



Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Unit 410 4/F La Fuerza Plaza 2, 2241 Don Chino Roces Avenue cor. Sabio St., Makati City 1231 Philippines
Tel: (+632) 819-6071 • Email: info@cald.org • Website: www.cald.org

24 June 2021

Senator Francis “Kiko” Pangilinan

President, Liberal Party of the Philippines
Chairperson, Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats

Dear Senator Kiko,

The Executive Committee of the Council of Asian Liberals and Democrats (CALD) would like to extend its deepest condolences to the family and party mates of former Philippine President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III, chairman emeritus of CALD full member and chair-party, the Liberal Party of the Philippines, for his untimely demise.


President Aquino was a staunch supporter of the liberal and democratic values that CALD espouses – human rights, social justice, peace and the rule of law. During his incumbency, he pushed for the passage of the landmark Reproductive Health Act, a piece of legislation that champions women’s reproductive rights and health by giving them access to contraceptives, despite strong protestations from the powerful Catholic Church. His administration promoted social justice through the expanded Conditional Cash Transfer program, which provides cash grant to the poorest households on the condition that they send their children to school or vaccinate them against preventable diseases, lifting millions out of poverty. He paved the way to peace by signing Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro, which ended a long-standing Muslim insurgency in southern Philippines. President Aquino’s government was also known for bringing China to court over the South China Sea disputes, a decision widely credited for upholding international law amidst China’s extensive maritime claims.

Early on in his presidency, President Aquino hosted Liberals from all over the world in Manila for the 57th Liberal International Congress in 2011. In his keynote address, he asked: “How can an individual enjoy the rights he has on paper, when from birth he has been denied the tools to take his destiny into his own hands?”

Then and now, the actions and words of President Aquino make the liberal and democratic values that we all hold dear relevant to the needs of the times. His demise, without a doubt, leaves a huge void in the international liberal family.

Again, please accept our deepest sympathy for the loss of a great Filipino Liberal.

Signed on behalf of the CALD Executive Committee,


Jayanthi Devi Balaguru
Chairperson
CALD Women’s Caucus