

Concept Note

Foreign policy analysts point to an imminent cold war set to bifurcate the global economy between one group of countries allied with the United States and another aligned with China and Russia. Navigating this new economic and geopolitical terrain will be critical for many countries that seek to chart stable and sustained pathways for both economic development and national security.

For a country like the Philippines, the nexus between national security and its economic development is perhaps even more fundamentally intertwined. The Philippines is strategically situated in Asia, separated by a mere 1200 kilometers from Taiwan to its North, faced by disputed territories to its West, and locked in continuing peace-building challenges in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in the far South of the Philippine archipelago. To the country's East is the Philippine Rise (earlier known as Benham Rise), which contains the promise of natural gas and other resources and the challenge to protect and utilize these strategically.

The Philippines sits adjacent to sea lanes for international trade, amounting to well over [USD 3.3 trillion](#) per year, as well as containing overlapping territory with the Coral Triangle—the richest biodiversity hotspot in the world, containing [one-third](#) of the world's coral reefs. Hence, the Philippines also plays a key role in preserving marine ecosystems that likely underpin part of the [almost USD 50 billion in](#) fisheries output of the Southeast Asian region (accounting for almost a quarter of the world's total fisheries output).

This policy research conference brings together the country's scholars and practitioners in defense and development policy, featuring the latest thinking on the country's security and economic development strategies. It builds on recent efforts to integrate these two spheres more effectively. It builds on the tradition of the Katipunan Conference, a policy forum inaugurated in 2016, which brought together scholars and practitioners in national security.



Katipunan Conference

Present geopolitical shifts entail significant economic risks and opportunities – placing a premium on policymakers’ ability to absorb the latest data and analysis on the nexus of national security and global economic trends. This event responds to this, and it is envisioned as an annual gathering of scholars and practitioners in national defense and economic development to leverage the country’s top brain trust in these fields to support greater coherence and effectiveness through firmly integrated defense and development strategies.