



## Stratbase ADRI Foreign Policy Forum: The Indo-Pacific Discussion Series

# 70 Years of the 1951 Philippine-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT): Opportunities and Challenges in a Changing 21st Century Indo-Pacific Region

8:30 AM - 10:30 AM (Manila Time)  
30 September 2021 (Thursday)

"**The Philippine government must enhance its strategic cooperation with partners and allies including the United States** to create a **comprehensive foreign policy and national security strategy** that can protect the country's sovereignty and advance its strategic interests and shared values.

Given the current regional security environment, now is the time for the Philippines to recognize the **importance of multilateralism and strategic partnerships in maintaining peace and stability in the region** and at the same time, addressing the security threats brought by China."

**Shaping the Future of the West Philippine Sea:  
Forging Alliances in a Multipolar Indo-Pacific**

Stratbase Brief | July 2021



**“The Philippines is a vital treaty ally.** Our countries face a range of 21st century challenges, and cooperation is key to the security, stability and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific.

**America is committed to a sovereign and secure Philippines** and to building an even stronger alliance based on our foundation of common interest and common values. And I look forward to discussing ways that we can deepen our partnership.”

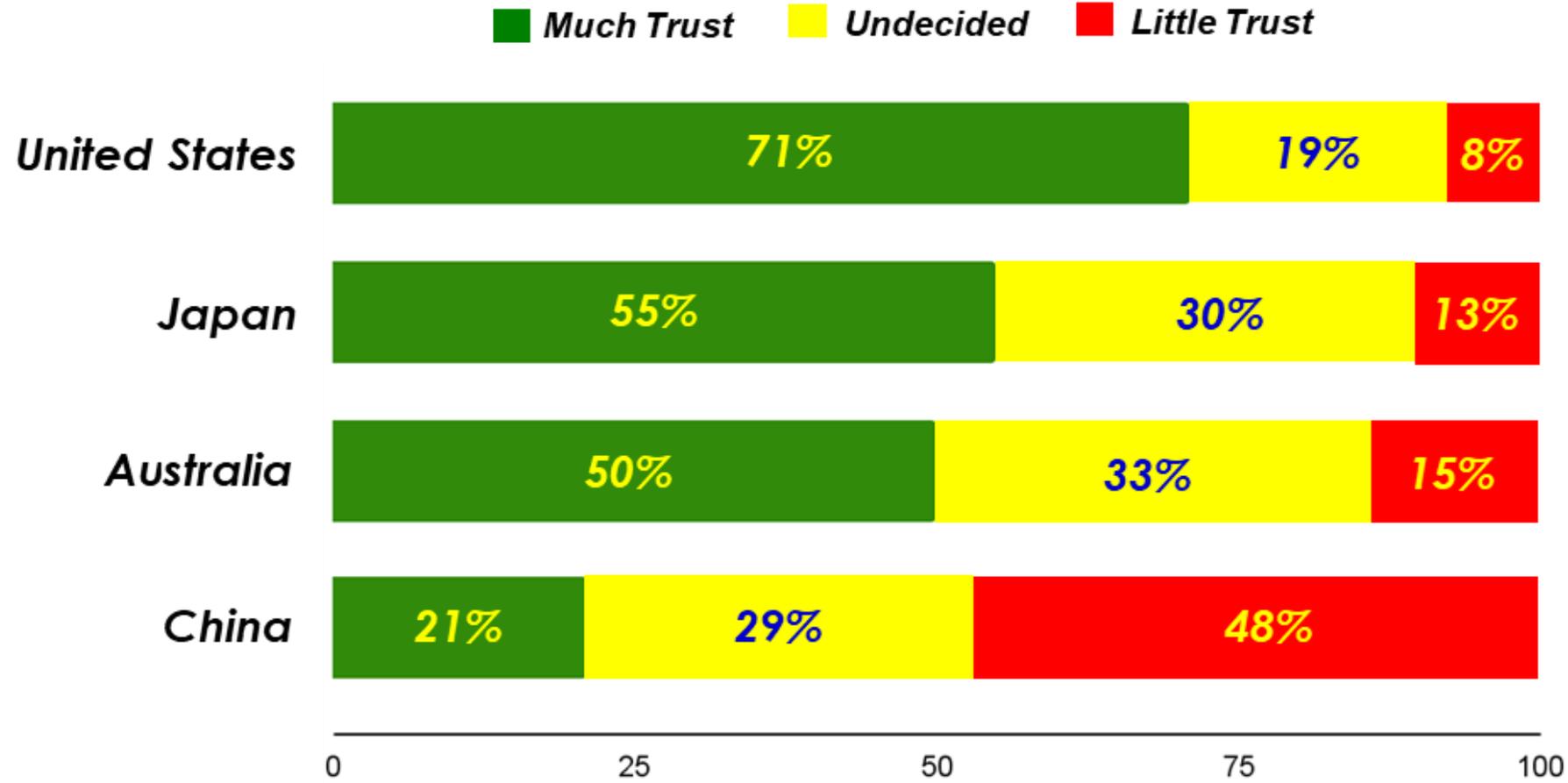
**US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin**  
Washington DC | 10 September 2021

“Given the security risks brought by the growing political and military power of China, **efforts should be focused on the further consolidation of the US-PH alliance**. The Philippines must ensure that it contributes to the nurturing of the alliance in accordance with the MDT. Although the majority of the Filipino public trusts the United States, the issues brought up by the Duterte administration regarding the alliance must be addressed. There is also **a need to revisit the terms of the MDT and the other agreements with its allies and partners**, especially since the current regional security context has become more dynamic and complicated.”

## **Restrengthening the US-PH Alliance**

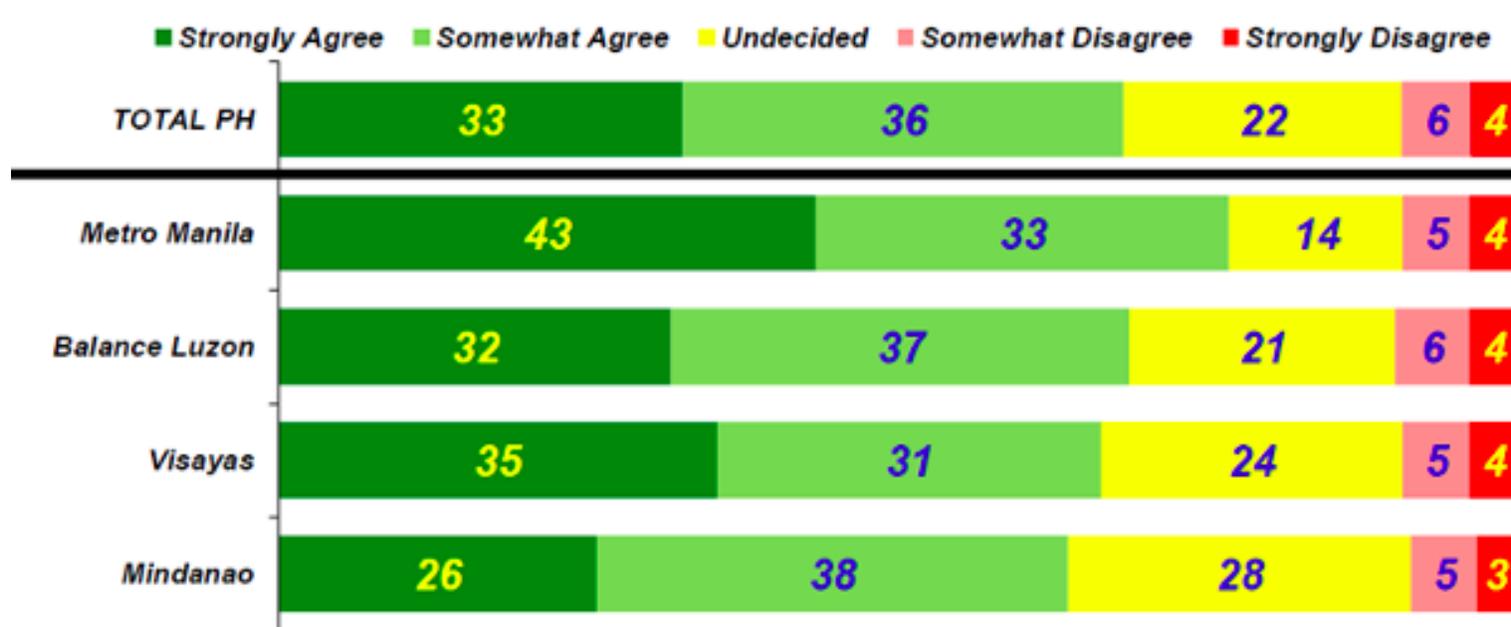
Philippine Daily Inquirer | 25 September 2021

# TRUST IN THE UNITED STATES, JAPAN, AUSTRALIA, AND CHINA: PHILIPPINES, JUN 2021



JUNE 23-26, 2021

**AGREE/DISAGREE: “The Philippine government should form alliances with other countries for defending the Philippines’ territorial and economic rights in the West Philippine Sea.”:**  
**BY AREA, JUN 2021**



Note: \*Net figures (% Agree minus % Disagree) are correctly rounded. Don't know and non-responses are not shown.

Q. Gaano po kayo SUMASANG-AYON o HINDI SUMASANG-AYON sa pangungusap na ito: “Ang pamahalaan ng Pilipinas ay dapat bumuo ng alyansa sa ibang mga bansa sa pagtatanggol ng mga karapatang pang-teritoryo at pang-ekonomiya ng Pilipinas sa West Philippine Sea.” (LUBOS NA SUMASANG-AYON, MEDYO SUMASANG-AYON, HINDI TIYAK KUNG SUMASANG-AYON O HINDI, MEDYO HINDI SUMASANG-AYON, LUBOS NA HINDI SUMASANG-AYON)

**JUNE 23-26, 2021**

**EFFECTIVE MEASURES FOR THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT TO DO  
ON THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA ISSUE (ALL ANSWERS):  
BY AREA, JUN 2021**

	<u>PH</u>	<u>NCR</u>	<u>Bal Luzon</u>	<u>Vis</u>	<u>Min</u>
Strengthen military capability of the PH, especially the Navy and Coast Guard	77%	78%	76%	75%	81%
Conduct joint maritime patrols and military exercises with allied countries	65	59	64	66	70
Fully implement the terms of the VFA and EDCA	57	63	58	60	47
Finalization of the ASEAN Code of Conduct or an agreement on how countries would act within the South China Sea	39	43	41	39	34
Bring this issue to the United Nations General Assembly	38	42	38	40	37

*Note: Don't know, No answer, and Refused responses are not shown.*

*Q. Sa inyong palagay, alin po sa mga sumusunod ang mga mabibisang pamamaraan na dapat gawin ng pamahalaan ng Pilipinas ukol sa isyu ng West Philippine Sea? Maaari po kayong magbigay ng hanggang tatlong sagot. Alin po dito ang pinaka-importante para sa inyo? Mayroon pa po bang pangalawang pinaka-importante? Mayroon pa po bang pangatlong pinaka-importante? (SHUFFLE CARDS; ALLOW UP TO 3 ANSWERS)*

**JUNE 23-26, 2021**

**“The future of the Indo-Pacific will depend on the multilateral understanding and cooperation between like-minded states** to uphold the rule of law and prevent any unilateral action that can undermine peace and stability in the region. In the context of the West Philippine Sea, **the Philippines must recalibrate its position on China and build a stronger and more responsive foreign and security policy.**”

Given the remaining months of the current administration, Filipino leaders should also start prioritizing **multilateralism and strategic partnerships** in order to neutralize China and effectively address security challenges in the region.”

**Foreign policy under Duterte: The 'Chinese Dream' and the dire consequences of an appeasement policy**

Philippine Star | 22 July 2021



“As leaders of Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, guided by our enduring ideals and shared commitment to the international rules-based order, we resolve **to deepen diplomatic, security, and defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region**, including by working with partners, to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. As part of this effort, we are announcing the creation of an enhanced trilateral security partnership called “AUKUS” — Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.”

## **Joint Statement on AUKUS**

15 September 2021



“We, the leaders of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States, convened today in person as “the Quad” for the first time. On this historic occasion we recommit to our partnership, and to a region that is a **bedrock of our shared security and prosperity—a free and open Indo-Pacific, which is also inclusive and resilient.**”

**Joint Statement from Quad Leaders**  
Washington DC | 24 September 2021

“In the coming 2022 national elections, **the Philippines has an opportunity to rethink its national security strategy** and build better from the foreign policy initiatives of the President Duterte’s administration. The next administration will also have a chance **to renew its commitment with trusted traditional allies** such as the United States. Our relationship with the US has been greatly affected by President Duterte’s pivot toward China.”

## **Restrengthening the US-PH Alliance**

Philippine Daily Inquirer | 25 September 2021

# Thank you!

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**ADR**<sup>i</sup>

ALBERT DEL ROSARIO INSTITUTE  
FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES