

Keyword: global-warming

Headline: Ratify Paris Agreement or PH will be left in isolation—Legarda

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Published Date: 10:49 AM November 08, 2016

Section: globalnation

Word Count: 506

Content:

Senator Loren Legarda, Chair, Senate Committee on Climate Change and Finance. Photo by Joseph Vidal/Prib

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The Philippines will be left in “isolation” if it does not ratify the Paris Agreement.

Senator Loren Legarda issued this warning as she urged her colleagues in the Senate on Monday to support the ratification of the Paris Agreement.

“If we fully accept the Agreement, we can influence the decisions on how the accord will be implemented and we maintain our leadership role in the international climate talks and advocacy,” Legarda said in a privilege speech.

“If we do not ratify, we are left in isolation while waiting to be a victim of natural hazards.”

“While the future may be uncertain, we can define the kind of future we want. We are part of a community of nations that can support us in addressing our vulnerabilities. We should be part of the body that will decide the future of the planet. We cannot be left out of it,” the senator added.

Legarda said the Philippines, as chair of the Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) during the Paris climate talks last December 2015, was among the most influential in the crafting of the Paris Agreement as it led the call to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius to be able to survive.

Limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius could raise growth economic output by as much as 1% by the 2040s since so many of the devastating impacts associated with higher levels of warming would be avoided, the senator said, citing Low Carbon Monitor that the CVF will launch soon.

“The Paris Agreement will help us in our adaptation efforts as it allows the Philippines, as a vulnerable developing nation, access to the \$100 Billion Green Climate Fund,” she said.

“The Paris Agreement is a vehicle towards achieving climate justice as it compels developed nations that have polluted the world and caused this climate crisis to finance the Green Climate Fund and provide developing and vulnerable nations needed support on capacity building and technology transfer for adaptation and mitigation efforts.”

The senator reiterated that the Agreement would not hamper the country’s development as it would even present opportunities for low carbon development and green growth.

She pointed out that vulnerable small island-states, such as Fiji, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Palau and the Maldives, already took the lead in ratifying the Agreement and largest emitters of GHG

(greenhouse gas) such as US, China, India and the European Union have ratified as well.

“The Philippines’ ratification of the Agreement will send a strong signal of our continuing commitment to work with the rest of the world in ensuring the survival of this generation and the generations to come, and the ability of the Earth to sustain life,” Legarda added. RAM

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