

His Excellency Fidel Valdez Ramos

The degree of Doctor of Laws (honoris causa) was conferred upon His Excellency Fidel Valdez Ramos at the ceremony held at 2.00pm on 12 March 1998.

Following the ceremony; Mr Ramos was the guest of honour at a black-tie dinner hosted by the University's Research for Asia and the Pacific and the Australia Philippines Business Council.



His Excellency Fidel Valdez Ramos, *photo, 'The University of Sydney News', 10 December 1998.*

Citation

Presented by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Gavin Brown

Chancellor

I have the honour to present to you His Excellency Fidel Ramos, former President of the Republic of the Philippines, for admission to the degree of Doctor of Laws (honoris causa).

Fidel Ramos has made a significant contribution to the stability and economic growth of his country and to the Asia Pacific region. He follows in the distinguished footsteps of his father, Narciso Ramos, who as Secretary of Foreign Affairs for the Philippines was his country's signatory to the ASEAN declaration in 1967.

Born in 1928 Fidel Ramos was educated at the United States Military Academy, West Point, and at the University of Illinois from which he graduated with a Master's degree in Civil Engineering. In 1980 he received an MBA from the Ateneo de Manila.

In 1992 Fidel Ramos was elected the 12th President of the Republic of the Philippines. During his six year term of office, he presided over a period of economic recovery which brought renewal of national confidence and which won respect for his leadership throughout the region. In particular, he successfully brought the Philippines into the liberalised global economy by implementing legislation that allowed his country to gain access to the World Trade Organisation agreement, freed up the foreign investment regime, developed a new mining code, reformed the Central Bank and liberalised the financial sector. He transformed the 'Sick Man of Asia' into a vibrant and stable economy better placed than many of its neighbours to weather the financial turbulence which has engulfed the region. He proved that democracy and development can comfortably co-exist.

Politically, former President Ramos was a consensus-building leader. He defused tension in the Philippines through a national reunification program designed to establish dialogue with the Communist Party and with rebel military officers. He legalised the Communist Party, released political prisoners and increased public confidence in the police force by instituting sweeping reforms to reduce corruption. In both internal and external relations, he has an outstanding track record of tolerance for cultural and ethnic differences.

In international relations, former President Ramos espoused the ASEAN principles of economic growth and social progress, stability and consensus. In bilateral relations, he took a personal interest in supporting innovative educational projects that enhanced cooperation between Australia and the Philippines. He provided strong support for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation organisation in promoting free trade, economic prosperity and international harmony. In 1996 he was the driving force behind the region's commitment to free and open trade which was ratified by the leaders of APEC member economies under the Manila Action Plan.

Since stepping down as head of state in June this year, he has continued to play a significant role as a senior adviser and ambassador at large for the new government of the Republic of the Philippines.

Chancellor, I present to you His Excellency Fidel Ramos, former President of the Philippines for admission to the degree of Doctor of Laws (honoris causa) and I invite you to confer the degree upon him.