

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SIXTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. **2879**



Introduced by Representatives
DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO and GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO

AN ACT
CREATING AND ESTABLISHING THE INSTITUTE FOR STRATEGIC STUDIES AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The present turn of events in the international scene has made it even more imperative the conduct of policy research and strategic studies. Such events range from domestic and international, political, economic and others of profound significance which have raised numerous and remarkable challenges for the Philippines. Coupled with advances in the technical field especially in communications, information and transportation, this has emphasized the reality of the times which is the interdependence of nations.

This brings to fore the fact that there will be intense competition for scarce resources even though massive military confrontations against nations have become unlikely. It has been predicted that the Asia-Pacific region will be an area of concern in this regard.

In many parts of Asia, continued territorial conflicts may spark many interstate tensions. As a result, some states continue to discreetly build vast arsenals of weapons in preparation of another arms race and more importantly, to secure the safety of their territories.

The contending claims of several states over a portion of the Spratly islands by the South China Sea the Philippines included may result in armed confrontation if not addressed diplomatically.

In the country, we are beset by a continuing insurgency problem. The local communist movement remains a clear and present danger to national security. On the other side, we find the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), together with terrorist organizations, like the break-away bandit group, Abu Sayyaf, whose activities continue to shake the country's political stability.

With all these concerns, there is clearly an urgent need to conduct scientific and continued policy research and strategic studies to come up with concrete and sustainable courses of action to address the country's fundamental and critical national concerns.

The proposed bill mandates the conduct of strategic study work which includes, among other things, the:

- (1) conduct of strategic research on national and international concerns;
- (2) formulation of various policy options on various national concerns; and
- (3) recommendation of appropriate actions to support such policies and strategies.

The bill also specifies that a selected expert/scholar-members group shall be mandated to be the lead in the conduct of such strategic study work.

Given the importance of this measure, we therefore enjoin our colleagues to support such measure and ensure its immediate passage into law.


DIOSDADO MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Camarines Sur


GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
Second District, Pampanga

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Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. *Short Title.* – This Act shall be known as the “Institute for Strategic Studies Act of 2013.”

SECTION 2. *Establishment of the Institute for Strategic Studies (ISS).* – The Institute for Strategic Studies, hereinafter referred to as the Organization is hereby created and established as an institution to promote understanding of fundamental, current and emerging domestic and international issues and to assist the government in formulating policy and strategic perspectives on those issues. It shall conduct research on fundamental national concerns in response to or in anticipation of the needs of policy-making, conduct studies on matters of domestic and international political, economic, military, socio-cultural and techno-scientific significance in an interdisciplinary and integrative manner; identify strategies to serve the ends of policy, design programs to effect coordinated and integrated work of other research institutes engaged in strategic studies, undertake commissioned research work in collaboration with outside entities/institutions consistent with its mandate; build and maintain a resource facility and data bank; and carry out such other activities and projects as shall enhance the mission of the organization.

SECTION 3. *Powers of the Organization.* – The Organization shall have the following powers:

- a) Adopt, alter and use a corporate seal;
- b) Take and hold by bequest, devise, gift, purchase or lease, either and absolutely or in trust, for any of its purposes, any property, real or personal, without limitation as to amount or value, to convey such property and to invest and reinvest any principal of the said Organization in such manner as shall best promote its objectives;
- c) Collect, receive and maintain a fund or funds and to apply the income and principal thereof to the promotion of its aims and purposes hereinbefore set out;
- d) Contact any obligation or enter into any agreement necessary or incidental to the proper management of its corporate powers;
- e) Engage in any activity, and exercise all the powers conferred by the laws upon private or government-owned and controlled corporations; and
- f) Exercise the general powers of a duly incorporated entity as set out in the corporate code.

SECTION 4. *The Board of Trustees.* – The Organization shall be organized functionally with the following components:

1. There shall be a Board of Trustees composed of the Executive Secretary, Senate President, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Secretary of National Defense, Secretary of Science and Technology, President of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, an eminent representative from the private sector to be appointed by the President of the Republic of Philippines and the President of the Organization;
2. The Trustees shall elect from among themselves the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board;
3. The Board of Trustees coming from the private sector may create an executive committee of five trustees including its Chairperson, which shall have the authority to make decisions on behalf of the Board of Trustees in between the regular meetings of the said board. The Chair of the Board shall head the executive committee. Decisions of the Executive Committee shall be reported to the Board of Trustees at its meeting.
4. The trustees shall receive a per diem as may be authorized for every meeting actually attended, in addition to reasonable transportation and representation expenses.

5. The Board shall provide guidance to the policy Council on the thrusts, objectives, policies, research, agenda, programs and other activities of the organization.

SECTION 5. *Policy Council.* – There shall be a Policy Council, composed of an Executive Director and five others as Members, all of whom shall be appointed by the President of Republic of the Philippines from among the present members of the Strategic Studies Group of the National Defense College of the Philippines, as presently constituted, for a term of six (6) years. The Council shall have the following authority:

1. To formulate the thrusts, objectives, policies, research agenda, programs and other activities;
2. To oversee, monitor and evaluate all research work and studies;
3. To designate Research Fellows with notable scholarship to do and or/direct research work and strategic studies in various functional/area program of the organization that are relevant to their areas of expertise;
4. To determine and fill up other positions in the Organization and fix the salaries, honoraria, allowance and other emoluments of all Organizations

SECTION 6. *Autonomy and Academic Freedom of the Organization.* – The Organization shall be an autonomous and self-governing institution governed by the principle of academic freedom; it shall neither be organic nor be part of any government instrumentality. It shall be attached to the Office of the President to facilitate its budgetary and other administrative requirements and for the purpose of policy coordination.

SECTION 7. *Assistance from Government Departments and Agencies.* – To assist in its functions, government departments, agencies, units or instrumentalities shall allow the Organization access to their official files, records, data and other documents, provided such access is consistent with the requirements of confidentiality.

SECTION 8. *Exemptions.* – Notwithstanding any provisions of law to the contrary, appointments to the research and administrative staff of the Organization may be on a full-time basis and shall be exempt from the requirements and restrictions of the Civil Service and retirement laws, other laws, rules and regulations on position-classification and salary standardization and Section Two Hundred Fifty Nine (259) of the Revised Administrative Code; *Provided*, That any government retiree employed in the Organization shall not be required to reimburse or refund any gratuity received from the government nor shall any pension or annuity to which he is entitled be suspended or reduced on account of his employment in the Organization.

SECTION 9. *Services of Outside Agencies and of Private Sector.* – The Organization may, for the purpose of research, field work and other activities, obtain

and pay for the services of the personnel of any agency of the Philippine Government and/or private sector to perform research of field work and such other activities as may be needed.

SECTION 10. *Endowment Fund.* -

1. An Endowment Fund shall be created to provide for nonrecurring expenditures of the Organization For this purpose, the amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (P500,000,000.00) is hereby appropriated from any funds in the National Treasury. The Endowment Fund shall be administered as a trust funds with the Board of Trustees thereof, provided that the principal of said endowment shall not be subject to impairment and provided further that the earnings thereof, shall constitute a trust fund available for non-recurring and unprogrammed expenditures of the Organization.

2. Any or all savings of the Organization shall form part of the trust funds provided in Section 9, above.

SECTION 11. *Appropriation.* - There is hereby appropriated the amount of Five Hundred Million Pesos (P500,000,000.00) out of any unappropriated funds in the National Treasury for such initial requirements as capital outlay and infrastructures of the Organization. Thereafter, the Congress of the Philippines shall include as part of its budgetary appropriations the amount of at least Fifty Million Pesos (P50,000,000.00) to finance the recurring and operational expenditures of the Organization.

SECTION 12. *Repealing Clause.* - All laws, presidential decrees, executive orders, proclamations, rules and regulations which are inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 13. *Separability Clause.* - If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Act shall be held unconstitutional or invalid, the other section or provision, not otherwise affected shall remain valid.

SECTION 14. *Effectivity Clause.* - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,