

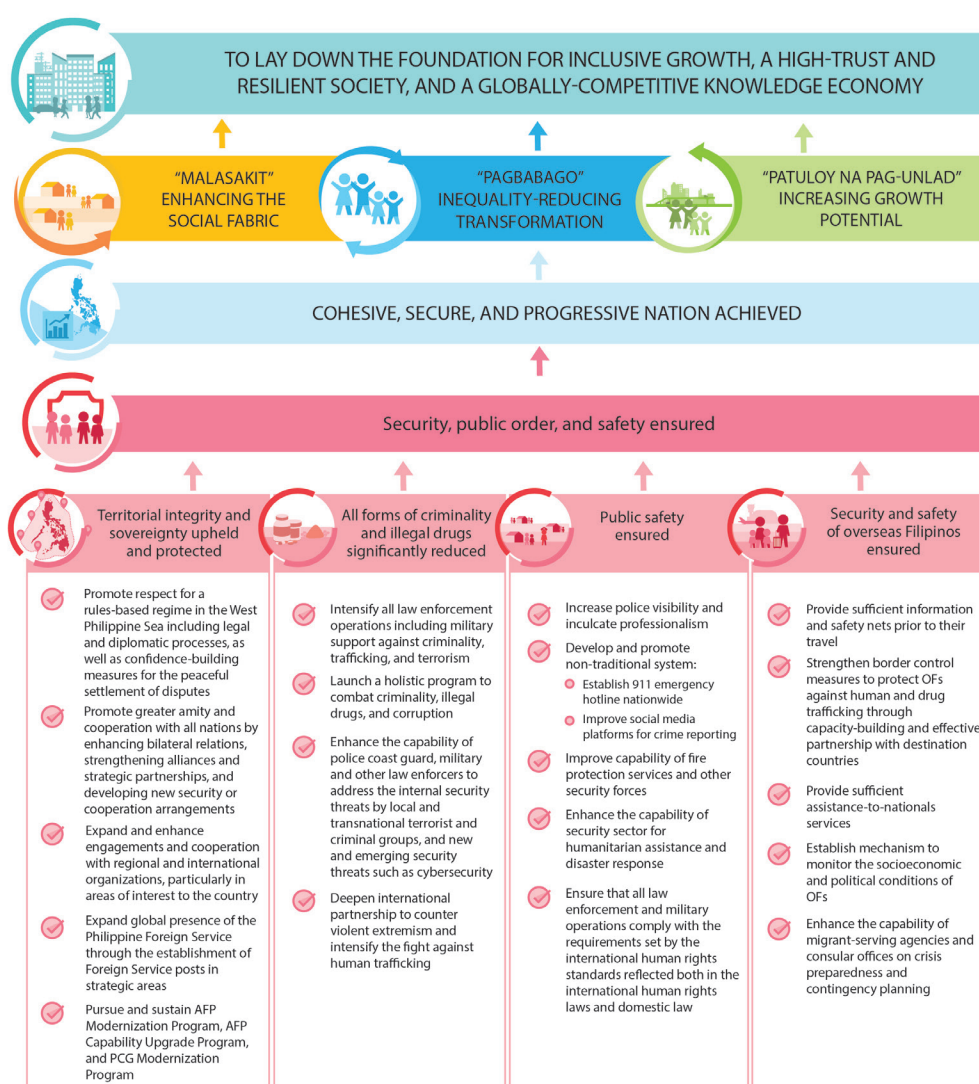
# 18

## Ensuring Security, Public Order, and Safety

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Peace, security, and public order are essential bedrock elements in building the foundation for inclusive growth, a high trust and resilient society, and a globally competitive knowledge economy. These affect people's mobility, confidence, and well-being, as well as business continuity and longevity. Ensuring security, public order, and safety is one of the fundamental bedrock strategies of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 – as it facilitates the implementation of all other strategies. The intended outcomes of this sector are: (a) territorial integrity and sovereignty upheld and protected, (b) all forms of criminality and illegal drugs significantly reduced, (c) public safety ensured, and (d) security and safety of Overseas Filipinos (OFs) ensured (See Figure 18.1).

**Figure 18.1. Strategic Framework to Ensure Security, Public Order, and Safety**



# Accomplishments

## Upholding and protecting territorial integrity and sovereignty

**The Philippines has taken the first step towards a rules-based regime in the West Philippine Sea by pushing for a legally-binding Code of Conduct (COC).** During the 31st ASEAN Summit hosted by the Philippines, ASEAN member states and China agreed to begin negotiations for the ASEAN-China Declaration of Code of Conduct in the West Philippine Sea. The COC shall be based on the framework for the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea agreed upon by ASEAN-China Foreign Ministers in August 2017 and in accordance with international law, including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The COC is expected to foster cooperation and rules-based conduct among claimant states to maintain peace, stability, and freedom of navigation in the area.

**Diplomatic engagements with traditional allies have been expanded and enhanced, while the government engaged nontraditional allies.** The Philippines has signed agreements enhancing defense cooperation and logistics cooperation with Russia, China, India, Czech Republic, Cambodia, and the United Kingdom. Likewise, the country implemented bilateral defense cooperation agreements with the United States of America, Australia, China, Japan, South Korea, and ASEAN member states.

**Allocation for the defense sector has been increased.** To address external threats and sustain efforts in modernizing the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG), the national budget for defense increased by 25 percent. The Department of Budget and Management also released ₱18.2 billion out of the ₱25.0 billion appropriated for the AFP Modernization Program for 2017. The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) Board approved the Maritime Safety Capability Improvement Project for the PCG-Phase II for the acquisition of two heavy-weather, high-endurance, 94-meter Multi-Role Response Vessels. To establish the Philippines' presence in the West Philippine Sea, the Department of National Defense (DND), in coordination with the Department of Transportation and the local government of Palawan, repaired and rehabilitated the runway and port facilities in Pag-asa Island.

## Reducing all forms of criminality and illegal drugs

**Efforts to reduce all forms of criminality have been fruitful.** There was a slight reduction in both index and non-index crime rates, complemented by improvements in crime solution efficiency and crime clearance efficiency. These can be attributed to the Philippine National Police's (PNP) intensified efforts to address crimes that disturb peace and order in communities such as theft, robbery, carnapping, rape, and murder. The military provided assistance in law enforcement operations through the Joint Task Force NOAH (Nationwide Operational Assessment of Hazards), a support unit to Law Enforcement Support Operations.

In support of the PNP, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) rolled out the *Mamamayang Ayaw Sa Anomalya-Mamamayang Ayaw sa Iligal na Droga (MASA-MASID)*, a platform for stronger collaboration between the local government units (LGUs), communities, and national government against criminality, corruption, and illegal drugs. The DILG exceeded the target for organized MASA-MASID teams in barangays and *Ugnayan ng Barangay at Simbahan* Technical Working Groups (UBAS TWG) in cities and municipalities.

**The anti-illegal drugs campaign led by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) has had initial success.** Through the barangay drug-clearing program, the number of drug personalities was reduced by more than half from 2016 to 2017. Likewise, drug level affectation in barangays declined from 47 percent in 2016 to 36 percent in the 3rd quarter of 2017.

## Ensuring public safety

**The number of fire incidents recorded was reduced by 26 percent, from 19,292 in 2016 to 14,197 in 2017.** However, the capacity of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) on fire prevention still needs to be strengthened. Despite a slight increase in fireman-to-population ratio and the implementation of the BFP Service Establishment Program and BFP Service Upgrading and Modernization Program, there was a notable increase in damages and casualties (deaths) due to fire incidents. The increase in wages for uniformed personnel is expected to improve the performance of the security sector.

**Nontraditional systems for responding to crime and emergencies were established.** The DILG implemented the National 911 Program which successfully managed and responded to 101,130 emergency cases from August to September 2017, resulting in a total of 94 human lives saved. The program was further expanded through the establishment of eight Public Safety Answering Points nationwide, and training of 161 emergency telecommunicators certified through the Emergency Telecommunicator Certification.

Aimed at ensuring fast, effective, and efficient management of public safety, the NEDA Board approved DILG's Safe Philippines Project to modernize the capabilities of the DILG, PNP, BFP, and Bureau of Jail Management and Penology in major cities to respond to emergencies, crises and disasters, law enforcement, traffic and fire management, peace and order, and public safety concerns.

**Compliance with local and international human rights laws in law enforcement and military operations was continued.** The DND implemented policies in compliance with local and international human rights laws such as the Child Protection during Armed-Conflict Situations, Prohibition on Red-Tagging, and the Doctrine Publication on the Law of Armed Conflict. In addition, the DND monitored and investigated alleged violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Laws through the Monitoring, Reporting, and Response System, Citizen's Assistance Desk in Iligan City in relation to the implementation of Martial Law in Mindanao, and the Inter-Agency Committee on Extra-Legal Killings, Enforced Disappearances, Torture and Other Grave Violations of the Right to Life, Liberty, and Security of Persons. To sustain efforts in ensuring the protection of human rights during military operations, the DND integrated human rights and International Humanitarian Law modules in the AFP's Professional Military Education. Concurrently, the DILG has conducted capacity-building activities for focal persons and Program Management Teams of the People's Law Enforcement Boards. Accordingly, the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) recorded a slight decrease in number of reported cases of human rights violations covering January to September 2017.

## Ensuring security and safety of overseas Filipinos

**Assistance to Nationals services, including human trafficking victims and mapping of OFs and repatriation of OFs, were provided.** The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) expanded the implementation of Assistance to Nationals (ATN) mapping, increasing the territories mapped from 35 to 51. The agency is on track in delivering its target of 80 territories mapped by 2022. The DFA is also continually developing and upgrading the contingency plans for all foreign posts to enhance the capability of migrant-serving agencies and consular officers on crisis preparedness and contingency planning.

In 2017, the DFA serviced 14,504 ATN cases and 463 legal assistance cases, and in coordination with the Department of Justice – Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (DOJ-IACAT), provided assistance to 727 human trafficking victims abroad. The Bureau of Immigration Port Operations Division was able to turn over 77 cases of human trafficking to the IACAT, and another 40 cases to the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA). The DFA likewise facilitated the repatriation of 8,000 OFs from Saudi Arabia, and another 2,227 OFs from the United Arab Emirates.

The DFA has developed an online platform through Facebook for legal aid, guidance, and counselling to migrants. The 888 Hotline for ATN queries was also established as an action line service for nationals in distress, complementing the OWWA 24/7 Operations Center and POEA 24/7 Hotlines. The DOLE also established under its International Labor Affairs Bureau the Assistance to Migrants and their Families Desk which assisted in 1,452 requests and resolved 526 cases.

The IACAT also launched a “1343 Actionline against Human Trafficking” to respond to emergency or crisis calls from victims of human trafficking and their families via call, mobile application, and Facebook. Moreover, the PNP and the National Bureau of Investigation has intensified its anti-trafficking operations, resulting in the rescue of 651 victims and arrest/identification of 387 offenders.

## Moving Forward

**The defense of the country’s territorial integrity and sovereignty in the West Philippine Sea remains a great challenge.** The presence and activities of South China Sea claimant states may negatively affect the Philippines’ exercise of sovereignty, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction in its territory. Further, there is a possibility of militarization of reclaimed islands in the South China Sea. Without a substantive and effective ASEAN-China Code of Conduct in the South China Sea, the risks of inadvertent escalation of hostilities remain.

The nuclear program of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, which involved a number of intercontinental ballistic missile tests, also threatens peace and stability in the region.

While positive developments have taken place in relationships among claimant countries to areas in the South China Sea, the Philippines still needs to improve its defense capability to protect its sovereignty. Given the archipelagic nature of the country, there is a need to intensify its detection, identification, and interdiction capabilities, and to strengthen border protection from piracy, trafficking, and other transnational crimes.

A credible defense posture must be established. Given the risks posed to the country’s sovereignty, sovereign rights, and territorial integrity, the modernization of the Armed Forces and Coast Guard should be sustained. The acquisition of necessary radars and maritime awareness platforms must be pursued. Likewise, facilities, equipment, and skills of maritime law enforcers and of LGUs should be enhanced. A decent presence and strengthened border protection in the West Philippine Sea and eastern seaboard should also be established.

The country will pursue legal and diplomatic engagements with other claimant states, as well as implement confidence-building measures to assert our claims and protect our sovereignty. The country must push for a legally binding Code of Conduct in the West Philippine Sea when the negotiations between ASEAN and China begin. Similarly, the Philippines should expand and strengthen diplomatic engagements and cooperation in regional and international fora.

To mitigate increasing tensions in the region arising from possible militarization of reclaimed islands, the Philippines shall advocate and work towards the peaceful resolution of territorial disputes and overlapping maritime claims in the West Philippine Sea. The country shall operate under the ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration and other international laws when engaging China and other claimant states.

**Rise of radicalism and violent terrorism continues to threaten peace and order in the country and the region.** The recent crisis in Marawi instigated by the Maute Terror Group highlighted the need to further enhance the capacity of our defense and security forces and improve regional cooperation against violent terrorism. It also exposed the vulnerability of the youth to indoctrination of radicals and terrorist groups. The government must ensure that the rehabilitation and recovery program to rebuild Marawi City includes psychosocial healing processes and incorporates conflict-sensitive, peace-promoting, and inclusive governance to prevent violent extremism.

A holistic approach in curbing the rise of terrorism and violent extremism shall be pursued. The mechanisms to monitor internal security threats shall be strengthened. Likewise, the ability of military and law enforcement forces to undertake immediate action against terrorists and extremists shall be enhanced. Engagements with local communities through the madrasahs, sultans, ulamas, and other religious and traditional leaders shall be pursued to deter and prevent recruitment of youth in sowing violence and terrorism.

**The government's capability to address criminality and illegal drugs needs improvement.** As a result of intensified criticisms, the President designated the PDEA as the sole agency in charge of the anti-illegal drugs campaign twice, first on January 30, 2017 and again on October 10, 2017 by virtue of Executive Order No. 15 and the President's Memorandum, respectively. However, the agency does not have the adequate budget, personnel, and equipment to fully and effectively enforce the campaign, which may counter the recent achievements of the government. As such, the Congress increased the allotment for PDEA's Dangerous Drugs Supply Reduction and Suppression Program from ₱1.2 billion to ₱2.4 billion to address the need for personnel and equipment in the full and effective enforcement of the anti-illegal drugs campaign.

However, it is still critical for law enforcement agencies to address issues on human rights protection for the campaign against criminality and illegal drugs to be successful. The integration of human rights in police and military training shall be institutionalized, while human rights offices, desks, or units shall be established in all police and military headquarters. Further, the security sector shall establish and strengthen mechanisms to monitor human rights abuses in law enforcement operations in support of the CHR.

Equally important are strategies to reduce the demand for illegal drugs. There should be a more aggressive promotion of activities involving the youth like sports, civic action, culture, and the arts.

To address the threats posed by transnational crimes, the institutional capacity of the Bureau of Immigration (BI) will be strengthened through increased plantilla positions and effective border control.

**There is a need to strengthen coordination among agencies and enhance the capability of the security sector in providing humanitarian assistance and disaster response.** The security sector has played a key role in restoring normalcy to disaster-stricken areas, both natural, and more importantly, human-induced events in the past year. Its capability however must continuously be upgraded to ensure safety of the people. The results of the review of RA 10121 (Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010) conducted by the National Disaster Risk and Reduction Management Council underscored the need for a more integrated approach to disaster risk reduction from mitigation and preparedness, to response, and rehabilitation and recovery.



Taking this review into consideration, Congress has initiated discussions on the enactment of a law to create a department-level agency with the primary responsibility of overseeing, coordinating, and implementing the country's comprehensive DRRM program. An independent Disaster Risk Reduction Authority shall enable the country to be more resilient to disaster events. Meanwhile, disaster mitigation and preparedness measures will be continuously strengthened at all levels of governance. To support this, capacity-building measures shall be sustained to enhance the competency of the security sector for humanitarian assistance and disaster response. For instance, the capacity of security agencies will be enhanced in terms of incident command system, chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defense (CBRNE) response, and scenario-building in nationwide simultaneous earthquake drills.

The government shall continue to provide humanitarian assistance to countries, especially during emergencies. This includes the provision of relief and assistance to crisis-afflicted countries, as well as the deployment of peacekeeping forces in conflict-afflicted areas.

**Safety and welfare of OFs must be ensured, especially during emergencies.** The DFA shall establish and strengthen mechanisms to monitor socioeconomic and security conditions of OFs, especially in conflict-afflicted areas. Likewise, the enhanced guidelines and increased ATN Fund of the DFA shall further enhance the capability of migrant-serving agencies and consular officers in providing assistance to OFs, crisis preparation, and contingency planning.

Recognizing the potential nuclear threat due to increasing tension in the Korean Peninsula, the DFA shall continually update contingency plans in the area and other neighboring states. The Philippines shall support and coordinate with the United Nations Command in monitoring the situation in the area to quickly carry out contingency plans should the need arise. Furthermore, the Philippines shall support efforts in resolving issues in the Korean Peninsula while working closely with international partners in urging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to tread the path of peace towards easing tensions and attaining long-term peace and stability in the region.

# Recommendations

To address the above concerns and to supplement and address the gaps of the existing programs and projects on ensuring security, public order, and safety, the following strategies are recommended for implementation of concerned agencies:

*Table 18.1 Supplemental Strategies to Ensure Security, Public Order, and Safety*

RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTING AGENCIES
<b>Upholding and protecting territorial integrity and sovereignty</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen border security and patrol measures to protect our porous borders from smuggling, piracy, and trafficking.</li> </ul>	DND, AFP, PAF, PN, PCG, BFAR
<b>Reducing all forms of criminality and illegal drugs</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen regional and international cooperation to combat terrorism, violent extremism, and transnational crimes.</li> <li>Strengthen capacity of law enforcement in addressing emerging threats such as cybersecurity and transnational crimes.</li> </ul>	DILG, DFA, DND, PNP, PCG, NBI, BI
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formulate and implement a plan to involve the youth in sports, civic action, culture, and the arts.</li> </ul>	PSC, DepEd, NCCA, NYC, LGUs, CSOs
<b>Public safety ensured</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhance capabilities of the security sector in providing humanitarian assistance and disaster response.</li> <li>Improve and enhance public safety measures and infrastructure for CBRNE.</li> </ul>	DND, DFA, DILG, AFP, OCD, BFP, PCG, LGUs
<b>Security and safety of overseas Filipinos ensured</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent with the proposed Rightsizing Bill, identify the need for additional plantilla positions and Foreign Service posts, especially in high-risk countries and in countries with high levels of undocumented OFs.</li> </ul>	DFA