CREDIBILITY OF ELECTORAL PROCESSES

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CREDIBILITY UNDER ATTACK

- **WHY ATTACK COMELEC CREDIBILITY?**
  - Losers need to justify their loss, without losing face
  - Candidates need to pre-emptively save face
  - Candidates resort to siege mentality to create a bandwagon
  - As a form of distraction and misdirection
  - Cynicisim, hate

CREDIBILITY UNDER ATTACK

- ## HOW IS COMELEC CREDIBILITY ATTACKED?
  - Promote fear of the unknown
  - Conduct a long-term, low-intensity de-legitimization campaign
    - Incl. coordinated inauthentic behavior
    - Incl. use of celebrity mouthpieces
  - Amplify COMELEC's own mistakes

CREDIBILITY UNDER ATTACK

- **WHO IS ATTACKING COMELEC CREDIBILITY?**
  - People who lose in elections
  - People who claim to be motivated by altruism
  - People who dislike (or even hate) COMELEC
  - People who do it for money
  - COMELEC itself, with its missteps

FIGHTING BACK

- **KEY STRATEGIES (T.R.A.P.)** 1/
  - Transparency
    - Misinformation thrives in the absence of reliable, accurate, and relevant information
    - Regular press briefings
      - #PalawanPleb – delivery of ballots to Kalayaan were delayed …
    - Live stream of key COMELEC activities
      - Incl. public biddings

FIGHTING BACK

- **KEY STRATEGIES (T.R.A.P.)** 2/
  - Reporting
    - Not allowing misleading information to go unchallenged
    - Using the reporting systems provided by socmed platforms
  - Acknowledge, assess, correct
    - We admit mistakes – yes, the 2016 ñ debacle was due to ...
    - We commit to correction – yes, in 2019 we tightened things up...
    - We follow-through – For 2022, we fine-tuned the process by ...

FIGHTING BACK

- **KEY STRATEGIES (T.R.A.P.)** 3/
  - Persistent repository of information
  - Deflates blowhards
  - Allows uniform and consistent, system-wide messaging
  - Encourages public participation and ownership
  - AskCOMELEC Facebook Group

ARE OUR ELECTIONS CREDIBLE?

- **YES**
  - **In 2016**
    - **Pulse Asia results**
      - 84% trusted the election results
      - 94% said the vote-counting machines were easy to use
      - 91%, want automated voting in future elections
      - "[Voters] feel that faster results made the elections more credible and it's also easier…" said Pulse Asia President Dr. Ronnie Holmes.
    - **Social Weather Stations (SWS) results**
      - An average of 86% of voters said the election results are believable
      - 80% were satisfied with the conduct of the election

ARE OUR ELECTIONS CREDIBLE?

- **YES**
  - In 2019
    - Pulse Asia results
      - 91% said they "would like to see automated voting continue in future elections"
      - 87% said they "were satisfied with the automated polling system or counting of votes through the vote counting machine (VCM)"
      - 94% said it was "easy to vote using the VCM"
      - 94% said the May 2019 elections in their areas was "orderly"
      - 64% said "there was no vote-buying" in their areas
      - 74% said "no cheating occurred" in their areas
      - 93% said "no violence occurred"

Where are the allies of truth?

- **LESSONS FROM THE AMERICAN 2020 EXPERIENCE**
  - Losers follow a universal playbook
  - Perpetuating a "big lie" can have effects that cross-over from the realm of rhetoric to real world actions that threaten the stability of government and, worse, human lives

Where are the allies of truth?

- **LESSONS FROM THE AMERICAN 2020 EXPERIENCE**
  - Journalists play a big role
  - Academics play a big role
  - Ordinary people with social media platforms play a role
    - Not just as watchdogs looking out for irregularities in government, but also as watchdogs that actively fight against disinformation
    - Silence is not a lack of bias; silence is complicity

THANK YOU

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