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Key Points and Policy Recommendations

- Establishing a link between the concepts of defense diplomacy and soft power promotes a more coherent perspective of how a state can shape the views of others in the process of advancing its own national interests.
- As defense diplomacy is conducted not only by the military but also defense officials, researchers, and personnel, it is imperative to capacitate defense officials, researchers, and personnel.
- While a country's participation in cooperation mechanisms involves numerous factors, building a domestic defense industry which values local manufacturers and suppliers must continuously be pursued.
- Defense diplomacy must be exercised not only with the hub and spokes system of cooperation but also others outside the system whose cooperation can be beneficial for the Philippines.

Defense Diplomacy as Soft Power for the Philippines

Christine Lisette M Castillo

On 4 July 2021, the Philippines received Php 48.5 million-worth of weapons and ammunition from the United States (US), its long-standing ally.¹ Intended to “support the continued readiness of the Armed Forces of the Philippines” (AFP), this showcase is the most recent among the total of Php 48.6 billion worth of security assistance given by the US to the Philippines in a span of six years. As the largest recipient of US military assistance in the Indo-Pacific region, the Philippines highly values its 75 years of diplomatic relations with the US despite instances of political tensions.² As this alliance has shown, building and maintaining robust relations with like-minded states is necessary for the Philippines in an evolving geopolitical setting where threats have become hybrid and uncertain.

Terrorism, maritime dispute, and cybercrime are three of the most pressing issues that the Philippines face today. By nature, these issues require effective response through knowledge-sharing and collaboration alongside strengthening the country's own defense and security capability. Indeed, military assistance and defense cooperation agreements with other states support the Philippines in confronting internal and external security challenges. Defense diplomacy, which first emerged in the 1990s, is a way towards this aim. Initially viewed as an oxymoron because it combines opposing elements – the regard for the armed forces as violent and the practice of diplomacy as peaceful – defense diplomacy is instrumental for going beyond traditional notions and recognizing how the concept of security has evolved.³ Powerful states such as the US, China, France, and the United Kingdom employ defense diplomacy as a vital part of their global strategy, having recognized the salience of this form of cooperation in advancing their respective national interests.⁴

Although states benefit from defense diplomacy, it is important to distinguish a clear line between cooperation and dependence. This especially applies to the Philippines which has limited capabilities vis-à-vis the threats to its national security. In this regard, this paper seeks to explore defense diplomacy in the Philippines in two fronts – its importance in advancing the country's defense and security and the ways how defense diplomacy as a soft power can be useful for the Philippines.

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Specifically, this paper seeks to answer the following questions: a) What is defense diplomacy?; b) How does the Philippines conduct defense diplomacy and how important is it for the country?; c) How should defense diplomacy as a soft power be pursued by the Philippines in achieving its national security interests?; and d) Why should the Philippines strive to prioritize the development of its domestic defense capability alongside the conduct of defense diplomacy? This paper subscribes to the theoretical works of Gregory Winger on defense diplomacy as a form of soft power employed by states. Establishing a link between the concepts of defense diplomacy and soft power promotes a more coherent perspective of how a state can shape the views of others in the process of advancing its own national interests.⁵

Defense diplomacy will be defined in this paper as “the nonviolent use of a state’s defense apparatus to advance the strategic aims of a government through cooperation with other countries”.⁶ It encompasses activities such as officer exchanges, ship visits, training missions, and joint military exercises, among other related engagements, and involves not only the military but also defense officials and personnel.⁷ Defense diplomacy stems from the notion that a country’s armed forces need not only be characterized by violence and force but also nation-building, peacekeeping, statecraft, and other nonviolent roles.⁸ If the traditional task of fighting wars for a political end is the norm for the military before, promoting the interests of its government through peaceful operations has become increasingly evident.⁹

BACKGROUND OF THE ISSUE

How Defense Diplomacy Evolved

Defense diplomacy first gained prominence after the end of the Cold War, when a new political language that can describe cooperation and international relations was necessary. The concept was introduced by the United Kingdom’s Ministry of Defense in 1998 when it realized that military strength alone does not guarantee achieving political and military goals and winning battles.¹⁰ Although the forms of

cooperation were indicated, the UK definition of defense diplomacy focuses on the general goal of “making a significant contribution to conflict prevention and resolution”.¹¹ Researchers and institutions in other countries who adapted defense diplomacy formulated their own definitions, broadening the meaning of the concept.

In South Africa, researchers Martin Edmonds and Greg Mills described defense diplomacy as the use of the armed forces to achieve national goals. As this is broad, the Director of the South African Institute for Security Research Anton de Plessis formulated a narrow definition which noted the peaceful use of military personnel and military attachés to prevent conflicts. Both definitions, however, fail to define defense diplomacy’s importance as an instrument of state security policy. Following this, Irish and British researchers A. Cottey and A. Forster, expanded the concept’s definition, indicating the presence of three components: the peaceful use of armed forces, the role of the Ministry of Defense, and the use of defense attachés – all towards the aim of preventing conflicts.¹²

Meanwhile, Tan See Seng and Bhubhindar Singh from Singapore identified three levels of the conduct of defense diplomacy through key actors: a) personal actions of political leaders, ministers, heads of defense and general staff, strategic staff, and the headquarters; b) military academies, educational and analytical institutions, and research and development centers; and c) representatives of civil non-government organizations. This definition did not identify tasks for the armed forces, defense attachés, and international organizations, thereby making the meaning of defense diplomacy incomplete despite the definition’s specificity. Another definition is from the Spanish Ministry of Defence which noted the bilateral implementation of defense diplomacy with allies and partners for the “goals of defence policy and Spanish foreign policy”. This definition is oblivious to the multilateral conduct of defense diplomacy and disregards the importance of joint implementation in international organizations.¹³

These definitions noted how defense diplomacy is interpreted differently from one state to another. At present, these differences are yet to be settled. However, the search for a single definition appears to be unwarranted as states give meaning to the term and apply it according to their respective security agenda. Defense diplomacy as soft power, the argument posited in this paper, provides a perspective that maximizes defense diplomacy as a term and more importantly as a tool in achieving national security.

Exploring Defense Diplomacy as Soft Power

Since the military is more commonly associated with hard power or the ability to coerce others to do what one wants, a discussion on the use of a country's defense apparatus under the lens of soft power must be explored. Gregory Winger's take on a theory of defense diplomacy under the ambit of soft power is interesting to explore mainly because power takes several forms and cooperation can be conducted through diplomatic engagements in an evolving geopolitical setting. This "new, intellectually coherent definition ... not only accurately captures defense diplomacy as it is currently practiced, but also illustrates the underlying mechanisms that fuel it."¹⁴

Defense diplomacy as a soft power is relevant in various ways.

First, it highlights defense diplomacy's role in international relations. In the field of International Relations (IR), several theories are used to explain how the international system works and how power is sought, with both state and non-state actors as role players. Defense diplomacy is cross-cutting two major IR theories, realism and liberalism.

On the one hand, realists argue that states live in an anarchic world where there is no central and legitimate governance.¹⁵ In this setting, states ascribe to a self-help system, relying only on its own in pursuing and protecting its interests by seeking and using power.¹⁶ These interests, although some are similar with others, still differ from one state to another. In addition,

realists believe that the international system is dominated by high politics which focuses on military security and strategic issues. On the other hand, liberals believe in collaboration, cooperation, and interdependence between and among states. They value the role that non-state actors (such as international organizations and multi-national corporations) play in international relations. Liberals regard low politics which involves the economy, society, and environment, as issues that also matter. If realists ascribe to a zero-sum game, liberals use a positive-sum perspective and explores the conditions under which cooperation might be achieved.¹⁷ Defense diplomacy holds aspects of both theories in that seeking power and influence as well as promoting cooperation, similarly within the exercise of soft power, are the key factors that form it.

Second, it provides a more strategic way of pursuing national interests. The link between defense diplomacy and soft power is not limited merely on cooperation but the deeper aim of shaping the strategic thinking of others towards one's own. The essence of soft power is persuasion, persuading other governments that they want what the practitioner (or the government that exercises soft power) wants. This involves utilizing all available resources and is exemplified in talks, engagements, and activities between and among countries' military institutions.¹⁸

Third, it proposes a coherent perspective on defense diplomacy. In Joseph Nye's book *The Future of Power*, he identified two methods of soft power that explain how a country's military creates an impact on another. First is the indirect model where a country (practitioner) generates support from the people of another country (target) through public diplomacy. By influencing the public of the target country, the political atmosphere in that country will change, pressuring the government of the target country to respond to the population, thereby benefitting the practitioner. This can range from issues about the society, education, and development. In this method, governments use their militaries to win the sentiments of the target country's population through disaster relief operations, humanitarian aid, and development assistance.

Public support from the population will likely translate to a favorable decision by the target country for the practitioner's interest.

Second is the direct model which happens when a practitioner directly appeals to the target government to convince it into doing a favored outcome. This can be done through the built friendships between government leaders. According to Nye, this method is an employment of defense diplomacy as seen in military-to-military activities such as officer exchanges, engagements among defense officials' and military diplomats, training programs, joint exercises, and ship visits. Notably, these are not merely a peaceful exercise of the military but more importantly a tool to communicate policy preferences and national interests. In other words, defense diplomacy does not only result to cooperation for the general good but also greatly benefits the countries at stake (self-serving).¹⁹

Although defense diplomacy is observed in the direct model, the indirect model also affects the conduct of defense diplomacy in ways that serve the end goal of the practitioner. Therefore, by discussing defense diplomacy through the lens of soft power, a better understanding of the manner and the objectives of the non-traditional role of the military was generated. This will benefit the Philippines in pursuing its national interests, most especially in issues that greatly affect the country against the larger geopolitical environment.

MAJOR CASE ISSUES

Philippine Defense Diplomacy

The Philippines' National Defense Strategy (NDS) 2018-2022 recognized the volatile, uncertain, and complex environment that "demands the Philippine defense apparatus to efficiently and effectively utilize its modest resources."²⁰ Strengthening the country's defense capability entails having a defense posture that is not only self-reliant but also credible. The NDS proposed a credible defense posture through modernizing the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) which involves the priority strategic industry of capability planning,

development, and acquisition.²¹ With the evolving threats faced by the country vis-à-vis its current capability, the courses of action necessary in achieving these plans require cooperation with security partners. Defense diplomacy provides a platform in this regard.

The NDS, under the strategic priority of Security Cooperation and Engagement (SCE), has identified the role of defense diplomacy in advancing Philippine defense interests and generating opportunities for capability enhancement. To this end, the country must ensure that engagements under defense diplomacy have high value and great impact to the defense department and the country.²² The Philippines' conduct of defense diplomacy is observed in the following:

Bilateral.²³ The US remains as the only treaty ally of the Philippines through the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) of 1951. To strengthen the MDT, two agreements were signed – the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) in 1998 to govern the presence of military forces in the other's territory and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) in 2014 to enhance military cooperation in maritime security as well as improve the joint capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies. Questions on sovereignty were raised in the EDCA, especially over concerns on the possible reestablishment of the US military bases in the country. But contrary to assumptions, the EDCA explicitly prohibits the US from establishing a permanent military base in the country and instead allows the presence of US military personnel only for identified activities and only in agreed locations. More recently, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's pronouncement of terminating the VFA raised concerns on the future of the Philippine-US alliance. The termination was cancelled after the Philippines reconsidered the importance of the agreement for both countries' defense.²⁴

Just like the US, the Philippines also share a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) with Australia, which was concurred by the Philippine Senate in 2012. The agreement covers issues such as immigration and customs, arrangements of wearing uniforms for

visiting forces, and criminal and civil jurisdiction over visiting forces while in the other country. The SOFA serves as the legal and operational framework of Philippine-Australia defense relations, building upon the 1995 Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperative Defence Activities. Notably, only the US and Australia have visiting forces agreements with the Philippines.²⁵

For years, there have been talks between the Philippines and Japan on the possibility of a having a visiting forces agreement, but this is yet to be pursued. In its absence, the Philippines and Japan regularly conduct bilateral dialogues. In October 2019, the two countries held the inaugural Philippines-Japan Defense Industry Forum which centered on the procurement and export of defense equipment, material, and technologies necessary for the Philippines' military modernization program. In June 2021, the defense officials of both countries reaffirmed their commitment to further deepen cooperation in all areas of defense. Japan is continuously supporting the Philippines' military capability upgrade through the donation of aircrafts, radar systems, and multirole maritime vessels.²⁶ The close defense relations of the Philippines to Japan are enabled by the fact that Japan provides a reliable source of investments and security assistance for the Philippines without the pressure of being involved in the great power rivalry between the US and China.²⁷

Meanwhile, the Philippines' defense relations with South Korea also focuses on the military modernization program. The two countries signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation in 2019, with the aim of streamlining the Philippines' military purchases from South Korean companies. It can be noted that the Philippines purchased two frigates from South Korea, the BRP Rizal and BRP Luna, and South Korea donated a class corvette, the BRP Yap, which is now considered as one of the most capable assets of the Philippines' navy fleet.²⁸ In addition, senior defense officials of both countries met in October 2020 during the inaugural session of the Joint Defense Cooperation Committee. They discussed cooperation in various security issues such as

the COVID-19 pandemic and the peace efforts in the Korean peninsula.²⁹ In March 2021, both countries agreed to continue their deepening maritime security and naval cooperation ties.³⁰

Regional. In the region, the Philippines refer to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in the conduct of defense diplomacy. The ASEAN Regional Forum, which was established in 1993 and is considered the largest and oldest institution in the organization, conducts the Defense Officials' Dialogue (DOD) to generate opportunities for defense officials to learn from one another and boost defense collaboration. In particular, the DOD held on 20 May 2021 involved discussions on bridging the knowledge gap of emerging technologies among nations, which affects how defense and security is viewed and pursued.³¹

Under this forum, the ARF Meeting of the Heads of Defense Universities/Colleges/Institutions (ARF HDUCIM) is conducted to provide a platform for senior leadership of defense universities, colleges, and institutions from the ARF participating countries to discuss regional defense and security issues and ways to conduct research and educational exchanges and contribute to the promotion of trust within the region. The meeting also allows the members to share their experiences on security education and research as well as other relevant areas of international security to enhance mutual understanding and peaceful resolution of conflicts. As a Track One diplomacy initiative, the meeting aims to increase awareness and recognition of the vital role of defense educational institutions in the ARF process.³²

In addition, the Philippines continues to participate in ASEAN's primary defense diplomacy platforms such as the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)³³ which is composed of ASEAN member-states, and the ADMM-Plus which is composed of the member-states including eight dialogue partners: Australia, China, India, Japan, New Zealand, Russia, South Korea, and the US. During the Philippines' ASEAN Chairmanship in 2017, the 11th ADMM Joint Declaration "reviewed the progress of ADMM initiatives and discussed issues related to terrorism and violent

extremism, maritime interactions and engagements with their Plus Partners.” Notably, the importance of self-restraint and the promotion of peace and freedom of navigation in the South China Sea (SCS) was included in the joint declaration.³⁴

Following this, the Network of ASEAN Defence and Security Institutions or NADI is a Track Two diplomacy initiative that contributes to the ADMM process by providing recommendations on enhancing cooperation on defense and security issues. It is an important venue for ASEAN think-tanks and research institutions to come together and discuss defense and security cooperation in the region. In addition, NADI is a forum for participants to think beyond their governments’ positions and to provide timely fresh ideas and relevant recommendations for the ASEAN defence track to consider.³⁵

Other defense diplomacy engagements in the region include the ASEAN Chiefs of Defense Forces Meeting (ACDFM), which affirms the militaries’ collective commitment to peace and stability;³⁶ and the ASEAN Chief of Army Multilateral Meeting (ACAMM), the ASEAN Navy Chiefs’ Meeting (ANCM); and the ASEAN Air Force Chiefs Conference (AAFC), where militaries share best practices on responding to security threats.

In all, the conduct of defense diplomacy through bilateral and regional means enable cooperation on defense and security matters that affect the region. Specifically, it provides several gains for the Philippines, focusing on prevailing security concerns that necessitate collaboration: territorial security, cybersecurity, and counterterrorism response.

The Boons

On territorial security. Since the Philippines’ capability still needs further development, its defense diplomacy with security partners will bring gains to the country’s maritime territorial claims such as that in the West Philippines Sea (WPS), and boost land and air capabilities. Also, the country’s defense relations with others serve as a platform in creating deeper understanding

over similar interests. With the US in particular, the Philippines conduct the annual Balikatan Exercise which reinforces the continued alliance and strong military relationship between the countries’ armed forces. From its commencement in 1991, the most recent joint exercise composed of maritime security training, bilateral staff exercise, subject matter exchanges, and close air support training, among others.³⁷ Considering that the US remains to be the strongest military power globally, this exercise is beneficial for the Philippine military to learn about the ways of the US military, most especially as it pursues a self-reliant defense. As the exercise is conducted to increase the interoperability of both countries’ militaries to respond to regionals security challenges, including the continuous rise of Chinese control over the SCS, both countries remain committed to uphold the alliance for mutual defense.³⁸

Other Quad members such as India, Australia, and Japan join the US in engaging with the Philippines on joint maritime drills and exercises. India has recently conducted the Maritime Partnership Exercise with the Philippines in August 2021, noting that both countries have a robust defense and security partnership in various areas, especially when it comes to bilateral collaboration in the maritime domain. Meanwhile, Australia and Japan have constantly participated in PH-US joint military exercises in various parts of the Philippines over the years.³⁹ On 1 July 2021, the Philippines and Japan held the first-ever joint air force exercise, a sign of deepening defense ties between the two countries.⁴⁰

On cybersecurity. It is important to highlight that growing challenges on cyberspace should not be considered only as a domestic issue but one that requires collaboration among neighbors and like-minded states. In the Philippines, defense diplomacy helps the cause of achieving cybersecurity in the pursuit of cyber defense, which is headed by the Department of National Defense (DND). The AFP, under the DND, has made remarkable progress in this regard, engaging with Japan, Australia, and the ASEAN.

In particular, the defense relations of the Philippines and Japan has grown over the past few years, broadening capacity building and regional cooperation on cybersecurity.⁴¹ Maintaining this dynamic with Japan is crucial for the Philippines as Japan is one of the leading countries in innovation and technology. In fact, Japan's Ministry of Defense has recently expressed plans to strengthen its cyber defenses through increasing military forces handling cybersecurity in dealing with sophisticated cyber attacks. For its part, several AFP leaderships have consistently viewed Japan as a reliable partner on cyberdefense and security, with former AFP Chief of Staff General Gilbert Gapay noting the role of Japan in beefing up the military's aerial systems capability.⁴² Meanwhile, cyber cooperation between the Philippines and Australia is new but poses great potential for development.⁴³

On counterterrorism. Here, the role of neighbors is critical. The INDOMALPHI (Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines) defense cooperation is instrumental for the Philippines' counterterrorism response in Sulu and Celebes Seas, where kidnapping cases by the violent extremist Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and other affiliates are rampant.⁴⁴ This minilateral cooperation forms part of the Trilateral Cooperative Arrangement (TCA) signed in 2017, which then created the Trilateral Maritime Patrol and Trilateral Air Patrol that are vital in intelligence-sharing and in ensuring that acts of terrorism are prevented and detected. Meanwhile, the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Program between the Philippines and Australia that was established in December 2019 largely involves counterterrorism cooperation, including capacity training to over 10,000 members of the AFP.⁴⁵ This program will help the Philippines "counter brutal tactics" employed by terrorists through the enhancement of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities. The Australian Defence Force has reiterated its commitment to helping the Philippines to combat terrorism threats to achieve long-term results and halt the spread of terrorism in the region.⁴⁶ These benefits, however, do not discount the fact that defense diplomacy incurs a point of consideration.

The Bane

Defense diplomacy as a temporary solution for the Philippines. The path to military modernization was revitalized in 2012 when the Revised AFP Modernization Act was passed in Philippine Congress.⁴⁷ Since then, programs were placed towards capacitating the country's armed forces to be able to be responsive and adaptive to traditional and non-traditional security threats. On the one hand, although the government has increased the annual defense budget to this end, the Philippine military capability still ranks the second weakest among other indicators of power and 19th among 25 countries in Asia, according to Lowy Institute's 2020 Asia Power Index. On the other hand, to its advantage, the Philippines ranked 10th on defense networks in the same report, the highest among all the indicators used.⁴⁸ This says a lot about the country's capability to persuade others to cooperate.

In this context, the inadequacies of the military are filled up by the country's relations with security partners. Indeed, the Philippines' security engagements with foreign militaries are crucial in aiding the gaps on the readiness of the country. However, the question of reliance and dependence comes to the fore. How long can defense diplomacy aid the readiness gap of the country? Why is the country's strength on defense networks not translated towards an enhanced military capability? Does defense diplomacy, in a way, inhibit the full pursuit of a self-reliant defense? With these questions raised, it can be opined that although defense diplomacy aids the Philippines' security stance, the country should continue to modernize and strengthen its armed forces with the principle that defense relations with others will become more effective with a credible domestic military capability. Eventually, this can also maximize defense diplomacy as soft power for the Philippines.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The discussions above suggest that defense diplomacy is a strategic and viable tool for the Philippines given its commitment on defense cooperation and integrity in its bilateral and

regional relations. Nevertheless, the country will not survive with defense diplomacy alone. Reinforcing the concept of defense diplomacy as a soft power aids the Philippines domestic capability and conduct of relations with countries of similar interests. This can be achieved through the following policy recommendations:

Capacitate defense officials, researchers, and personnel. As defense diplomacy is conducted not only by the military but also defense officials, researchers, and personnel, it is imperative to train and provide support to these key actors in the fulfillment of the responsibility placed in them. This meant that government investment must not be limited on materiel but include the people, which are the drivers of defense diplomacy. In a way, enhancing defense diplomacy through the individual level perspective in addition to the state level may aid this pursuit.

Revitalize the Self-Reliant Defense Posture program. The Self-Reliant Defense Posture (SRDP) program of the government was established in 1974 but was not fully implemented. In recent years, talks to revive the SRDP program have been put forward by Secretary of National Defense Delfin N Lorenzana and AFP Chief of Staff Jose Faustino Jr. In fact, the military modernization program heavily supports the attainment of the long-sought defense self-sufficiency. At present, the SRDP program has still not progressed, with the Philippine Defense Industry Act (PDIDA) of 2019, the legislation for SRDP's revitalization, is still pending for approval in the Senate. While a country's participation in cooperation mechanisms involves numerous factors, building a domestic defense industry which values local manufacturers and suppliers must continuously be pursued. Having a self-reliant defense does not mean the absence of alliances and cooperation agreements but rather limiting dependence on others. As capacitating oneself is a key component of an effective and mutual defense cooperation, other countries may become more compelled to establish, maintain, or bolster defense diplomacy with the

Philippines if the country holds greater authority and influence, as in soft power.

Diversify defense diplomacy outside the San Francisco system. The San Francisco System, also known as the Hub and Spokes system of cooperation in international relations is led by the US (hub) with Japan, South Korea, Australia, Thailand, and the Philippines as members (spokes).⁴⁹ As discussed in this paper, most defense diplomacy engagements of the Philippines are with the spokes, the US-led alliance system. The main concern here is that defense diplomacy must be exercised not only with the hub and spokes but also others outside the system whose cooperation can be beneficial for the Philippines. This may include, but not limited to Brunei, Spain, and France, all of which the Philippines has defense cooperation agreements with that can be developed and enhanced. While the agreement with Brunei focuses on bilateral trainings and subject matter experts exchange, the agreements with Spain and France prioritize defense equipment cooperation.⁵⁰ These areas of cooperation allow the Philippines to engage on shared strategic interests.

CONCLUSION

National security has evolved to encapsulate the different dimensions of geopolitical challenges that threaten the attainment of a secure and prosperous Philippines. Aside from pursuing a credible self-reliant defense posture, the Philippines gives high regard to a cooperative relationship with allies and security partners for regional peace and stability. This is stated in the government's National Defense Strategy which serves as an overview of the extensive plans and commitments of the country's defense establishment. In this regard, the concept of defense diplomacy and its importance to Philippine national interests were discussed in this paper. Further, this paper highlighted the theory of defense diplomacy as soft power, which does not only view the concept as a platform for cooperation but also a strategic tool to seek power and influence in international relations.

Given the limited capability of the Philippines at present in comparison to its security partners and against the background of a complex security environment, it is important to reinvigorate the country's conduct of defense diplomacy as soft power. To this aim, several recommendations for policymaking were proposed as reference for the defense establishment, including capacitating key actors of defense diplomacy, revitalizing the Self-Reliant Defense Posture program through the Philippine Defense Industry Act of 2019, and diversifying defense cooperative arrangements outside the US-led San Francisco system of

bilateral alliances. As the Philippines is known to perform well on defense networks, these three policy recommendations will supplement the strengths of the country on defense diplomacy.

It can be noted that diplomacy is a country's first line of defense. Through this paper, the ability of cooperation to generate power was fully realized and defense diplomacy was able to present the modern and non-traditional role of the military as promoters of peace without the need for war.

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⁶ Winger, "The Velvet Gauntlet," 1.

⁷ Winger, 1.

⁸ Winger, "Soft Power," 27-28.

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¹⁹ Winger, "The Velvet Gauntlet," 8-10.

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²² DND, 48.

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