 2022

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Executive Summary

Based on the extensive Mission ground reports and verified media and social media reports before and after May 9, 2022, the International Observer Mission concludes that the Philippine Elections 2022, especially the Presidential, Senatorial and House of Representatives elections, including for the 20 percent Party-List seats, failed to meet the international standard of a free, honest and fair election.¹

These elections were marred by a higher level of failure of the electronic voting system than ever before, along with a higher level of blatant vote-buying, disturbing level of red-tagging and a number of incidents of deadly violence. A large number of voters did not get to cast their vote, and many had to trust that election officials would later put their marked ballot paper through a Vote Counting Machine (VCM), thus undermining the secrecy of the vote.

Vote counting was neither transparent nor reliable because of the failure of so many VCMs. Nor was the declared vote count credible because of the unbelievable speed in the transmission of election returns, the extraordinary loss of almost 900,000 votes by the Bayan Muna Partylist, and the election of only one opposition Senate candidate, Risa Hontiveros, out of 12 Senate positions up for election. How could that happen if the Robredo presidential vote was 30 per cent?

Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) were the first to cast their votes in this election cycle with overseas absentee voting (OAV) beginning on April 10, 2022. But from this first day OFWs faced voter suppression, disenfranchisement and other obstacles to voting. As a result, only 480,000 voted out of almost 1.7 million registered voter OFWs.²

The failure of the VCMs is the responsibility of Smartmatic USA Corp and its partner SMMT-TIM 2016 Inc, who already faced credibility issues after alleged poll irregularities in past Philippine elections (such as a delayed transmission of results to the transparency server). COMELEC awarded them the contract for the Procurement of Automated Election System (AES) Software for the Election Management System (EMS), Vote Counting Machines (VCMs) and Consolidation and Canvassing System (CCS) to be used in the 2022 National and Local Elections. Smartmatic is less than 60 percent Filipino-owned, thus not meeting the requirement of the Philippine Constitution. Domestic forwarding company F2 Logistics, associated with the Uy family who were major financiers of the Duterte 2016 campaign, were awarded the contracts for delivery of all election paraphernalia.³

Election-related violations of human rights began in January with the first political killings related to the elections taking place in Sorsogon, Bicol Region, on January 15. These violations took the form of political killings, shootings, abductions, death threats, political arrests and detention, harassment and surveillance of candidates and supporters, very large-scale red tagging including by President Duterte and by the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC), very widespread vote-buying, media manipulation and repression, fake news and harassment of journalists by the Marcos campaign.

1 <https://www.ipu.org/our-impact/strong-parliaments/setting-standards/declaration-criteria-free-and-fair-elections>

2 <https://ph.rappler.com/elections/2022/races/president-vice-president/overseas-absentee-voting-results>;
<https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1171794>

3 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/smartmatic-bags-half-poll-contracts-2022/>

This election does not meet the standard of “free, honest and fair” because of these prevailing conditions that robbed the voters of access to reliable information, access to the voting places without intimidation, and a credible vote counting system.

Following May 9 and the subsequent proclamation of Ferdinand Marcos Jr. as president-elect, and Sara Duterte as vice-president-elect, a series of violations of human rights took place which must be attributed to the final days of President Duterte, but which were not criticized by the incoming duo. These were the violent dispersal of a rally at the U.S. Embassy, violent dispersal of a rally at the Commission on Human Rights, harassment of environmental and rights organizations, red-tagging of national organizations critical of the government, mass arrest of farmers and their supporters in Central Luzon for asserting their ownership of farmland, followed by the red-tagging of this group by the NTF-ELCAC.

The IOM visited the National Capital Region (NCR) and Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog and Bicol, Mindanao, Western Visayas, Central Visayas and Eastern Visayas several weeks before and after the election day, May 9, 2022, as well as post-elections for validation and further investigation of the interim report. They were able to meet with workers, indigenous peoples, farmers and farm workers, urban poor, market stallholders, teachers, other government employees, students, young people engaged in election campaigning, candidates, elected officials, fisherfolk, migrant workers and their families in the Philippines, environmentalists, barangay tanods (village police), campaign organizers of a presidential candidate, campaign organizers of partylist groups, church and legal networks, local Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) and a fair trade organization.

Who we are: The IOM Commissioners

The Philippine Elections 2022 International Observer Mission (IOM) was established on the recommendation⁴ of the INVESTIGATE PH Commissioners in their 2nd and 3rd Report of the Independent International Investigation into Human Rights Violations in the Philippines, which was in turn established in response to the October 7, 2020, decision of the UN Human Rights Council 45th Session (Resolution No. 45/33),⁵ which was very disappointing to civil society. Its Commissioners are as follows:

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation

Canon Barry Naylor, CHRP UK

Séverine de Laveleye, Ecolo/Groen Deputy, Belgium Parliament

Lee Rhiannon, Former Australian Senator

Rev. Michael Yoshii, ICHRP Global Council, USA

Chris Ferguson, Former Secretary General, World Communion of Reformed Churches

Xavier Cotillas Romero, President, Catalan Association for Peace

Over 60 people from 11 countries took part in the IOM. The Observers on the ground are human

4 <https://www.investigate.ph/media/final-report>, Recommendation 17, p 69.

5 <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/RES/45/33>.

rights advocates in their respective countries and volunteered to support human rights monitoring in the Philippines during this election. Their names have been deliberately not mentioned for safety and security reasons.

Methodology.

The IOM ran for five months and monitored the campaign period, election day, and post-election period until June 22.

International volunteers formed into various missions were deployed to Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, National Capital Region (NCR), Central Visayas, Eastern Visayas, Western Visayas, and Mindanao to interview voters belonging to various sectors/communities and people's organizations, candidates, campaigners, government authorities, politicians, media, various civil society organizations, churches, among others. Additional missions were deployed post-elections to probe and verify the interim IOM report.

The missions were complemented by a researcher-writers' team for consolidating mission reports, reports from partners Kontra Daya (Against Fraud) and OFW/migrants groups, online research, and news monitoring and validation.

All these were verified and consolidated into six IOM bulletins, urgent alerts and statements, and an Interim Report released on June 19, and this Final Report released on June 28.⁶

The names of individuals and organizations interviewed and the places visited are not mentioned in this report for safety and security reasons.

6 <https://ichrp.net/iom/>

IOM Reports from the Campaign Period up to Election Day

The IOM visited the National Capital Region and Central Luzon, Mindanao, Western Visayas, Southern Luzon, Central Visayas and Eastern Visayas in the period up to and including election day, May 9, 2022. An extensive report of their findings is in the IOM Interim Report published on May 19, 2022.⁷

They were able to meet with indigenous peoples, farmers and farm workers, urban poor, market stallholders, students, teachers, other government employees, young people engaged in election campaigning, candidates, elected officials and health workers, fisherfolk, environmentalists, church and legal networks, a local Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), and LGBT organization, and a fair trade organization.

They found that the atmosphere for the 2022 elections was already set well before the campaign by violence in the 2019 midterm elections, by a history of local political dynasties, their culture of vote-buying, and the use of political violence as another tool of political control. Red-tagging, surveillance, raids, arrests and detentions and killings of civilians by the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) are only the latest manifestations. They did not expect a clean and honest election.

Six years of extrajudicial killings, arrests and detention based on trumped-up charges and on planted evidence, intimidation of the media, the passing of the Anti-Terrorism Law and widespread red-tagging have created a permanent climate of fear that intimidated and neutralized opponents of the Marcos-Duterte bid in the current presidential election. Some local activists said they had to go into hiding during these elections.

Youths campaigning for VP Robredo were red-tagged, and struggled against the Marcos camp's massive spreading of fake news on social media platforms. Vote-buying was reported in all areas visited and was described as systematic, widespread and with many millions of pesos per day being distributed by vote-buyers. Vote buying is so bad it causes a traffic jam of people lining up to receive their envelopes and sample ballots; so bad that voters expect and even shame candidates/their campaign personnel that do not offer money. In some areas the vote price ranges from P300 - P4,000 pesos per candidate; and higher for one whole slate. The price varies depending on how sure about winning a candidate is - higher if he/she feels uncertain, lower if otherwise. In some areas, they are given in the guise of aid. Some were given in installments, some cash, G-cash (electronically) or in-kind. Around 80-90% of the people engage in and see this as an opportunity to augment their daily subsistence. Because of widespread poverty, people are afraid to go "against the ruling party" because they could be deleted from the vote buying list and lose a source of income.

⁷ <https://ichrp.net/interim-report-of-the-philippine-election-2022-international-observers-mission/>.



Vote-buying envelope acquired by the IOM Eastern Visayas Team

Nonetheless, indigenous communities were united in their determination to hold onto their ancestral domains, but had experienced massive land grabbing, backed by military force, and the suppression of the community-driven schools in Mindanao. Farm worker communities visited were staging occupations of agricultural land that they contend is rightfully theirs, in direct opposition to powerful landlord political families in the province; campaigning for better prices for their products against landlord monopolies. The same for fisherfolk.

In one province, the landlord's clan have elected officials at the barangay, municipal and Congressional levels. They even have family members appointed to positions in the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). Landlords and development companies use bribery to suppress farmer action. In another province, the landlord is the outgoing governor, a lawyer, who has been a politician since 1998: a three-term congressman, two-time senator and a senate candidate once again. The political dynasties in the Eastern Visayas include the Romualdez (the family of Imelda Marcos), Tan, and Petilla.

The IOM in Eastern Visayas saw 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 peso bills with the name of the candidates written on them. Some people received several bills for different candidates. They saw a 'volunteer' supporting one local candidate who had a list of all the voters in one barangay and who was passing from door to door to give money for his candidate.

Participants at a Marcos-Duterte rally on May 3 were paid P2,000 each. Scantly-clad women were hired to dance to political jingles and provide entertainment to distract the public from any meaningful agenda.

Election day in two cities in Mindanao was rife with militarization and voter disenfranchisement. Polls were difficult to access because of heat, long lines, delayed openings, malfunctioning of Vote Counting Machines (VCMs), widespread military checkpoints and the presence of tanks, helicopters, and police in full battle gear like combat troops.

Teachers who organize and fight for their economic and political rights reported that they are red-tagged, harassed, and threatened. Representatives from the Philippine National Police (PNP) used their Kabataan Kontra Droga at Terorismo (Youth against Drugs and Terrorism) program to meet with students in the absence of their teachers, and red-tag the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT), Makabayan Bloc, and other legally recognized progressive groups and candidates.

A local politician confirmed that red-tagging happens all over his province, particularly targeting progressive partylist spokespersons, organizers and strong local politicians (especially those who help poor families). Those who accept monies from the Army are listed and showcased as NPA surrenderees while those who do not are threatened or are actually tortured/killed.

A group of young church people working on development issues and organizing among the grass-roots all reported that such work is regarded by the government as subversive and constantly gets tagged as communist or terrorist.

Their physical churches were regularly vandalized. The walls were often painted with the words “communists” or “terrorists”. They had all been forced to become more cautious and careful when talking about things like human rights. They all took measures concerning their personal safety. They all reported that red-tagging had increased during the election period.

Observers saw for themselves the tarpaulins labeling progressive groups like Gabriela and Anak-pawis as supporters of the Communist Party of the Philippines – New People’s Army (CPP-NPA).

The IOM observed soldiers in Eastern Visayas up to the election day intimidating people not to vote for Bayan Muna and other progressive partylists. People were really scared, campaigners were very careful. The barangay captain said that if he wanted he could convince the whole barangay to vote for a progressive party list, but then the whole barangay would get targeted by the military. Those who met with the Mission were not afraid to be interviewed but are being careful with their movements and whereabouts saying that there is no better thing to do than say what is true and fight for what is right.

The Visayan Church People’s Summit For Peaceful Elections said that the separation of church and state does not mean that the church cannot actively demand clean and peaceful elections or urge voters to choose candidates who are not corrupt and who are genuinely committed to supporting the poor and marginalized. They said that churches cannot have a neutral stand on vote buying or intimidation and killings or election rigging or on the lies being told on social media, and should urge a vote for candidates who were not corrupt, respected human rights, were pro-poor, and supported the peace talks between the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

Media-sourced election-related human rights violations up to election day

To supplement the reports of the Missions in the different regions, the IOM also monitored main-stream and social media in the Philippines for verified election-related violations of human rights.⁸

Extra-Judicial Killings

On January 15, 2022: Rosemarie Galias, 68, and Silvestre Fortades Jr, 70, Anakpawis Partylist members, were killed by four motorcycle riding gunmen in Brgy San Vicente, Barcelona, Sorsogon.

February 23, 2022: At Brgy. Andap, New Bataan, Davao de Oro, Mindanao, the AFP killed volunteer teachers Chad Booc and Gelejurain Ngujo II, community health worker Elgyn Balonga and two community volunteer drivers, Tirso Añar and Robert Aragon.

March 7, 2022: National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) peace consultant Ezequiel “Ka Rey” Cortes Daguman, age 50, was abducted and extrajudicially killed by the AFP in Davao del Norte.

Shootings

March 13, 2022: 64-year old Bayan Muna Partylist Coordinator Larry Villegas, red-tagged by NTF-ELCAC, was shot in the leg while cleaning his tricycle at his home in General Santos City, Mindanao.

April 19, 2022: Presidentiable Leody De Guzman was shot at by company goons while with a group of indigenous people at Bukidnon discussing a seizure of their ancestral lands. Five farmers were injured.

Abductions/ Enforced Disappearance

March 8, 2022: NDFP Peace Consultant, Edwin Alcid, was reported abducted by AFP in Catubig, Northern Samar, along with two other farmers.

April 5, 2022: Iver Larit, the education officer of Kadamay–Negros, remains missing after he did not arrive at an appointment with an urban poor community organizing against a demolition.

April 23, 2022: Dante Gatdula, the head of the Robredo People’s Council for Candelaria City in Quezon province left home to prepare for Leni Robredo’s rally in Lucena but disappeared.

Death Threat

March 19, 2022: Kabataan Partylist National President and First Nominee Raoul Manuel received a death threat from a Philippine Navy officer.

8 <https://ichrp.net/interim-report-of-the-philippine-election-2022-international-observers-mission/>

Illegal Arrests

February 28, 2022: Agnes Mesina, Makabayan Cagayan Valley Coordinator, was illegally arrested in Aparri, Cagayan, for fake murder charges that had already been dismissed on July 21, 2021.

March 7, 2022: Henry Palaje, leader of the Farmer's Organization OMA which is a member of the Anakpawis Party List Albay Chapter, was arrested in Albay.

March 10, 2022: Cavite police in Barangay Mayugam, Silang, arrested Jonathan Mercado, spokesperson of Teatro Kabataan Mula sa Nayon and a staff of Anakpawis Southern Tagalog's regional campaign. As well, PNP and Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) in Cavite arrested ten Anakpawis volunteers, following the red-tagging of the successful March 4 Leni-Kiko rally.

March 18, 2022: Young peasant activist Carlo Reduta was arrested in Quezon province on trumped-up charges of murder under the Anti-Terrorism Act. His family has been experiencing harassment.

March 29, 2022: The Secretary General of the Panay Chapter of BAYAN (Bagong Alyansang Makabayan-New Patriotic Alliance), Elmer Forro, was arrested in Iloilo on trumped-up murder charges. He had been red-tagged multiple times.

April 1, 2022: state elements ransacked the house of farmer Nemfa Delima and illegally arrested her in Negros. A caliber .38, ammunition and a rifle grenade were planted.

April 8, 2022: At least 30 PNP officers arrested Isabelo 'Buting' Adviento, Anakpawis Partylist 4th Nominee, in Nueva Vizcaya, on false charges dating from December 2020.

April 10, 2022: Following intense red tagging, police arrested Aldeem Yañez of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) in an early morning raid at his home in Cagayan de Oro, on fake charges.

April 13, 2022: Police and military arrested three elderly women, community organizers and Bayan Muna members, Maria Teresa Buscayno, Erlinda David and Evelyn Munoz, in Mabalacat, Pampanga. They are accused as high ranking CPP officers.

Harassment and Surveillance

March 5, 2022: The AFP harassed volunteers for Anakpawis Cagayan Valley Chapter in Isabela while on their way to join a mural painting activity in support of Leni-Kiko.

March 9, 2022: Anakpawis volunteers in Quezon in Southern Tagalog, Felizardo Repaso and his wife, reported being continually harassed, spied on and surveilled by soldiers outside their home for at least three days. On the same day, plain clothes officers were searching for Anakpawis Laguna Coordinator Red Clado, whom they accuse of being a "high ranking member of the CPP-NPA-NDF."

On April 4, 2022: In Cagayan, Rep. Arlene Brosas and members of the local chapter of Gabriela Women's Partylist were flagged down at a checkpoint and photographed.

Massive Red-tagging

January 24, 2022: President Duterte's intelligence chief, Alex Paul Monteagudo, called 'insane' the remarks made by presidential candidates Leni Robredo, Ping Lacson, Isko Moreno and Manny Pacquiao in favor of resuming the peace talks with the NDFP.

March 6, 2022: Senator Ping Lacson, a presidential candidate, tweeted after the huge Leni-Kiko rally in Cavite on March 4: “This is worrisome. A coalition government with the CPP/NPA/NDF will set back the gains of the government’s efforts to end the country’s decades-old insurgency problem.” On local radio, Cavite 7th District Rep. Jesus Crispin “Boying” Remulla claimed that those who attended the campaign rally were paid P500 each. He said, “They were trained by the NDF. They brought banners but these were pink.”

March 21, 2022: Undersecretary Lorraine Marie Badoy, NTF-ELCAC spokesperson for sectoral concerns, attacked VP Robredo, Baguio City Mayor Magalong, and Sorsogon Governor Chiz Escudero for their alleged connections with or sympathy for the CPP-NPA. She said that the Cordillera People’s Alliance and Makabayan partylist groups, were “urban operatives of the CPP-NPA.”

March 25, 2022: Red-tagging tarps were hung in Brgy. St. Joseph Village, signed by “Patriotic Filipinos of Baguio City”, tagging Kabataan Partylist, Gabriela Women’s Party and youth organizations National Union of Students of the Philippines (NUSP), Student Christian Movement of the Philippines (SCMP) and a school-based organization, ACS UP Baguio.

March 28, 2022, Signs linking VP Robredo to the CPP, the NDFP and the NPA were hung on trees around the government center in Palo City, Leyte.

March 29, 2022: President Duterte red-tagged the Makabayan partylists Anakpawis, Bayan Muna, ACT Teachers, and Gabriela Women’s Party as “legal fronts” of the CPP on his “Talk to the People” broadcast, and urged the people not to vote for them.

April and May, 2022: Tarpaulins were hung in front of the United Church of Christ⁹ in the Philippines along EDSA and in hotels in Quezon City red-tagging foreign visitor: “Communist Terrorist Group supporters, get out!” while a rally was staged outside the National Council of Churches building with the same calls.¹⁰

Media Manipulation and Repression¹¹

February 27, 2022: CNN Philippines was knocked offline by a DDoS (denial of service) attack for two hours while hosting the Philippine presidential debate, with every presidential candidate except for Senator Bongbong Marcos.

Since nominations closed in October 2021, there has been a massive spike in positive online posts, about Marcos Jr. and negative posts about Robredo.

April 9, 2022: Senatoriable Herbert Bautista and Ormoc City Mayor Richard Gomez (both former actors) entertained a rally in Ormoc by “courting”, touching and kissing a 23-year-old female supporter on stage.

April 12, 2022: Vice President Leni Robredo directly accused Marcos Jr. of spreading an alleged fake lewd video of her eldest daughter.

9 <https://ichrp.net/ichrp-condemns-police-harassment-of-u-s-human-rights-worker-in-manila/>

10 <http://www.fightbacknews.org/2022/4/15/2022-election-philippines-repression-and-resistance>

11 <https://ichrp.net/interim-report-of-the-philippine-election-2022-international-observers-mission/>

April 13, 2022: *Rappler* reporter Lian Buan was harassed and physically assaulted by the Marcos camp when she approached Marcos Jr. for an interview after his rally in Quezon City. Hours before, Buan was red-tagged by a Twitter account, as a “high ranking official of the CPP-NPA-NDF”.

Overseas Absentee Voting (OAV)

Voter suppression and other obstacles to voting. OAV began on 10 April 2022. But voter suppression led to low voter turnout. On May 5, Commissioner George Garcia said that while there are 1.697 million registered overseas voters, “the number of overseas voter turnout is not as promising ... at only 400,000 more or less.” In fact only 480,000 votes were cast. The following are some of the obstacles faced by OFWs as reported on by the media and by Migrante International:

- In France the Embassy was closed and no one was able to vote on the first day of voting.
- Vote counting machines (VCMs) were not accessible, delayed and insufficient in number.
- Ballots for mail in voting were also delayed or unavailable, and there were reports of pre-shaded ballots.
- Filipino leaders from Italy tried to dialogue with the Philippine government leading up to the 2022 elections, but they were ignored.
- OFW domestic workers in Saudi Arabia did not have a “legal basis” to ask for a day off to vote. OFW domestic workers in Hong Kong can only go out to vote on Sundays. Voting for OFWs in Shanghai was suspended due to the strict COVID-19 lockdown.
- The wife of the Philippine Ambassador to Saudi Arabia was caught on video campaigning for Marcos and Duterte in Riyadh; while Marcos supporters in Dubai were allowed to campaign very near voting places.
- In Singapore, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands there were anomalies with ballots and the voting process.

Updates from Observer Missions / Ground Reports since May 9

Election Violence

Election Day in a town in Central Luzon province was relatively quiet. The town was still abuzz with rumors of a gunfight one evening between security forces belonging to the incumbent mayor and his challenger, a distant relative. Various reports of casualties came in but the most heard number was around five injured from the challenger's security team. No one was quite certain who had ordered the gunfight or exactly how it came about, but it was called an ambush. The mayor said he was personally for Leni Robredo, but because of political realities had to be a "BBM Mayor."

In another Central Luzon province, many of the peasants and workers consulted were familiar with at least one instance of political violence or political assassination that had occurred in or around their community, and understood that politics in the Philippines could often be dangerous to engage with. The Aeta locals in particular seemed to have the most experience with political violence. Multiple Aeta leaders spoke to the fact that their members had been threatened and harassed by people working for the various candidates, and this had been effective at coercing them to change their votes for fear of reprisal. In addition, one leader mentioned that the governor of their province has a reputation for extreme violence, and that they suspect that he is directly responsible for the deaths of two barangay captains and many others who have been directly campaigning against him for office.

In SOCCSKSARGEN (a region in the south east of Mindanao), the horrors of the 2009 pre-election Massacre still haunt the people. That year, Maguindanao Mayor Andal Ampatuan ordered the murder of 58 people who were in a contingent to file a certificate of candidacy for governorship on behalf of Vice Mayor Mangudadatu. Victims included Mangudadatu's pregnant wife and his sisters, two human rights lawyers, and 32 journalists, the largest single massacre of journalists in world history. Perpetrators included members of the PNP hired by Ampatuan. This event continues to be a warning to journalists and human rights organizers in the area, especially because the Ampatun remain in political power and maintain ties with Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and recent president-elect Bongbong Marcos. People organizing today for justice for the families of the Maguindanao victims continue to be harassed and surveilled by the PNP, and expect the situation for organizers and journalists in the Philippines to get worse under BBM's leadership.

Fake News, Misinformation and Disinformation

Fake news, misinformation, and disinformation were indeed rampant. Even before the elections the Marcos-Duterte camp was already spreading a lot of it about the martial law era of Marcos Sr. such as it being the 'golden age' for the Philippines. The poor quality of and access to education worsened by the pandemic, the deliberate revision/distortion of the dictatorship era in or the omission of history subjects altogether under the K-12 curriculum, the massive fake news, misinformation and disinformation on social media and even in education modules were confirmed by informants on the ground.

Interviews with student organizers in Central Visayas confirmed that the historical revisionism touted in school curriculums played a massive role in shaping public opinion, especially among working class youth in these elections. Textbooks and even teachers in some cases cast martial law under Marcos as a golden age marked by increased foreign investment and infrastructure projects while whitewashing the rampant human rights violations and extreme poverty. Class disparities in access to the internet and educational resources have allowed a pro-Marcos retelling of history to assume dominance for those with no memory/knowledge of the martial law years. A martial-law era activist told one of our Missions about the experiences he had of being detained and tortured by the Marcos administration during martial law, and the Central Visayas youth interviewed expressed fears that Sara Duterte's potential appointment to the position of Education Secretary will exacerbate this problem.

The same is true for a town in Central Luzon. Informants said the education given to the youth was of poor quality, with many reports that the youth did not understand the history of Martial Law due to misinformation spread across social media. Children knew how to do the BBM TikTok dance but didn't know about the dark annals of Marcos Sr.'s rules. A museum dedicated to the political history of the Philippines was worried about the new president, who could easily wipe out the last sections of the exhibit detailing his father's rule. With that censorship, the Filipino youth would be deprived of another avenue of education in their past. In another town, said a PPCRV volunteer, the most talked about misinformation was about Marcos' hidden gold, that they have offshore money stashed and that once BBM is elected he would give out money to the poor. There was a widespread belief that Marcos would give out his riches, and that people would say they'd vote for BBM because his people would give them money for their votes.

In Eastern Visayas, many people mentioned misinformation as a reason why people voted for Marcos Jr. The Mission witnessed that the people who got convinced to vote for Marcos Jr. had been misinformed about his family history and about his projects. Some people believe that Marcos Jr is going to give money to their province because his mother is from that province. Fake accounts were constantly spreading positive comments and news about Bongbong Marcos. In contrast, there were many posts and videos spreading fake news about Leni Robredo, making people believe that she is not smart, corrupt or a communist.

Misinformation left the peasants interviewed in a town in Central Luzon confused as to Marcos' pronouncement of lowering the price of rice to Php20 as this would put them out of business. The peasants stressed that this was totally unworkable. It was notable how pro-BBM interviewees had no idea of BBM's platform. Not one of the several Marcos voters we have spoken to throughout the mission would point to any of Marcos' policies as the reason he was getting their vote. The opposite, in fact: several of the people asked were unsure of what his policies were, or confused as to why they were being asked the question. The overwhelming consensus was that they were either voting for him because they were paid to vote for him or "just because."

Aware of this, a Leni supporter in SOCCSKSARGEN said she had to work hard to find accurate information for deciding who to vote for. She avoided social media and said she stuck to ABS-CBN. She worries that young voters are on social media the most and thus susceptible to disinformation. She also said that voter education would improve the fairness of the elections. Other evidence of misinformation came from a BBM supporter who claimed that Marcos Sr. didn't have Ninoy Aquino assassinated, but rather that his murder was orchestrated by his own wife Cory Aquino

to ascend to the presidency. This voter claimed to get her news mainly from YouTube, vlogs, and Duterte's friend, pastor Apollo Quiboloy.

COMELEC's attempts to disqualify progressive partylists were coupled with mis/disinformation campaigns. A day before the election, a fake COMELEC resolution¹² stating the disqualification of the progressive partylists circulated on social media. This meant that many people might have voted for other partylists to make sure their vote was not wasted.

While the COMELEC had denied the resolution on election day itself, interviewees in Southern Tagalog reported that COMELEC officers told people ahead of the elections that the progressive candidates and partylists were disqualified, and that peoples' ballots would be invalidated if they voted for them.

Across a Central Visayan province, the Mission observed that mass text messages were another important medium for doling out misinformation. It was not uncommon to receive texts from unknown numbers accusing the progressive partylists of being in league with terrorists and or being disqualified from the elections. Voters of all political persuasions were bombarded with a deluge of false information and red-tagging online, in schools, and in their text messages. The effect of unverified claims repeated many times and from many sources cannot be understated.

Disinformation was not limited to those aiming to discredit opposition and progressive candidates, but also to the issues that matter to the electorate.

In Central Visayas, local vendors fighting privatization of an important regional market are continuing their demand to restart the development process and prevent the displacement of thousands of vendors and urban poor residents. While construction on the market is still on hold, the organizers are continuing to face rampant misinformation and intimidation. Public officials such as the Vice Mayor have peddled lies about the status of an outstanding legal case, claiming it was thrown out of court when in reality the hearing has been repeatedly delayed. These lies are attempts to paint the issue as a done deal and convince others to not resist. While no major updates have occurred and construction has temporarily halted presumably so as not to taint mayoral candidates in their campaigns, vendors are increasingly scared of speaking out. Many disapprove of the project in private or among fellow vendors, but pretend to be supportive in front of officials in fear of losing their licenses. The prospect of a Marcos-Duterte administration has also had a large impact on the organizers, as threats of state-supported violence are all the more real.

In another town, disinformation is being spread about a quarrying activity, which has put residents in a constant state of fear and anxiety about an impending landslide (already one happened nearby in 2018 that killed 78 people). The local government not only approved the quarrying under a bogus permit for a "goat farm" but also claims that the fracture caused by quarrying is natural from the mountain's "lack of draining." The quarrying activity is supplying material for land reclamation in the shoreline, which will be developed into a business park, displace fisherfolk communities and inflict more environmental destruction to the coast. Both the quarrying and land reclamation projects have direct links to the newly elected mayor and vice mayor, and both received investment money from China.

12 <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1593661/bayan-muna-calls-fake-dq-case-against-makabayan-bloc-desperate-scheme-of-fascists>

According to a veteran election lawyer, these development projects are inextricably tied to local government seats which when aligned with the sitting Philippine President, open the doors to wide ranging approvals.

There is also massive curbing of opposition and progressive candidates' information campaigns. During the campaign season, interviewees in NCR reported that there were BBM-Duterte supporters paid to regularly take down tarpaulins of rival candidates.

Red-tagging, Terror-tagging and Demonization, Surveillance and Infiltration, and Harassment by Duterte state forces and BBM supporters

There was a lot of red-tagging and intimidation of supporters, volunteers and campaigners for the Leni Robredo camp and MAKABAYAN bloc. They faced allegations of supporting or being legal fronts for the New People's Army (NPA) and received a lot of threats.

In Central Visayas, ACT Teachers Partylist was subjected to a combination of red-tagging and electioneering. Within the Department of Education surfaced incidents ranging from the head of a local public school sending messages to a group chat swaying colleagues not to vote for Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) Party-list while encouraging them instead to vote for Una sa Edukasyon—which she claimed to be supported by President Duterte—all the way to the Commission on Higher Education Chair Prospero de Vera publicly campaigning for Marcos–Duterte during a mandatory voters education forum for students. ACT Party-list was also red-tagged with banners hung around Cebu of ACT pictured with CPP founder and NDF chief political consultant Jose Maria Sison. The president of the university faculty union was red-tagged as an NPA recruit. These taggings have had a chilling effect on some teachers discouraging them from voting for ACT or causing them to support silently but not publicly even on social media.

Across one of the region's provinces, mass text messages were another important medium for red-tagging. It was not uncommon to receive texts from unknown numbers accusing Partylists like Gabriela, Kabataan, or Bayan Muna of being in league with terrorists and being disqualified from the elections. Voters of all political persuasions were bombarded with a deluge of false information and red-tagging online, in schools, and in their text messages. The effect of unverified claims repeated many times and from many sources cannot be understated.

The threats and red-tagging came not just from the Duterte administration and Bongbong Marcos supporters but also from the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). This way, the state intervened with the democratic process of the Philippine elections. An interviewee with some influence in his community said that he could not speak out against the elections and the government because if he did he would be red-tagged.

In Central Luzon, two weeks before the elections, military forces went around giving away flyers and posters red-tagging the MAKABAYAN bloc. The flyers and posters consist of "statements" from purported former members of CPP-NPA-NDF, these flyers were distributed by PNP officers in full battle gear.

In the Eastern Visayas Mission, the IOM host organization shared the various forms of red-tagging that they experienced over the past two years, as well as the countless instances of intimidation, black propaganda, death threats, red-tagging posters, and protests against their president.

- In 2020, a poster was published and put on the wall of their office. It depicts the president as someone connected with terrorists and with Joma Sison living in the Netherlands.
- The NGO's president received death threats by phone and text messages, until 2021.
- On social media, there was a post from the social media pages of the local AFP, Air Force, and brigade linking their work to terrorism.
- On September 21 (anniversary of the declaration of martial law), a rally in front of their office in the capital was organized and coordinated by the AFP, with peasants from the communities that this NGO served, who were coerced to participate.
- The NGO heard that the mayor was approached by the military about them being NPA supporters.
- In the latter half of may 2022, SMNI (a national TV-channel owned by Marcos ally Pastor Quiboloy) showed a 'documentary' accusing this organization of channeling financial support for its programs to the NPA
- Other employees of the NGOs were red-tagged.

This NGO said that some of its partners in communities have also experienced the same harassment. One of the partner organisations was even thrown a molotov bomb in its office.

The Mission met with a Vice Mayor who used to be part of an environmental NGO which also got red-tagged.

There were also many people, even minors/17-year olds, who were red-tagged for simply posting their support for Leni on their social media.

The Eastern Visayas Mission also talked to Robredo volunteers who were also red-tagged. The victims' names with photos were labeled as communists or NPA on social media. This is an attempt to intimidate them, but also to scare voters away. A barangay captain and counselor were seriously threatened and harassed by the military after an encounter between the military and the NPA in their neighborhood. Since that day the military have placed a post in the middle of the neighborhood. The barangay counselor was approached by some fake NPA-soldiers, who commanded him to give them some food and bring them to the barangay captain. He refused stating this is illegal, knowing the persons were in fact military trying to expose him. Five young persons (a journalist, a lawyer, and a human rights worker) were arrested in the city, allegedly for prohibited possession of weapons. The weapons were planted in their houses. Three of them have been in prison for two years now, awaiting their trial.

The Mission talked to a vice mayor in the region who explained the red-tagging of Leni supporters before a 6000-strong campaign rally in April. The night before, posters were placed around the Robredo campaign headquarters, stating: "Leni Robredo supporters = NPA".

Military trolls on social media threaten NGO-workers, who knew they were from the AFP, but could not do anything about it.

In Central Luzon, Robredo volunteers were also put under much more scrutiny and even harassment. Their work was more difficult to do because of this. Conducting even just a small assembly was hard to do since most local politicians in the area were massive supporters of Marcos-Duterte, and they have threatened and harassed people to not campaign for Leni. For instance, some barangay officials and local government workers were threatened to be laid off from work if they actively campaigned for Leni. Permits for meetings and rallies are quite hard to obtain especially if these were for Leni Robredo events, while permits were not even asked for in mobilizations in support of Marcos-Duterte. Some supporters have received text messages saying that they should not join Leni-Kiko campaigns and rallies because they are part of the CPP-NPA-NDF, these happened during the time wherein Leni was straightforwardly red-tagged. The pandemic quarantine IDs were also used against volunteers who actively campaigned for Leni. Once, youth volunteers were threatened while doing a house to house campaign. One local organizer received two death threats. A campaigner for Solid Leni Pilipinas (SLP) said that he experienced two death threats.

In addition to those, in a city in NCR, street sweepers were warned of losing their jobs if they supported Leni. There were also people who threw stones at houses where Leni posters were hung.

In an urban poor community in a province governed by a Marcos-Duterte ally in Southern Tagalog, a 17 year old youth volunteer narrated that on January 13 he was distributing flyers with his family for the Leni/Kiko campaign when he was confronted by a group of Marcos supporters. They smacked the flyers into his face, and told him, “don’t vote for her, all she will give us is porridge” and “we will butcher you and turn you into sinigang.” On March 10, a 19 year old youth volunteer was providing security outside of an Anakpawis meeting when the police raided the meeting. The police handcuffed him, kicked and beat him, hit him in the neck with a gun, and told him “don’t run, or else.” The police ordered him to identify alleged drug suspects, even though he had no connection to drugs. On the same day, the provincial coordinator of Anakpawis partylist and the vice president of the local urban poor organization was cornered and held at gunpoint by the police who shot at him, but his wife diverted the gun upwards. The Anakpawis partylist president was abducted in this area.

Even the non-partisan PPCRV are being red tagged because they help the poor and live among them. These taggings were perceived to have negatively impacted on the campaign operations and voting results of the progressive partylists and candidates.

In SOCCSKSARGEN, multiple reports from local organizers included incidents where voters that would have voted for progressive candidates from partylists like Anakpawis, Gabriela Women’s partylist and Makabayan block did not vote for them or did not go to the polls at all for fear of being arrested or attacked. The NTF-ELCAC, in the guise of monitoring elections, was used as a cover to harass activists and dissuade voters from voting for progressive candidates.

The Central Visayas Mission reported that as is the norm throughout much of the Philippines, local political clans in one of the region’s provinces coordinated their electioneering efforts with the presidential campaign they believe is favored to win in exchange for protection and privileges. On the one hand, mayors, city councilors, and barangay captains who ran opposed to those aligned with either Marcos or Duterte, faced the threat of being red-tagged or executed—a threat underscored by the 2018-2019 killings of anti-Duterte municipal election candidates and other officials extrajudicially executed after President Duterte publicly accused them of being drug lords.

On the other hand, this 'stick' was complemented by the 'carrot' of legal impunity and wealth through unscrupulous development projects or bribes.

Interviewees in this region shared instances of harassment, red-tagging and death threats directed at the candidates' supporters. A local politician whose wife ran for Mayor this year, for example, stated that a bottle containing the message "the next one will be a grenade" was thrown into the yard of a supporter. Another supporter received multiple texts from an unknown number leading up to the election, which included death threats and detailed evidence of the supporter's close surveillance. Across the political spectrum, there is a clear pattern of those involved in opposition party list campaigns dealing with harassment and threats. The chilling effect created by past instances of violence and campaigns of intimidation has made many too afraid to engage in the political process. Students who supported Robredo also experienced harassment and intimidation and thus reported covering their faces at rallies to avoid being photographed and harassed by police. A labor leader and organizer for Bayan Muna party list, in addition to being red-tagged, was surveilled by suspicious men and threatened by relatives working for the AFP.

Equally if not more alarming is the NTF-ELCAC's infiltration of various churches in the region as was confirmed by a church leader, reporting that there are up to three or four infiltrators in several congregations. The same church leader received death threats while conducting Typhoon Odette relief work, stating that she was now tops the hit list. The previous one, also a local church leader, has already been in jail under trumped up charges involving planted guns. Some pastors are afraid to pursue their 'prophetic work' due to these red-taggings. Now that the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP - Protestant) Council of Bishops has for the first time endorsed an electoral candidate (Leni Robredo) as a way of bringing their 'prophetic mission' to the people, a local church leader anticipates the red-tagging will continue given the Marcos-Duterte win.

Militarization was also widespread. The mission in Eastern Visayas describes it in detail. The Mission met with barangay officials in a Bayan Muna bailiwick (landslide win in all barangays in 2019) who said that the military set up a checkpoint in the middle of the neighborhood and stayed in the area until the elections, oppressing and warning the people not to vote for Bayan Muna and other progressive partylists. They constantly watched the moves of the people. As a result, the people lived in fear and the community organizers did low profile campaigns and met secretly. The barangay captain said that if he wanted he could convince the whole barangay to vote for a progressive party list, but then the whole barangay would get targeted by the military. After the elections, the military arrived and stationed troops in the municipality threatening the youth organization, councilors, even the mayor - practically everyone. The barangay captain was forced to sign a persona non-grata declaration against the progressive partylists, which meant the partylists could not enter the barangay. A barangay councilor was followed by two persons on a motorcycle, the modus operandi for extrajudicial executions in the Philippines. NGOs addressing human rights issues are intimidated. Under Duterte, many of their colleagues have been kidnapped and killed. The fear is real. A mayor was killed by the police in Samar. He was expected to challenge the incumbent governor in the next elections. The police just said it was drug related.

Some prominent Eastern Visayas politicians also exploited their influence to sow fear among and threaten the voters. The Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) in 2013 caused 15,000 deaths and many thousand of families lost their houses. Some of them were offered relocation to new living areas. However, after nine years many still have not got land certificates or registration of their house/

piece of land in the tax office, which means that they have no legal rights and thus are vulnerable to demolition and eviction - a rampant phenomenon in Philippine cities. At present, the issue is pending with the courts. During the election campaign, a prominent politician said that if the people didn't vote for him, he would bring the court process to a halt.

Students of the University of the Philippines were greatly affected by red-tagging and police harassment. On May 11, two days after the election, a group of student-athletes from UP Cebu were red-tagged simply for attending the university. Incidents like these both prior to and in the aftermath of the elections sowed a great deal of fear in the student community and discouraged many from attending anti-Marcos protests. Despite the hostile climate, the youth oppositional campaigns were very involved on the ground, and volunteerism inspired many.

Election coercion was reported by the Mission in SOCCSKSARGEN, one in the form of block voting, in which a group of people are coerced into voting for a particular electoral ticket. This can take several forms. One church is widely known for its block voting practices, in which church leaders allegedly accept vote buying money from candidates to support their lifestyle and church facilities in return for a congregation's block of votes. Another example of block voting is when a candidate's wealth allows their campaign to be the sole influence in the region, producing a de-facto block vote. Block voting also takes advantage of illiteracy in indigenous communities. Instead of translating the ballot, interviewees explained that paid off poll watchers instructed indigenous community members to vote for specific candidates.

With all of this happening, the Missions noticed during their stay on the ground the climate of tension and fear on the part of progressive activists and organizations. People have to take strict security measures when organizing meetings, going out on the street, or visiting relatives. Many of their friends and colleagues have been kidnapped or killed by the military. Since Duterte's 2016 election, many human rights defenders have been subject to extrajudicial killings. Online harassment is also widespread.

Vote Buying

The Philippines has a serious problem with vote buying. Due to widespread poverty and hopelessness in the corrupt system, the population is generally susceptible to these bribes. Many people think that they will live in poverty regardless of who is elected, so they see little reason to refuse money for vote buying because it provides a short term solution to poverty and food insecurity.

In the 2022 elections, the Marcos-Duterte camp reportedly did a lot of vote-buying. But what's visible are the local politicians and dynasties endorsing national candidates and buying local voters.

At the local level, both the mayor and the opposition candidate's team that were interviewed admitted to our Mission that they had purchased votes. They do not see it as a criminal act but simply one of the costs of becoming a mayor. Other people spoken with mentioned that this was the case in nearly all provincial elections on the lower levels.

Asked to describe how vote buying happens, a youth group in Central Luzon reported that in some communities, some families were invited to the office for dinner yet they were given money to vote for certain politicians. Some people were asked for their precinct numbers and were taken

pictures of with their names written on cardboard in support of certain politicians. Other ways of vote-buying/manipulation include inviting big poor families on election day to go to a resort/trip so they could not vote, because they knew that the family wouldn't vote for their preferred candidate. They also reported that the Sangguniang Kabataan or Youth Council head (youth counterpart of the village captain) expected to be paid after attending a youth electoral consultation. The group also reported an instance commonplace around the country - that BBM supporters gave out free ATM/debit cards if they bought a pamphlet for Marcos. Money would be deposited in the account of the ATM card if they won.

In another town in Central Luzon, it was estimated by people working for both local political camps, and by local officials themselves, that over half of all votes were purchased, under the cover of either "ayuda" (aid) or food allowance. People who "sold" their votes said they were given 2000 Php in two separate installments. Candidates from opposing camps participated in vote buying, purchasing votes for around the same amount of money. The mayor of the town admitted it, as did a representative of the opposition.

In several of the peasants' group consultations in the same region, vote buying was very widespread to the point of being normalized. Many of the farmers spoke to the fact that representatives of the candidates had been sent out into their communities to pay off the residents in exchange for their vote, though many also mentioned that this was not usually an effective way to secure the vote for the candidate, since not only were there competing interests, but people would often simply take the money and vote however they wanted thanks to ballot box anonymity. One consultation participant told of a local candidate in a nearby town whose election officials had paid ₱2,000 (currently US\$37.22) to every person who voted for him. In turn, his opponent was forced to up the ante to ₱3,000 (currently US\$55.82) per head. This kind of money, they added, was not so easy to reject; this was especially true as a result of both unemployment in the wake of the pandemic, and urbanization-related drops in agricultural yield across the province. However, in the end, most voters apparently took the money from both candidates and voted as they would have otherwise (or not at all).

In a province in Southern Tagalog, interviewees shared that BBM officials came around the day before the election to buy votes for P1000 but then people only received P300 after voting. P1000 is the equivalent of two days of livelihood. In another area, a provincial mayor - a known and feared major drug pusher in the area- committed mass vote buying by giving local community members 300 pesos. Members of the community closer to town were given 500 pesos each.

Workers in NCR reported another vote-buying scheme where the buyers would stand in a toilet and people would wait in line to receive money via G-Cash, the most used mobile app for money transfers. The price was somewhere between 4000 and 5000 pesos. They explained that because of contractualization and scheming by the big capitalist companies on the docks, many people were out of work and the money offered by the politicians for their votes would make a huge difference for them. A community of Muslims and migrant workers in one of the NCR cities also reported that all purok (sub-village) officials (all pro-BBM) were involved in vote buying.

Similar scenes were also observed by the Mission that visited Eastern Visayas. They heard about vote buying from multiple sources, especially in two of its provinces where all the people talked to (be it barangay officials or simple citizens) acknowledged it as a reality. Most people take it

as a “normal” or at least expected in the election campaign. The Mission saw bills (of 50 pesos, 100 pesos, 500 pesos or 1000 pesos) with the name of the candidates on it. Some people received several bills for different candidates. People said they take the money but do not always vote accordingly. The candidates also sometimes handed over a list of candidates to vote for at the different levels (president, senator, mayor,...). The Mission also witnessed a local candidate’s “volunteer” who had a list of all the voters in one barangay going door-to-door to give vote payments. On May 8, between 9 pm and 10 pm), the Mission also witnessed a lot of inhabitants in the streets or in front of their doors, which a local said was not common practice at that time of the evening (it was past Filipino bedtime in most rural areas). These people were apparently still waiting for some candidates to show up and distribute some “vote buying” money.

In another part of NCR, interviewees said they were being invited to join BBM groups - and upon doing so were given ATM cards where money would be deposited. Some of those who promised their votes have already received their payments/“aid” in cash or in kind (in one area, five kilos of rice) while some are still waiting for the promise made to them during the campaign period.

In another city of NCR, a voter said there was such a thing as buying votes that have already been bought. A neophyte politician bought votes (in the guise of ayuda) for P500 each with a promise that it will be a monthly thing should she get elected. The incumbent candidate eventually bought the cards (proof of bought votes) at three times the price.

In certain communities in SOCCSKSARGEN, vote buying targets a family’s patriarch in exchange for his vote as well as the matching vote of his wife and other women in his family, which takes away women’s free will in voting this election. Vote buying is enforced by poll watchers, who intimidate and harass voters when poll numbers don’t add up to the expected results after vote buying. But there was one poll watcher who expressed the wish for reform such that politicians convicted of vote buying would be disqualified from elections.

A BBM supporter in the said region acknowledged that candidates must have money to win and reported that she saw vote buying during this election. She said her mayor in an indigenous people’s region gave out 35 million pesos for vote buying, and that Marcos gave one governor involved in the Ampatuan massacre one million pesos for vote buying. Mining companies have donated to certain candidates, which one local organizer claimed was inevitably used for vote buying.

In Central Visayas, the re-election of a city mayor heavily criticized for his lackluster response to Typhoon Odette and the pandemic – along with his controversial efforts to privatize a major public market - disappointed many. Some in the community attribute his victory to his promise to provide financial assistance to supporters after the election, coupled with harassment of those who hadn’t pledged their votes to Marcos-Duterte. In the nearby city, the barangay captains within the mayor’s jurisdiction coordinated vote buying efforts for the mayor’s Marino Party list and the Marcos-Duterte campaign. In another town, the campaigns of two Marcos-Duterte allies - both of whom have approved controversial housing developments and infrastructure projects threatening to displace local communities– were involved in vote buying on behalf of the Marcos-Duterte campaign. The power of vote-buying lies in the province’s astonishingly low minimum wage (404 Php - USD 7.72 per day) and high poverty rate.

An election lawyer and campaign veteran reported that the price of a straight ballot for a dominant local clique and their Presidential candidate can go for as high as 3000 Php (USD 57.33) in some parts of the island.

Campaigners of a local official's own partylist, Marino Partylist, reportedly offered 500 Php for votes in one of the islands in the region, 500 Php in an urban poor community in a nearby city, and in the same neighborhood, 1000 pesos for a Marcos-Duterte vote. Here in particular, vote buying was so blatant that locals lined up all day outside the home of the barangay captain to collect payments. These funds, aside from being used to purchase votes, are a way of securing the loyalty of officials at every level of government. The cash distributed to voters is what remains after local government officials and COMELEC workers have taken their cut. Smartphone buying sprees and sales at electronics stores on the day after an election are common throughout the country. The practice of vote buying is so deeply embedded in Philippine political culture that campaigners unwilling or unable to purchase votes are openly mocked by voters and COMELEC workers in some cases.

Regardless of the practice's efficacy, its prevalence speaks to a tenuous rule of law, and a culture of cynical ambition and open corruption that animates Philippine politics at every level, despite claims to the contrary.

Paid Rallyists

At Marcos-Duterte rallies the participants often got money if they would vote for Marcos. There have also been cases of people being promised money if they joined Marcos-Duterte campaigns. Local politicians who supported Marcos-Duterte facilitated this vote-buying.

The Mission attended the BBM rally in Paranaque City near Solaire Hotel. There were dozens, if not hundreds of buses, causing a massive traffic jam that took hours to navigate, despite it still being afternoon. The buses often had the neighborhood or city name of the passengers draped across the side, coming from all over the NCR and nearby provinces. Several participants had been paid 300-500 pesos per person, with food provided as well. This was later confirmed from people spoken to elsewhere, who had either attended the rally or knew people who did. Local leaders would pay participants to take a bus trip, and as the rally was located near a massive mall complex, the participants also got a free trip to the mall in an air conditioned bus.

Many of the rally attendees were wandering around a kilometer away from the rally, having exited the bus and found more exciting things to do. The actual rally itself was more like a rock concert, with a massive stage towering over a sea of people. Two helicopters made constant low-altitude circles over the crowd, dropping glitter. It had the air of a rock concert rather than a political rally, except for the sound trucks playing the Bagong Lipunan (New Society) hymn - popularized by the Marcos Sr. administration- every so often. People looked dispirited and confused. In a Central Luzon province, vehicles owned by the local government were used to mobilize people and join Marcos-Duterte rallies.

Inaccessibility and Disenfranchisement

Peasants whom our Central Luzon Mission spoke with said that the lines to register to vote were too long for them to stand in all day. They had to tend to their crops and so, while they went

to sign up to vote, they had to leave the line to go home. Long lines were also complained of even by NCR interviewees. In precincts where VCMs malfunctioned the lines were even longer - many were forced to leave their ballots with the election officers, compromising its secrecy, and still many were forced to just go home. An interviewee, who is a senior citizen, also said that COMELEC promised senior citizens and people with disabilities that they would be able to vote one day earlier to avoid the long lines. This did not happen, at least not in this senior citizen's precinct that the Mission visited.

The urban poor interviewees in a Southern Tagalog province of a Duterte-Marcos ally described the following barriers to voting: brownouts or power outages; malfunctioning VCMs; not being allowed to put their ballots in the VCMs (only the officials were allowed to do so), however people were not able to wait to see if their ballots were inserted; wait times of 2-4 hours to vote; harassment between guards and locals. In general in this province, different progressive party lists including Makabayan received zero votes in certain areas, which was very surprising to the local organizers knowing the supporters of its partylists and candidates. There were cases of black propaganda against Anakpawis and enemy candidates and supporters would tear down their posters. There were also cases of voters who were registered in a precinct being told that they were not registered to vote on election day, and also cases of "ghost voters," or evidence of people who are deceased showing as having voted. These, along with the other rights violations and election rule violations already described above, show disenfranchisement not only of voters but also of the progressive candidates.

Interviewees in a fisherfolk community also in Southern Tagalog reported that their mayor ordered certain communities who were supportive of the other candidate to be blocked so they couldn't leave to vote. Like in so many other places, they also reported that the voting center was incredibly chaotic, there were no clear lines, which made it unclear where to go or how to vote, as a result many people didn't get to vote. From 3pm-7pm 3 counting machines were broken, calling into question whether their votes were even counted, and this is an area that has a high voting population.

The Mission in Central Luzon and NCR also received the same complaint from locals. There were long lines at the polling precincts, canvassing almost done while voters were still lined up waiting to cast their votes, there were a lot of cases of missing names of voters as well that did not allow those people to vote. The interviewees found PPCRV and NAMFREL questionable as well, since there were obvious fraudulent activities during the election date.

In Central Visayas, aside from rampant vote buying, the Mission saw irregularities and various vote tampering at nearly every polling place, especially those in heavily pro-Robredo precincts. Malfunctioning machines and brown outs made wait times at many of these precincts glacial, a problem exacerbated by the coordinated efforts of pro-Marcos poll watchers and paid voters to challenge the ballots of opposition voters and hold up the line. The result was a great many Robredo voters being unable to cast their votes due to the unbearable heat or the time constraints of their daily routine. Faulty Smartmatic machines, usage of unsealed cardboard ballot boxes, and legal acts of obstruction maximized voter disenfranchisement, preventing many voters, especially those in poorer communities, from carrying out their civic right and duty.

To the shock of many, nearly 50% of precincts were reporting vote counts by 8:30 PM when polls close at 7 PM in a country with one of the slowest broadband connections in Southeast Asia - this enraged many voters everywhere as they were still dealing with broken machines and waiting lines near closing time. The speed of the results seemed even more suspicious when compared to the 2016 Presidential elections which did not return until 12:30 AM, and as some point out, compared to the US Presidential elections. This disparity in reporting speed which cannot be accounted for by improvements in communications infrastructure, along with Marcos-Duterte's numerically consistent lead across regions, strongly suggests data manipulation.

Well-oiled Election Day Machinery

Candidates have their own poll watchers, mobilizers, marshalls, and canvassers during election and canvassing days. Mobilizers, unlike poll watchers who must stay and guard votes in a single polling precinct, have the privilege of going around various precincts in a given school.

An NCR-based mobilizer for a progressive partylist and for the Robredo camp narrated his experience that the BBM machinery was well-oiled. Candidates were allowed a maximum of two poll watchers per precinct - BBM had a total of six per precinct because they have two for the morning shift, two for the afternoon shift, and another two for the evening shift. The Partylist/Robredo camp had just one for the entire vote counting duration, which compromises poll watching because sometimes some of them seek permission to buy/have a meal. A canvasser, who is a Leni supporter, said that they were almost not allowed to participate in the canvassing by being required to follow unnecessarily strict protocols.

This NCR-based mobilizer said the most common problems he observed were people unable to vote, defective machines because the machines don't work or don't read the votes, reject ballots or do not release receipts, and brownout/electric outage of around 10-20 minutes.

In a Central Luzon province, there were unnecessary restrictions towards volunteers of MAKABAYAN Bloc on election day - they were given a hard time going inside their polling precincts, their appointment papers were often questioned. The IOM was told by interviewees that wait times at one voting station were excessively long, and that pre-filled "sample ballots" were used to campaign to voters on voting poll grounds.

In Eastern Visayas, the open ballot makes it possible for politicians to see who people are voting for and thus to coerce and control them. In some communities candidates or their accomplices are in the rooms to "supervise" and intervene. Poll watchers complained because politicians were assisting people to vote. The COMELEC, whose mission is to verify that the elections are fair, is constituted by people designated by president Duterte, whose daughter is running as candidate to become vice president. The voting machines are made by a friend of Duterte. Several people expressed concern that the machines were not counting correctly and the outcome does not reflect how people voted. There are no manual counts, which control the results of the machines.

Malfunctioning Vote Counting Machines

On election day, there were a lot of VCM malfunctions. Most of the interviewees, many of them volunteers at the polling stations, encountered at least one VCM that malfunctioned. The NCR-based mobilizer said there were at least four or five in the school they were assigned to.

As a consequence, it took longer for people to cast their ballot. In many cases, people were told to leave their ballots without receipts. In one polling station (an elementary school in NCR), COMELEC promised to send a technician to fix the VCM, but nobody came.

COMELEC refused to extend election day despite malfunctions of VCMs and its disenfranchising impact on voter participation.

Lack of Grievance Mechanism

The PPCRV interviewee described how difficult it is to actually bring cases before COMELEC of voting malfeasance and fraud, and how vote buying cases are never actually heard before the court. When you witness vote buying, you're forced to put it under oath and under your own name, which can endanger those reporting fraud. He also complained that there were problems with receiving copies of election returns, which as a registered NGO that was meant to watch the election in conjunction with COMELEC, they should have been given.

SOCCSKSARGEN interviewees said COMELEC didn't investigate complaints against BBM. The NCR-based mobilizer interviewed said poll watchers, who were tasked to talk to/ask the machine operators/ election officers regarding election day problems encountered in polling precincts, were usually prevented from doing so and were even questioned for asking, so they end up just taking photos. There was no repairman and the machines never got fixed.

Unbelievably Quick and Skewed Results

Several interviewees commented on the short time it took for Marcos-Duterte camp to be proclaimed the winner. Because the Philippines is a third world country it is suspicious that the results were apparently compiled that quickly.

For the interviewees, the fact that Leni got 14 million votes last 2016 elections, and still 14 millions votes this 2022 elections is purely questionable. As an example, the interviewees in a coastal community in Southern Tagalog reported that Leni was the favored national candidate in the community, in part due to her delivery of 4 trucks of food and necessary goods during the economic blockade imposed upon them in the wake of a demolition raid. The interviewees were all skeptical about Leni's loss in the area, as well as the uncannily consistent vote margins reported throughout the course of election day.

The voter turnouts for the senatorial candidates as well to them seems very questionable.

As one vendor in Central Visayas said, "Slowest internet in Asia Pacific, the fastest result in election. How does that happen? Why?"

Candidates not representing the interest of the poor

In Central Luzon, said a farmer, a few of the candidates supported the farmers, but most did not. None of the candidates actually visited the farmers or forest people, they all stayed (campaigned) on the main roads.

One added that they didn't know which candidates supported their interests, even calling the candidates "frauds." They champion the farmers' interests sometimes but when they win the progress is slow and it seems they are not fighting well.

Political Dynasties and Patronage

While the workings of political dynasties and patronage have been described in various mission reports, the Eastern Visayas Mission observed this in the region and specifically pinpointed this as an overarching election problem.

The Philippines are governed by powerful and wealthy Filipino families who hold positions in national and regional politics. They have economic power and people depend on them for their livelihood (jobs, land, careers, ...). There have been some efforts to diminish the power of the Philippine oligarchy, but the implementation of this legislation depends on Congress, dominated by the very same political dynasties. It is like leaving Dracula to guard the blood bank. The power of the dynasties has only continued to grow. This is also the case in Eastern Visayas. The dynasties are amongst others the Romualdez (the family of Imelda Marcos), Tan, the Petilla. In this system, the barangay captains are expected to convince their citizens to vote for the dynasty that keeps them in power. They also depend on the dynasty (the person in higher power) for funding of the barangay and the projects in them. If the barangay captain does not provide votes from the people in their barangay during elections, funding might be stopped and the good relations with higher officials might be challenged. Also this might affect the distribution of resources under the pork barrel system.

The probability of a local politician being elected depends on the person with greater power giving patronage to him or her. So the politician must keep at all times his or her relations with the mayor/governor etc. good. This means that they are often dragged into corruption and that they must make sure the higher politician gets elected (by vote buying or coercion). Those who refuse to obey, or those who challenge the persons in power, can be subject to extrajudicial killing. In Samar several killings took place in the months before the elections, of people challenging the families in power.

Distrust in the System

There were multiple expressions of distrust in the system. Fired dockworkers in NCR had been let go after they discovered the contractor their workplace was using had been stealing their social security (SSS) and healthcare money. They had won multiple court cases and were supposed to get their jobs back along with repayment of the money—but the courts had let them down time and time again. Many people spoken to had a fatalistic attitude towards the oligarchical setup of politics in the Philippines. There were constant jokes and lots of head-shaking about how interconnected the politicians were with each other's families and businesses.

Left-wing political activists from peasant organizations told us of being shot at by goons of Gregg Araneta. They had been documenting an illegal eviction of peasants by a group of 30 goons, when the goons opened fire on them, before robbing them of their cameras, other recording equipment, money, aid for the peasants and cell phones. This is part of a larger system of repression towards marginalized groups and those who mobilize to protect them.

Some interviewees also expressed distrust in the media for painting an almost perfect picture of the election process.

Views and Attitudes towards the Incoming Administration

When asked about the overarching sentiment for the post election period, the response from a Southern Tagalog urban poor community was fear of the incoming administration. Interviewees described that the country is in crisis and this crisis is intensifying, and Marcos and Duterte are making promises which are impossible to keep, such as promising that the cost of rice will go down to P20 per kilo. Since the election, there have been no major changes in attacks or harassment, in fact it is worse. The local youth organizer said that they aspire for unity and solidarity of the community, and that they will push themselves to be united in the struggle for their community. They said that the youth will not be repressed, and the struggle for human rights will continue.

A Central Luzon farmer lamented that Leni lost and that the incoming administration had promised that rice sales would be 20 pesos/kilo, which would make it impossible for farmers to profit. Nonetheless, some said they would wait and see if he improves conditions, but based on his predecessors and the local leaders they do not expect much.

In a Southern Tagalog fisherfolk community, the peoples' homes, livelihoods, labor rights, and environment are threatened by a boat repair company, the corrupt provincial mayor, the village official close to the mayor, and unreliable government agency (Department of Environment and Natural Resources, who when approached just diverted them to the mayor). The community has been taking all legal steps they can - but with all the business and government officials/agency collusion and the corruptness of the elections, they expect to be displaced from their community and have no hope in the voting system - it's so corrupt they don't see anyone who cares and they're hoping that the IOM visit will help bring international attention to their plight. Another fisher-farmer community which corporate land grabbers and the government has erased from the map of the province (by renaming and officially recognizing the relocation site instead of the coastal community as "the" village), many residents felt despondent about the Marcos victory. Residents feel that Marcos-Duterte will pave the way for the demolition to continue and are worried about what may come. The community continues organizing to defend their land.

Survivors of Martial Law and those aware of it are wary that Marcos Jr, who did not apologize and had no remorse for it, will repeat this dark part of Philippine history.

One youth activist in Central Visayas told the IOM: "It's a very controversial moment in history... As much as the outcome is far from desirable, it was a lot of setbacks for the future of our country. But I think at the very least, it really made people realize how very important it is to be politically active even if you're not a voter."

Updates on HRVs from the media

The final tally for the partylist system exposed the extent of the backlash brought about by the massive fraud and relentless red-tagging of progressive partylist groups, particularly the Makabayan Bloc. Only three representatives, one each from Kabataan Partylist, Gabriela Partylist, and ACT Teachers' Partylist, were voted into the 19th Congress, only half of the bloc's representatives in the 18th Congress. In particular, Bayan Muna was deprived of a seat, the first time this has happened since it entered electoral politics 20 years ago in 2001.¹³

Aside from the constant red-tagging in the last six years, the members of the Makabayan Bloc became a victim of disinformation when a false report that the groups were disqualified spread like wildfire a day before the elections. Even though this was corrected by Bayan Muna representatives, the false information certainly caused confusion among the voting public.¹⁴

The red-tagging did not stop on the last day of the campaign period. The NTF-ELCAC continued red-tagging statements post-elections when it demonized election watchdog Kontra Daya which also serves as a partner of ICHRP for the International Observer Mission.¹⁵ Both Kontra Daya and their lead convenor Prof. Danilo Arao, were repeatedly red-tagged by Jeffrey Celiz,¹⁶ who claims to be a former member of the CPP-NPA and who has condemned the CPP and has claimed to have known numerous CPP-NPA cadres from different parts of the country.¹⁷ Celiz claimed that Kontra Daya is a communist front organization after Prof. Arao said in interviews that there had been a widespread failure of elections.¹⁸

Freedom of the press and of expression is continuously besieged even after elections. The incoming Marcos Jr. administration has given an idea of how it will treat journalists in the next six years by ignoring sensitive questions during press briefings¹⁹ or by completely excluding legitimate news organizations in a press conference, but giving preference to media outfits considered to be friendly to the Marcos-Duterte team.²⁰

The opposition has also experienced attacks during street demonstrations denouncing the legitimacy and credibility of election results. On May 20, 2022, brute force was exerted to break a rally in front of the US Embassy in Manila²¹ where two campus journalists were arrested.

Lloyd Manango, from the University of the Philippines Manila and the national chairperson of the League of Filipino Students, and Kathy Yamzon of the labor group, Defend Jobs Philippines, were arrested and detained at the Manila Police District Station 5 in Ermita, Manila.

13 <https://news.abs-cbn.com/spotlight/05/27/22/bayan-muna-out-of-congress-for-first-time-in-20-years>

14 <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1593661/bayan-muna-calls-fake-dq-case-against-makabayan-bloc-desperate-scheme-of-fascists>

15 <https://kontradaya.org/kontra-daya-denounces-red-tagging-spree/>

16 <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1174594>

17 <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1174751>

18 <https://www.ibon.org/red-tagging-kontra-daya-convenor-delusional-ibon/>

19 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/watch-spokesperson-ignores-question-on-marcos-jr-united-states-contempt-order/>

20 <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/inside-track/marcos-jr-invites-3-reporters-press-conference-first-day-president-elect-may-26-2022/>

21 <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1600659/campus-journalist-labor-group-member-in-us-embassy-rally-arrested>

Brute violence was used on May 25, 2022, at a rally in front of the office of the Commission on Human Rights in Quezon City, a designated freedom park. At the rally which took place on the day a joint session by Philippine Congress proclaimed Marcos Jr. as President-elect, the Philippine National Police used water cannons to disperse the rally. Ten demonstrators were injured.²²

On June 2 and 3, 2022, Iglesia Filipiniana Independiente (IFI) church leaders found posters and leaflets bearing the photos of an IFI woman bishop and church leaders with the headline “Mag-ingat sa taong ito. NPA recruiter!” (Beware, this person is an NPA recruiter!) around various churches throughout Ilocos Norte.²³ Photos in the banner included Kabataan Partylist 2nd nominee Angelica Galimba,²⁴ and Diocese of Batac Bishop Emelyn Gasco-Dacuycuy, her husband Reverend Noel Dacuycuy, and Reverends Arvin Mangrubang and Randy Manicap of the adjacent Diocese of Laoag.²⁵

On June 6, the SMNI news program “Laban Kasama ang Bayan” red-tagged the Center for Trade Union and Human Rights (CTUHR) during a segment entitled “Labor Infiltration Operations of CPP-NDF-NPA in CALABARZON, Central Luzon and NCR.”²⁶ They focused on the strike conducted by J&T Express workers in Laguna. The guest Charlie “Steve Alejandro” Ponclara and one of the hosts Jeffrey “Eric” Celiz, purported that the strike was illegal and that they were infiltrated and instigated by operatives of the CPP-NPA-NDF. Thus they red-tagged CTUHR together with Pagkakaisa ng Manggagawa sa Timog Katagalugan – Kilusang Mayo Uno (PAMANTIK-KMU).²⁷

The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) issued a memorandum to all internet service providers dated June 8. The memorandum states per June 6 letter from the National Security Council (NSC) that all internet services providers are “directed to effect the immediate blocking of the reported websites found to be affiliated to and are supporting terrorist and terrorist organizations.” Websites on the list provided by the NSC included news sites Bulatlat & Pinoy Weekly, people’s organizations BAYAN, Pamalayaka-Pilipinas - organizing fisherfolk, UMA Pilipinas & AMIHAN National Federation of Peasant Women - who organize peasants and farmers, church group Rural Missionaries of the Philippines, Schools Save our Schools Network - support network for Lumad schools in Mindanao, and 19 others.²⁸

The PNP-Northern Police District released a new memorandum directing the profiling of communities with a large number of voters for Makabayan bloc partylists, specifically GABRIELA Women’s Partylist, ACT Teachers Partylist and Kabataan Partylist²⁹.

22 <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2022/05/25/2183643/10-rallyists-injured-cops-disperse-protest-marcos-proclamation>

23 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/iglesia-filipino-independiente-church-leaders-red-tagged-ilocos-norte/>

24 <https://www.facebook.com/100000715932596/posts/5662821577084984/>

25 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/iglesia-filipino-independiente-church-leaders-red-tagged-ilocos-norte>

26 <https://www.facebook.com/LabanKAB/videos/1096541174544110>

27 <https://ctuhr.org/releases/red-tagged-labor-rights-ngo-filed-a-complaint-at-chr/>

28 https://twitter.com/bulatlat/status/1539390239566770178?t=gcELpy_cW8Ml49GIXoaPIA&s=19

29 https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1613195/gabriela-cops-profiling-makabayan-voters?utm_medium=Social&utm_source=Twitter#Echobox=1655676327-1

A letter issued June 9, by the PNP intel section to a barangay in Navotas city, signed by Police Lieutenant Luis Rufo Jr., refers to the memo “from Higher headquarters”, and requests the barangay to list “sectoral mass organizations,” their leaders and members.”³⁰

On June 9, 2022, a plainclothes policeman knocked at the office of The Center for Environmental Concerns-Philippines (CEC) and the Kalikasan People’s Network for the Environment in Quezon City, looking for an individual not familiar with the staff. They took a picture of a staffer without consent and they did not present any warrant to search.³¹

Also on June 9, 2022, in Concepcion, Tarlac, police violently arrested without warrants 93 people as they were peacefully cultivating the land for the farmers to plant their crops in Hacienda Tinang. Among the arrested were local farmers, agrarian reform advocates, activists, foreign and local researchers, cultural workers, students and journalists covering the gathering.³² In 1998, the land the farmers were cultivating was won by 246 Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries through a Certificate of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) issued to them by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). Tinang Samahang Nayon Multipurpose Cooperative Incorporated (TSNMPC) served as the primary administrator of the land for more than two decades. Recent Mayor-elect Noel Villanueva and his relatives are majority owners of TSNMPC, according to Securities and Exchange Commission documents submitted to the DAR.³³

Detained without charges for over 72 hours, as many as 64 individuals were locked in one cell, measuring around 3m by 6m, and endured extreme heat and poor ventilation, with some incidences of people fainting.³⁴ Police charged 83 of the arrested farmers and activists with “malicious mischief” and “illegal assembly”. Even after a local court issued a release order, police initially refused to recognize the release order.³⁵ On 17 June, during their first court appearance, they were informed the PNP had filed 3 additional charges, namely disobedience, obstruction of justice and usurpation of real rights, against all 83.³⁶

On June 12, 2022, an anti-dam activist was abducted by the police in Pakil, Laguna. Forty members of the PNP Special Action Force dragged anti-Kaliwa Dam campaigner Daisy Macapanpan from her home into jail without presenting a warrant for arrest.³⁷ Even Pakil town mayor Vince Soriano decried the arrest on vague charges, saying Macapanpan was a known environmental defender in their town.³⁸

The Center for Environmental Concerns-Philippines (CEC) and the Kalikasan People’s Network for the Environment reported posters outside their shared Quezon City office on the evening of June 13, 2022, red tagging other progressive groups such as Gabriela, ACT Teachers Partylist and

30 <https://www.facebook.com/100069036405667/posts/pfbid02arLvTvRom2ib1Dvq83hP4DnmWTPMEFnQQVCed5z9k2KCharZDnaw8HnZrtFpSPD5l/>

31 <https://www.facebook.com/kalikasan/posts/pfbid02XS8BCCU4425trwxMuWKmoqLi8F4unGAo6yqCLPyahS4G5Lfu4a3Ep9tqrjXomol>

32 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/police-arrest-farmers-concepcion-tarlac/>

33 <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1609184/raps-filed-vs-83-farmers-supporters-nabbed-over-tarlac-land-dispute>

34 <https://www.theartnewspaper.com/2022/06/16/fifty-five-artists-arrested-following-land-protests-in-philippines>

35 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/police-reject-release-order-then-free-detainees-tarlac-farming-activity/>

36 <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1612280/fwd-more-complaints-filed-vs-tinang-83>

37 <https://philippines.icas.news/2022/06/13/green-activists-call-for-probe-into-arrest-of-elderly-environmental-defender-in-laguna/>

38 <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1609816/laguna-mayor-groups-condemn-arrest-of-environmental-defender>

Bayan Muna Partylist.³⁹ That same night a staff of the building that houses the national offices of Karapatan, BAYAN, National Union of Peoples’ Lawyers and Kodao Productions, noticed a dark green Toyota Revo vehicle which stopped for a few seconds in front of the gates outside the building and drove away. The staff went outside to check and saw two sacks on the pavement with texts red tagging Gabriela Partylist and Kabataan Partylist as terrorists.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, in a press conference of the NTF-ELCAC on the morning of June 14, 2022, Karapatan Central Luzon paralegal Pia Montalban,⁴¹ who was among those arrested and detained in the incident in Concepcion, Tarlac, was red-tagged by Spokesperson for Sectoral Concerns and Presidential Communications Undersecretary Lorraine Badoy-Partosa.⁴²

On June 15, Duterte’s Anti-Terrorism Council, a non-judicial executive body of mainly military and police officers, issued Resolution No. 31 declaring retired NDFP Peace Panel Chief Negotiator, Luis Jalandoni, and five others as terrorist.⁴³ Jalandoni’s work with the NDFP to put forward meaningful reforms targeting the root causes of the people’s armed revolution is not in any way terrorism but rather the way to just and lasting peace.⁴⁴

On June 22, a poster was found along Katipunan Avenue in Quezon city near the GT toyota building, with a photo of Raoul Manuel, the Kabataan Partylist Representative Elect. The poster had the heading “Terrorist Recuriter!”⁴⁵ The poster appeared just days after Manuel took his oath for joining congress in front of Senator Kiko Pangilinan on June 2022⁴⁶

39 <https://kodao.org/environment-defenders-reveal-new-wave-of-surveillance-red-tagging/>.

40 <https://www.facebook.com/273728780152/posts/pfbid02sf3PPKbkRDZiRS4J1Rbt5UJaghiXxMNRZKJkU6NqwRDtnASuuEVMhuqDz3hDJmvml/?d=n>.

41 <https://www.facebook.com/273728780152/posts/pfbid02sf3PPKbkRDZiRS4J1Rbt5UJaghiXxMNRZKJkU6NqwRDtnASuuEVMhuqDz3hDJmvml/?d=n>.

42 <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1176689>.

43 <https://politics.com.ph/2022/06/15/verified-validated-ndf-leader-luis-jalandoni-among-6-designated-terrorists/>

44 <https://ichrp.net/luis-jalandoni-is-a-peace-champion-duterte-is-the-terrorist/>

45 Original photo taken and shared by a UP alumni in a private group chat on June 22, 2022

46 <https://twitter.com/KabataanPL/status/1538786530395045888>

The Election Results

Presidential Election

The Marcos - Duterte slate was declared the winner of the unofficial count within hours of the end of voting at 7 PM May 9, despite the clamor of complaints about the failure of electricity, failure of VCMs, long queues of voters and many voters still waiting to cast their ballot.⁴⁷

The declared voting figures show that second-runner Vice-President Leni Robredo won in most provinces in the Visayas, and that Marcos won almost all provinces in Luzon and Mindanao. Marcos was jubilant, claiming that the Filipino people were united behind his UniTeam, while ignoring the strength of the Robredo Pink Tide. After four days Leni Robredo chose to concede, while urging her supporters to accept the results of the vote and to keep fighting disinformation.⁴⁸

Place	Name	Total Votes	Percentage
1	Marcos, Ferdinand Jr	31,104,175	58.74
2	Robredo, Leni	14,822,051	27.99
3	Pacquiao, Manny	3,629,805	6.85
4	Domagoso, Isko Moreno	1,900,010	3.59
5	Lacson, Ping	882,236	1.67
6-10	Remaining five candidates	613,929	1.15

Note: Total count as of May 13, 2022 5:18 PM includes a total of 474,295 votes from 61.51% precincts of Overseas Absentee Votes.⁴⁹

The New Philippine Senate: A Family Affair

The May 9 2022 election reaffirmed near-total Senate support for the Marcos-Duterte ruling bloc, with only one opposition Senator, Risa Hontiveros, elected among the 12 seats contested. The six Senate candidates on the Marcos-Duterte ticket who were elected are Robin Padilla, Loren Legarda, Win Gatchalian, Mark Villar, Migz Zubiri, and Jinggoy Estrada. The new Senators, combined with the nine continuing Senators backed by Duterte in 2019, give the incoming President a super Senate majority.

47 <https://kontradaya.org/fact-check-may-9-2022-polls-marred-by-fraud-irregularities/>.

48 <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/13/world/asia/robredo-philippine-election.html>.

49 <https://ph.rappler.com/elections/2022/races/president-vice-president/map-results>.

2022 Final Results Senate Election⁵⁰				
Place	Candidate	Party	Vote Count	Notes
1	PADILLA, ROBIN	PDPLBN	26,612,434	Former action film star, Marcos-Duterte ticket
2	LEGARDA, LOREN	NPC	24,264,969	Marcos-Duterte ticket
3	TULFO, RAFFY	IND	23,396,954	Radio host and sponsor of the ACT-CIS party-list
4	GATCHALIAN, WIN	NPC	20,602,655	Marcos-Duterte ticket
5	ESCUDERO, CHIZ	NPC	20,271,458	
6	VILLAR, MARK	NP	19,475,592	Marcos-Duterte ticket, son of a traditional politician couple (mother is still in the Senate)
7	CAYETANO, ALAN PETER	IND	19,295,314	Sister is an incumbent Senator
8	ZUBIRI, MIGZ	IND	18,734,336	Marcos-Duterte ticket
9	VILLANUEVA, JOEL TESDAMAN	IND	18,486,034	
10	EJERCITO, JV ESTRADA	NPC	15,841,858	
11	HONTIVEROS, RISA	AKBAYAN	15,420,807	Robredo-Pangilinan ticket
12	ESTRADA, JINGGOY	PMP	15,108,625	Marcos-Duterte ticket

The 2022 election strengthened control for specific dynastic families. Some of the more notable names to succeed in the elections were Jinggoy Estrada and JV Ejercito, half-brothers and sons of ousted (People Power II) President Joseph Estrada. Alan Peter Cayetano joined his sister Pia Cayetano. Mark Villar, son of the Philippine's richest man Manny Villar, joined his mother Cynthia Villar in the Senate. A quarter of the Senate seats are now controlled by three political dynasties.

While Cayetano officially ran as an independent, for a time he was Duterte's Foreign Secretary and a staunch defender of Duterte's brutal and illegal "War on Drugs". In 2017, he said that the police anti-drug operations were necessary to protect human rights.⁵¹ On the contrary, subsequent investigations by the UN and Investigate PH found this policy produced gross violations of human rights.

⁵⁰ https://comelec.gov.ph/?r=2022NLE/ElectionResults/_SenatorialSummaryStatementofVotes

⁵¹ <https://www.benarnews.org/english/news/philippine/senate-winners-05182022154319.html>.

Juan Miguel Zubiri is from a well-connected political family as well - his father was a Governor, and his brother was a Congressional representative.

Raffy Tulfo, although a political neophyte, also comes from a well-connected family. His wife was a member of the House of Representatives in 2019, and his sister served as Duterte's Tourism Secretary before being forced to resign over allegations of graft.

Chiz Escudero, who was congress rep for 1st District of Sorsogon 1998-2007, and senator 2007-2019⁵² is the son of the late Sony Escudero who served as the 1st District representative from 1984 up to his death in 2012⁵³ and Evelina Escudero who served in Congress from 2013-2022. Evalina's daughter and Chiz' sister, Marie Bernadette "Ddette" Escudero, won the 2022 congressional race in the 1st District of Sorsogon.⁵⁴

Among the 12 remaining senators, there are a number of other dynastic connections. Aimee Marcos is the sister of President-elect Bongbong Marcos and daughter of former dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Her cousin, Martin Romualdez, is touted to be the next Speaker of the House of Representatives, and her nephew (son of Bongbong) Ferdinand Alexander was elected as the new Congressional representative from Ilocos Norte.

The dynastic nature of the Senate excludes participation from the popular sectors. While many candidates would claim to represent the masses, very few produce legislative records that demonstrate these claims. The sheer cost of a national campaign excludes all but the families of the oligarchs from genuine competition for these posts. In the 2016 Senate elections, the average spending for the winners was P107 million (just over \$US2 million). Much of the revenue is self-financed or from large donors (other oligarchs). This fundamental reality excludes most candidates from winning.

The 2022 elections showed that the power of Philippine dynasties has increased substantially in the decades since the ousting of Marcos, thus distorting democracy and worsening inequality.

A 2019 study by Dr. Ronal Mendoza from Ateneo de Manila identified approximately 80 percent of governors belonging to "fat dynasties", which are political clans with two or more members in power at the same time – up from 57 per cent in 2004. Political families also held 67 percent of seats in the House of Representatives, and 53 per cent of mayoral posts.

The clear concentration of power in the hands of a very few dynastic families makes the case for electoral reform. Real democracy is not possible when a few rich families wield total power. The Philippine Constitution itself calls for the exclusion of dynasties from the political process, yet the future is in the hands of these political elites at the core of the political process. These same political elites cannot be expected to legislate themselves out of political power to enable a more democratic system.

52 <https://www.rappler.com/people/Francis-Joseph-Escudero/>

53 <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/249261/escudero-sorsogon-solon-dies-of-cancer-69>.

54 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/results-political-dynasties-local-races-bicol-2022/>.

The Bastardization of the Philippine Party-List System

The 2022 Philippine election was a basic primer on everything wrong with the Party-List System. Of the 55 winning party-list groups in 2022, the vast majority reflect nothing of the original intent of this electoral reform to enable representation of the marginalized and underrepresented social sectors.

In 2022, the party-list system elected 23 candidates of local political clans in different regions, and six candidates of political dynasties. Groups purporting to represent disadvantaged sectors such as the United Senior Citizen and Angat actually represented the Magsaysay and Del Rosario political dynasties, respectively. Marino which purported to represent seafarers and mariners actually represents pro-Duterte business executives.⁵⁵

Rappler reported at least four other political clans gained representation via the party-list system in the 2022 election based on final results from the Commission on Elections (Comelec).⁵⁶ These four political dynasties are Romualdez (Marcos relatives) – Leyte for Tinog Sinarangan; Villanueva for CIBAC, Noel for An Waray; Singson-Ilocos Sur for Ako Ilocano Ako; Tan-Tabut – Sulu for Kusug Tausug; Colada for Ambisawa.

The 1995 Party-List Act declared: “The State shall promote proportional representation in the election of representatives to the House of Representatives through a party-list system of registered national, regional and sectoral parties or organizations or coalitions thereof, which will enable Filipino citizens belonging to the marginalized and underrepresented sectors, organizations and parties, and who lack well-defined political constituencies but who could contribute to the formulation and enactment of appropriate legislation that will benefit the nation as a whole, to become members of the House of Representatives.”⁵⁷

The partylist system is a proportional representation process enacted on February 28, 1995, setting aside 20 percent of the seats in the Philippine House of Representatives to give voice to marginalized and disenfranchised sectors. Groups that get at least 2% of the total party-list votes get one guaranteed seat each, two guaranteed seats at 4%, and a maximum of three seats with at least 6%. The groups with less than 2% of the total votes, in order of the votes they received, will win one seat each until all the remaining party-list seats are filled.

This was a legacy of the 1986 EDSA People Power and was a small measure designed to broaden the base of the Philippines elite democracy that had been dominated by political dynasties and financial oligarchies. It appears however that even 20% of Congressional seats for the poor, oppressed and disadvantaged was too much for Philippine elites to bear.

A Supreme Court decision in 2013 (under the Benigno Aquino III presidency) determined “*the party-list is a system of proportional representation open to various kinds of groups and parties, and not an exercise exclusive to marginalized sectors*”.⁵⁸

55 <https://www.bulatlat.com/2022/05/24/in-2022-poll-party-lists-still-backdoor-for-political-dynasties/>.

56 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/list-political-family-members-party-list-seats-poll-results-2022/>.

57 Republic Act No. 7941, An Act Providing for the Election of Party-List Representatives through the Party-List System, and Appropriating Funds Therefor, Section 2. <https://pcw.gov.ph/republic-act-7941-party-list-system-act/>.

58 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Party-list_representation_in_the_House_of_Representatives_of_the_Philippines.

This decision opened up the Party-List process to all political formations. Since then the partylist system has served as a backdoor to Congress for members of political dynasties. The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism identified that at least 70 of the 177 partylist groups accredited by the Comelec for the 2022 elections have nominees who are connected to political clans or incumbent local or national elected officials.⁵⁹

The growing success of political dynasties also parallels the concentration of the partylist vote in specific regions. Twenty of the 56 successful party-list organizations garnered more than half their votes in a single region. The regionalization of the party-list system makes it resemble the congressional district process for electing representatives, increasingly dominated by local regional political clans and dynasties.

Increasingly excluded since the 2013 Supreme Court decision are those whom the party-list system was intended to assist - marginalized sectors such as laborers, peasants, urban poor, indigenous peoples, women, and youth. In 2022, only a thin slice of the 63 party-list seats provided a voice in Congress to groups who actually represent marginalized sectors: Kabataan, Gabriela Women's Party, AGRI, P3PWD, COOP-NATCCO, ACT Teachers, Magsasaka, and the TUCP are among the few to secure representation.

Some of the long-standing partylist contenders such as Bayan Muna and Anakpawis did not garner enough votes to hold seats. Bayan Muna in particular was the victim of a red-tagging campaign from military officials, the NTF-ELCAC, the President and even partylist groups such as Duterte Youth and Mocha. The day before the election a fake document circulated online which stated that Makabayan bloc partylists and senatorial candidate Neri Colmenares were disqualified due to their alleged communist links. In 2022, Bayan Muna purportedly got only 219,848 votes – a decrease of 897,555 votes compared to its 1,117,402 in 2019, and has protested that this was gross electronic vote-shaving.⁶⁰

The partylist system has been completely corrupted and bastardized. It is no more than a shadow of its original intention. It is now just another vehicle for the political oligarchs and dynastic families. This situation demands complete reform to take the partylist system back to its origins to provide an avenue for the marginalized and underrepresented, or it should be abolished.

59 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/politicians-spouses-siblings-children-pack-party-list-race-2022-polls/>.

60 <https://www.rappler.com/nation/elections/makabayan-bloc-fight-on-progressives-19th-congress/>.

Prospects for the Philippines under Marcos Jr. Presidency

Governance in the Philippines is described by progressives as oligarchic experiments on democracy. Owing to the Philippines' history of colonialism under Spain and the United States of America, and its enduring ties with the U.S. ruling elite, contemporary political leaders still bear the marks of colonial collaboration. Marcos Jr. is no exception.

To understand the dynamics of foreign domination of national sovereignty in all its dimensions, it is important to follow the political and economic history of the Philippines in the post-war period and the U.S. ascension to be a global superpower. In the so-called post-colonial period, the U.S.-installed government of the Republic of the Philippines followed the logic of representative democracy. U.S.-style elections corresponded with the entrenchment of the U.S.-designed free market on Philippine soil. For this system to persist, it is a must to have a regular recruitment of political figures from the dependable select clan of Filipino oligarchs connected to this long history of colonialism and imperialism.

On May 23, 2022, Japanese Ambassador Koshikawa Kazuhiko, South Korea Ambassador Kim In-chul, India Ambassador Shambhu S. Kumaran, and United States Chargé d'Affaires Heather Variava separately paid courtesy calls on Marcos Jr. as the new president-elect.⁶¹ Marcos Jr. reports that his discussion with Variava was mainly about "security concerns" involving the "extension of the VFA (Visiting Forces Agreement) and how it has to be redefined for the near future with the situation around the world especially in our region."⁶²

Further, the U.S. seems to be providing Marcos with favors to win his support. Despite a contempt order worth 353 million dollars against Marcos Jr, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman has said that Marcos Jr could enter the U.S. without arrest given his status as a Head of State. This cannot come as a surprise since it was also the United States who famously helped the Marcos family exit the Philippines when Marcos Sr. was ousted in 1986.

This is not something new. The United States-Republic of the Philippines alliance is an important anchor for the U.S. presence in Southeast Asia. The cultivation of this alliance is a priority of President Joseph Biden in his determination to foil Chinese expansionism in the Asia-Pacific. This alliance with the U.S. is especially important considering Duterte's open and repeated declaration of ending ties with the US and "dependence" on China. More recently, Marcos Jr. recognized China as the Philippines' "strongest partner",⁶³ and his mother Imelda was recently given the Association for Philippines-China Understanding Hall of Fame Award for being the "greatest champion of Philippines-China relations."⁶⁴

61 <https://globalnation.inquirer.net/204124/us-asian-diplomats-pay-courtesy-call-on-bongbong-marcos>

62 <https://globalnation.inquirer.net/204132/marcos-talks-with-us-envoy-on-possible-redefining-of-vfa>

63 <https://www.manilatimes.net/2022/06/11/news/national/china-our-strongest-partner-marcos/1846966>

64 <https://cebudailynews.inquirer.net/446651/bongbong-marcos-china-cant-find-greater-champion-in-ph-than-mom-imelda>

Prior to the elections, mainstream media was citing credible sources calling Marcos Jr. a “Manchurian candidate” (backed by China).⁶⁵

The U.S. Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) is set to deploy U.S. forces, including marine and army units, along the first island chain running from Japan through Southeast Asia. These mobile teams function as support for U.S. air and naval operations to be able to challenge Chinese vessels with ground-based missile units. This, from the perspective of U.S. hegemony in the Pacific, is a good strategy to match if not counter the naval and missile advantages of China in its near waters.

No other country in Southeast Asia has such a standing and solid military agreement with the U.S. as the Philippines, with the VFA and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). The rivalry between the U.S. and China calls for a maximized implementation of VFA and EDCA.

Marcos Jr.’s openness to intensified U.S. militarism in Asia, which entails an extensive presence of U.S. troops and military facilities in the country, will, as with his predecessors, be normalized as a head of state’s implementation of national security policy.

This is in line with Biden’s key role in the summit of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), between the United States, Japan, Australia and India held on May 20-24, 2022, in Korea and Japan. It is a move to consolidate the ruling elite in East Asia not only for drumming up modalities of war with China but also for U.S.-NATO’s intensified project of global military power.⁶⁶

This year’s RIMPAC, or Rim of the Pacific, the world’s largest maritime military exercise, set to take place between June 29 and August 4th along the Hawaiian Islands and the west coast, will further lead to heightened militarization of Asia Pacific and the Philippines. RIMPAC, which includes the Philippines, will be comprised of 26 countries, including the United States, NATO and the Philippines, will seek to further align the Marcos regime with US military interests.

Alignment with the U.S. goal to frustrate the economic and political rise of China has the effect of an intensified campaign of suppression against democratic and patriotic forces who will oppose any form of foreign military intervention. Filipinos are known for organizing the powerful mass movements that ousted the 20-year rule of the dictator Marcos Sr. in 1986 and the corrupt Estrada presidency in 2001, and rejected a new military bases treaty after the expiration of the 1947 Philippine-U.S. Military Bases Agreement in 1991.⁶⁷

Meanwhile, the escalation of military campaigns against progressive and revolutionary organizations in the Philippines is one of the foundations of the Marcos Jr.-Sara Duterte alliance. Their avowed commitment to Rodrigo Duterte’s National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC) patterned after the U.S. Whole-of-Nation Approach (WNA) to counterinsurgency is less an independent program for national security than an outcome of local politicians’ compliance with U.S. political and military pressure exerted through the local pro-U.S. armed forces. Marcos Jr.’s appointment of Sarah Duterte as Secretary of Education accords with the Marcos family’s goal to rehabilitate their tarnished reputation, especially that of the dictator Marcos.

65 <https://pressone.ph/the-secret-candidate-and-the-manchurian-candidate/>

66 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/24/quad-joint-leaders-statement/>

67 <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/09/16/world/philippine-senate-votes-to-reject-us-base-renewal.html>

This is done through historical revisionism and an all-out information war against the Filipino people's demand for truth and accountability for the atrocities committed by Marcos Sr. during the dark years of Martial Law.

This campaign for rehabilitation can only step up what President Duterte has already implemented in the educational field — the repression of the main teachers' union, the Alliance of Concerned Teachers, the red tagging of universities, and the purging of what the government tags as subversive materials in various higher education libraries. The Marcos-Duterte tandem will mobilize state agencies and resources to revise Philippine history in textbooks as well as in libraries and museums, aiming to glorify the tyrannical rule of both their fathers. These are extensions of the Cold War McCarthyism campaign in the U.S. and its semi-colonies in the Global South that started in the second half of the 20th century.

This shows how fealty to the global U.S. economic, military and political strategy also means embracing the U.S. COIN (counterinsurgency) doctrine. U.S. COIN has no other objective but to crush dissent in all its forms, including armed rebellion, without addressing the roots of armed conflict in the Philippines. Localized peace talks with the armed communist group is an attempt to undermine these forces which are organized on a national scale. Vilification campaigns through red tagging of legal civilian organizations are bound to escalate given the melding of political dynasties in the Marcos-Duterte tandem. Their rise to and current hold on power is enabled by U.S. intervention in the Philippines.

Marcos Jr. has not expressed any sign of departing from Duterte's close partnership with China. As a matter of fact, in a welcome speech he delivered in the presence of the Chinese Ambassador, Marcos Jr. mentioned his own father's long-time diplomatic ties with China, which he aims to strengthen. During the January 23 APCU award ceremonies, he thanked the APCU and Chinese embassy for his mother's Hall of Fame award and committed to continue Duterte's so-called "independent" foreign policy⁶⁸ - which demonstrated at least superficial independence from the US and greater dependence on and favors for China. The relationship between China and the Philippines is largely defined by Duterte's submission to China's violation of the sovereign maritime rights of the Philippines over the West Philippine Sea since 2016. The Php 13 trillion (USD 240 billion) debt for infrastructure building that Duterte leaves behind as he finishes his term includes a total of USD 25 billion borrowed from China on onerous terms and without any infrastructure project to show for it.⁶⁹ Marcos Jr.'s expressed desire to reinforce the state-to-state relations between China and the Philippines only means a continuation of partnerships with Chinese big business dubiously operating in the Philippines, such as providing POGOs (Philippine Offshore Gaming Operations) with semi-legal status. The Philippine government's partnership with China's expansionist interests, including its extra-territorial claim on Philippine waters, does not sit well with U.S. strategic interests in the Pacific. This puts Marcos Jr. in a precarious position as a head of state who will always have to walk the tightrope, as he aims to strike a balance between serving the interests of two rival foreign powers.

68 <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1609203/bongbong-marcos-china-cant-find-greater-champion-in-ph-than-mom-imelda>.

69 <https://www.philstar.com/business/2021/08/26/2122595/china-reviewing-19-billion-assistance-philippines-infrastructure-projects>;
<https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/3139861/chinas-promised-infrastructure-billions-yet-ar-rive>.

All this falls on the shoulders of the Filipino people whose lives under the new government will be affected by fundamental changes in the organization of law and governance to accommodate foreign interests. Engagement with foreign powers marked by unequal exchange is far different from forging diplomatic ties. It entangles the whole population in the global market monopolized by powerful corporations and their pro-capitalist national leaders, and the perilous ways in which they engage in modalities of rivalry and war.

The 1987 Constitution of the Philippines, crafted and implemented after the 1986 People Power Uprising, is a testament to the Filipino people's aspiration to overcome the darkness and lingering harsh impacts of the Marcos dictatorship. The Constitution restricts Martial Law and human rights violations. It hinders foreign ownership of business, enterprises and property. It bans foreign military bases and forces on Philippine territory. It also limits the presidential term to six years. But if a president assumes as his mandate the interests of a foreign power that is keen on using other nations for its proxy wars and profit accumulation, then the forging of an independent and prosperous Philippine nation may now, more than ever, depend largely on the Filipino people's march towards progress, freedom and just peace.

Recommendations

Changes to the Election System

1. The Comelec needs to function as an independent nonpartisan institution. The current Comelec is a warehouse for political patronage, stacked with supporters of the current president, making it a partisan institution unable to provide independent oversight of Philippine elections. In turn the Comelec contracts to supporters of the president for provision of logistics and services for the election. Comelec Commissioners should be appointed by an independent process, such as the Supreme Court or the Commission on Appointments. There should also be an efficiently functioning grievance mechanism that effectively responds to electoral complaints.
2. The Party-List System needs to be returned to its original Constitutional intention of representing marginalized and under-represented groups: workers, peasants, indigenous communities, women, youth, urban poor, LGBTIQ+. The Anti-Political Dynasty bill also needs to be passed.
3. The military must be excluded from all aspects of the electoral process. Military officials should not make public statements in support of or in opposition to any candidates or parties running in the election. Any officials who do so should be properly sanctioned by the Comelec.
4. The AFP and the PNP should not be directly involved in the management of polling stations and the counting of ballots.
5. Independent observers from other countries and global civil society should be accredited by the Comelec to provide independent oversight.
6. Vote-buying is rampant and since it is illegal, vote-buyers must be apprehended and sanctioned to minimize or eliminate this practice.
7. The electronic voting system is not transparent. It is not possible to independently audit and verify the vote under the current system of voting. Vote Counting Machines are too unreliable and should be replaced by manual counting, with votes cast being published at the voting centers before results are transmitted to the provincial and national counting centers. The vote counting algorithm must be independently verified as accurate prior to the election. There needs to be a transparent process of verification.
8. A free press is a cornerstone of the democratic process and free and fair elections. The broadcast license for ABS-CBN should be restored. Owners of newspapers and broadcast networks should not be forced to sell them to partisans of the president. Judicial harassment against journalists such as Maria Ressa and intimidation of journalists such as Lian Buan should be stopped.
9. Social media platforms must be legally required to ensure that pages and accounts of users providing election-related content provide verifiable author profiles (indicating whether the author is a journalist, a vlogger, etc) and content information (e.g. type

of content whether news or opinion, original or shared and their sources) and set up mechanisms that encourage people to scrutinize the material's content and source first before sharing. Social media platforms must be legally required to eliminate confirmed fake news posts relating to elections, based on independent fact-checking advice. Verified troll farms and their social media accounts should be shut down. International community to regulate social media companies in this regard.

10. The anti-political dynasty provision of the Constitution should be implemented.
11. Withdraw all charges and release all election campaigners detained during the election campaign period and at protest rallies after the election.
12. Because of the large-scale violation of human rights before, during and after the elections by the NTF-ELCAC and the Anti-Terrorism Council, the NTF-ELCAC must be abolished and the Anti-Terrorism Law repealed. Red-tagging should be criminalized and punished, and the corresponding bill pending in Congress be reviewed and passed.

For the International Community

13. International community institutions such as the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Human Rights Council, and the European Union, as well as international civil society, must intensify their monitoring of the human rights situation in the Philippines following this non-credible election process.
14. The International Criminal Court should expedite its investigation of the alleged crime against humanity of murder by officials of the Duterte administration, and of torture and other crimes committed by government officials since 2011.
15. National Parliaments which have enacted Magnitsky-style laws need to initiate action against prominent Filipino actors associated with gross violations of human rights and associated with corruption.
16. International civil society, international institutions and national governments should take action to uphold the freedom for Filipino people to communicate / report on abuses of people's rights.
17. The European Commission and its External Action Service should use all available instruments, including the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), to persuade the Philippines to put an end to extrajudicial killings related to the anti-drug campaign and the killing of civilian political opponents, and in the absence of substantive improvements, to initiate the procedural steps which could lead to the temporary withdrawal of the Generalized Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+), as stated in the European Parliament Resolution of September 15, 2020.
18. The United States Department of Justice is urged to pursue the contempt judgment of US\$353 million issued by a United States court in 1995 against Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and his mother Imelda, as executors of the Marcos Sr. estate, in connection with a human rights class suit against his late dictator-father. Records from the United States District Court and Court of Appeals show that they are being held in contempt for

“contumacious conduct causing direct harm to [a class of human rights victims].” In August 2019, a new judge, Derrick Watson, extended the judgment on contempt to January 25, 2031.

19. The U.S. Congress is urged to pass the Philippines Human Rights Act (PHRA) to halt the U.S. government’s Philippine military funding and assistance (including weapons sales and donations of armaments) to the police until the Philippine government can guarantee the human rights of its citizens, establish a judicial system to prosecute members of its military and police responsible for human rights violations, and comply with audits and investigations to ensure that U.S. aid is not used for human rights violations.
20. The UNHRC and the ICC are urged to act on the intense and pervasive red-tagging and intimidation by the Duterte administration and its NTF-ELCAC in particular, and to uphold the Filipino people’s constitutional rights to freedom of assembly, speech and association. Numerous red-tagging statements by President Duterte, including the red tagging of the Makabayan Partylists and Senatorial candidates, during the elections, may have incited violence and may have had the effect of encouraging, backing or even ordering human rights violations with impunity. The UNHRC stated in its June 2020 Report on the Philippines that the use of such language could amount to a violation of the prohibition against arbitrary deprivation of life in Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
21. The international academic and media community is urged to challenge and discredit the sustained efforts by the Marcos family to rewrite/distort the history of the Marcos Dictatorship.
22. The international community must redouble its efforts in calling for the abolition of the NTF-ELCAC and the Anti-Terrorism Council, and the repeal of the ATL.