

Headline: De Lima advises Duterte against junking Paris climate change pact

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Senator Leila De Lima. INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

Senator Leila De Lima. INQUIRER FILE PHOTO

Senator Leila de Lima on Wednesday called on President Rodrigo Duterte to change his position to disregard the Philippines' commitment to the Paris agreement on climate change, saying the country "stands to gain more" by upholding the pact, being one of the world's most disaster-prone nations.

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"The Philippines which is a signatory to the Paris agreement stands to benefit more from honoring our commitment to this international agreement not only in terms of financial aid but also on technology-transfer and capacity-building assistance for disaster mitigation," said De Lima in a statement.

She placed the agreement parallel with the landmark UN ruling on the Philippines' bid to invalidate China's nine-dash line claim over the South China Sea, part of which the Philippines' calls the West Philippine Sea.

"As head of state, President Duterte should honor the Paris agreement if we also want other countries to rally behind us in our monumental victory in the West Philippine Sea arbitration case," she said.

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The December agreement, reached after several years of failed negotiations, binds 195 signatory nations to cutting down carbon emissions in order to contain global warming below 2 degrees Celsius, past which point the increase in Earth's temperature would be irreversible.

Mr. Duterte had said Monday that this may stunt the Philippines' efforts to progress from a developing nation into an industrialized one.

For De Lima, it is "not a zero-sum game."

"We can still grow our economy and achieve without compromising our commitment and industrial growth towards combating climate change," she said.

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