



**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**(March 28, 2006)**

**FROM: Dr. Ana Maria L. Tabunda**  
**Executive Director**  
**Pulse Asia, Inc.**

**RE: Pulse Asia's March 2006 Nationwide Survey on Charter Change**

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Pulse Asia is pleased to share with you some findings from the March 2006 *Ulat ng Bayan* national survey on **Charter Change**. In the interest of disseminating information relating to Filipino perceptions, opinions, sentiments, and attitudes relating to current developments here and abroad, we request you to assist us in helping inform the public.

Based on a multistage probability sample of 1,200 representative adults 18 years old and above, Pulse Asia's nationwide survey has a  $\pm 3\%$  error margin at the 95% confidence level. Subnational estimates for each of the geographic areas covered in the survey (i.e., Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao) have a  $\pm 6\%$  error margin, also at 95% confidence level. **Face-to-face** field interviews for this project were conducted from February 18 to March 4, 2006. (Those interested in further technical details concerning the surveys' questionnaires and sampling design may request Pulse Asia in writing for fuller details, including copies of the pre-tested questions actually used.)

Topping the headlines during the survey period were President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration of a state of emergency on 24 February 2006 (and its eventual lifting a week later), the arrests of some individuals (including one party-list representative in Congress) and the issuance of guidelines for the media in connection with the declaration of a state of emergency, the various rallies held in commemoration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EDSA People Power I and protest actions against Proclamation 1017, renewed calls for the President's resignation, the standoff at the Marines Headquarters in Fort Bonifacio, the continued rescue and recovery operations in Leyte, and the fluctuations in the value of the local currency vis-à-vis the American dollar arising in part from the political turmoil in the country.

The surveys sampling design and questionnaire are the full responsibility of Pulse Asia's pool of academic experts and no religious, political, economic or any other form of partisanship has been allowed to influence the survey design, the findings generated by the actual surveys or the subsequent analyses of survey findings.

Pulse Asia undertakes *Ulat ng Bayan* surveys on its own without any party singularly commissioning the research effort.

**Pulse Asia's March 2006 *Ulat ng Bayan* Survey:  
Media Release on Charter Change  
28 March 2006**

**Most Filipinos lack knowledge about the 1987 Constitution**

Despite the various public consultations and discussions held in connection with initiatives to push the charter change agenda forward, two in three Filipinos (66%) report having little, almost none or no knowledge at all about the 1987 Constitution. On the other hand, about a quarter of Filipino adults (28%) reports knowing enough while only 6% of Filipinos claim to know a great deal about the 1987 Constitution. These figures are practically the same as those recorded in March and October 2005 (*Table 1*).

**Table 1**  
**AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE CONSTITUTION**  
October 2005 and March 2006 / Philippines  
(In Percent)

How would you describe the amount of knowledge you have regarding the Constitution? (Base: Total Respondents, 100%)	LOCATION					CLASS		
	RP	NCR	BAL LUZ	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
<b>A great deal of knowledge</b>								
March 2006	6	10	7	5	4	15	4	8
October 2005	8	7	12	7	1	17	7	6
<b>Not a great deal, but a sufficient amount</b>								
March 2006	28	33	25	27	31	44	30	20
October 2005	25	40	27	15	20	32	27	18
<b>A little knowledge</b>								
March 2006	53	49	52	56	55	37	53	56
October 2005	52	48	49	53	59	45	50	56
<b>Almost none or no knowledge at all</b>								
March 2006	13	8	16	12	10	5	12	16
October 2005	16	5	13	26	21	6	15	20

Question: Paano ninyo ilalarawan ang inyong kaalaman tungkol sa Konstitusyon?

**Filipinos are essentially divided on whether it is right to amend the Constitution now**

About the same number of Filipinos (48%) does not consider it right to amend the 1987 Constitution at present as consider it right to amend it now (43%). Nearly one in ten (9%) is undecided regarding the timing of charter change. Of the 48% who deem charter change inappropriate at present, half (24%) oppose it now but are open to it in the future, while the other half (24%) do not see the need for charter change now or at any other time in the future (*See Table 2*).

**Table 2**  
**WHETHER IT IS RIGHT TO AMEND**  
**THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION NOW OR NOT**

February 18 - March 4, 2006 / Philippines  
 (Row Percent)

<b>INTRO : There are frequent discussions regarding the need to change the Constitution now and with it the form of government, from the presidential form to a parliamentary government. In a parliamentary form of government, the currently separated legislative and executive powers are fused, and a prime minister usually leads rather than a president.</b>								
In your opinion, is it right to amend the Constitution now ? (Base: Total Interviews, 100%)	<u>LOCATION</u>					<u>CLASS</u>		
	<u>RP</u>	<u>NCR</u>	<u>BAL</u> <u>LUZ</u>	<u>VIS</u>	<u>MIN</u>	<u>ABC</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>
YES, the Constitution SHOULD BE amended now	43	41	46	40	41	37	41	49
NO, the Constitution SHOULD NOT BE amended now, but it may be amended at sometime in the future	24	23	20	31	26	29	24	23
NO, the Constitution SHOULD NOT BE amended now nor any other time	24	25	25	19	27	23	27	18
Don't Know/Can't say	9	11	8	10	6	11	8	10

*Maraming mga talakayan tungkol sa pangangailangang baguhin ang Konstitusyon ngayon at kasama nito ang pagbabago ng porma ng gobyerno mula pormang presidensyal tungo sa parlyamentaryong gobyerno. Sa isang parlyamentaryong gobyerno, magkasabig ang kasalukuyang hiwalay na kapangyarihang panglehislatura at pang-ehekutibo, at isang punong ministro ang karaniwang namumuno sa halip na presidente.*

*Q176. Sa inyong palagay, tama ba na baguhin ang Konstitusyon sa ngayon?*

Even as a big plurality of Filipino adults think it is not right to amend the constitution now (48%), this sentiment is now expressed by fewer Filipinos relative to the previous year. In March and October 2005, a small majority of Filipinos (55%) did not think it right to have charter change at the time. Between October 2005 and March 2006, the percentage of those opposing charter change now drops significantly in Class ABC (-18 percentage points) and in Metro Manila (-19 percentage points) (See Table 3).

The percentage of Filipinos in support of having charter change immediately has been increasing since March 2005 when only 29% of Filipinos were for the immediate amendment of the Constitution. In October 2005, this figure rose to 36% and it now stands at 43%. Between October 2005 and March 2006, agreement with having charter change now goes up in the poorest socio-economic Class E (+12 percentage points) and in Metro Manila (+15 percentage points). Fewer Filipinos are now for having charter change sometime in the future instead of immediately (24% in March 2006 versus 35% in October 2005), while indecision regarding the timing of charter change has dropped (from 16% to 9% between March 2005 and March 2006) (See Table 3).

On the other hand, the percentage absolutely opposed to charter change (i.e., not now nor at any other time in the future) remains nearly constant between October 2005 and March 2006 across all of the country's geographic areas and socio-economic classes (*Table 3*).

**Table 3**  
**WHETHER IT IS RIGHT TO AMEND**  
**THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION NOW OR NOT**  
 March 2005 to March 2006 / Philippines  
 (Row Percent)

Demographic variables	Base: Total Respondents, 100%															
	YES, the Constitution should be amended now				NO, the Constitution should not be amended now, but it may be amended at sometime in the future				NO, the Constitution should not be amended now nor any other time				Don't know/ Can't say			
	Mar 05	Oct 05	Mar 06	Change Mar06 - Oct05	Mar 05	Oct 05	Mar 06	Change Mar06 - Oct05	Mar 05	Oct 05	Mar 06	Change Mar06 - Oct05	Mar 05	Oct 05	Mar 06	Change Mar06 - Oct05
Total Philippines	29	36	43	+ 7	27	35	24	- 11	28	20	24	+ 4	16	8	9	+ 1
NCR	32	26	41	+15	34	41	23	- 18	27	26	25	- 1	7	7	11	+ 4
Balance Luzon	23	40	46	+ 6	26	36	20	- 16	26	19	25	+ 6	25	6	8	+ 2
Visayas	33	37	40	+ 3	28	28	31	+ 3	31	22	19	- 3	7	13	10	- 3
Mindanao	35	35	41	+ 6	24	37	26	- 11	28	18	27	+ 9	13	11	6	- 5
Class ABC	25	26	37	+11	31	48	29	- 19	28	22	23	+ 1	16	4	11	+ 7
TOTAL D	29	37	41	+ 4	27	36	24	- 12	28	21	27	+ 6	16	6	8	+ 2
E	30	37	49	+12	25	30	23	- 7	28	19	18	- 1	16	14	10	- 4

**Question: MARCH 2005 (NO INTRO)**

Ang mga mungkahi na baguhin ang ilang mga probisyon ng Konstitusyon ay muling binubuhay dahil sa patuloy na seryosong problemang pang-ekonomiya at kawalan ng istabilidad pampulitika sa bansa. Sa inyong palagay, tama ba na baguhin ang Konstitusyon sa ngayon?

**Question: OCTOBER 2005 (WITH INTRO)**

Noong Hulyo 25, 2005 ipinahayag ni Pangulong Arroyo sa kanyang SONA na dapat ng masimulan ang debate tungkol sa pagbabago ng ilang probisyon ng konstitusyon. Ang pagbabago ng konstitusyon ay maaaring magbigay daan sa pagpalit ng porma ng gobyerno, halimbawa, mula pormang presidensyal tungo sa parlyamentaryong gobyerno. Sa isang parlyamentaryong gobyerno, magkasanib ang kasalukuyang hiwalay na kapangyarihang panglehislatura at pang-ehekutibo, at isang punong ministro ang karaniwang namumuno sa halip na presidente. Q166. Sa inyong palagay, tama ba na baguhin ang Konstitusyon sa ngayon?

**Question: MARCH 2006 (WITH INTRO)**

Maraming mga talakayan tungkol sa pangangailangang baguhin ang Konstitusyon ngayon at kasama nito ang pagbabago ng porma ng gobyerno mula pormang presidensyal tungo sa parlyamentaryong gobyerno. Sa isang parlyamentaryong gobyerno, magkasanib ang kasalukuyang hiwalay na kapangyarihang panglehislatura at pang-ehekutibo, at isang punong ministro ang karaniwang namumuno sa halip na presidente. Q176. Sa inyong palagay, tama ba na baguhin ang Konstitusyon sa ngayon?

Even as there are significant movements in the percentage of Filipinos favoring and rejecting charter change now, the reasons behind their position on the charter change issue remain basically the same between October 2005 and March 2006. Among those who disagree with changing the Constitution now, one in four (24%) also does not see it as the solution to the country's current problems. Others similarly opposed to charter change now point to the futility of changing the form of government if the politicians themselves will not change (17%). Yet others think it is a ploy of the administration to divert attention from the political crisis President Arroyo faces (16%), or simply do not see any need to change the 1987 Constitution for any reason at all (13%) (Table 4).

**Table 4**  
**REASONS FOR NOT WANTING TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION NOW**  
 October 2005 and March 2006 / Philippines  
 (Row Percent)

Which of the following best describes your opinion on Constitutional Change? (Base: Those who say that the Constitution SHOULD NOT BE amended now)	LOCATION					CLASS		
	RP	NCR	BAL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
			LUZ					
<b>This is not the solution to the country's prevailing problems</b>								
March 2006	24	24	20	26	31	17	25	24
October 2005	24	26	27	24	18	33	25	21
<b>Changing the form of government is to no avail if the politicians will not change</b>								
March 2006	17	24	18	14	14	24	17	16
October 2005	19	20	21	18	18	15	20	21
<b>This is just a ploy of the administration to divert attention from the current political crisis that the President is facing</b>								
March 2006	16	10	17	17	17	6	18	13
October 2005	17	14	19	16	15	18	19	13
<b>There is no need to change the constitution at all</b>								
March 2006	13	13	16	13	10	15	13	13
October 2005	10	5	12	12	11	2	10	13
<b>Some politicians only want to change the form of government so that they will be the ones in a position to lead the country</b>								
March 2006	11	13	11	11	11	12	10	13
October 2005	12	22	4	18	14	16	10	14
<b>We are not ready for a parliamentary government</b>								
March 2006	9	7	10	11	8	12	8	11
October 2005	9	6	10	8	11	9	9	10
<b>This is just a way to ensure the graceful exit of the President</b>								
March 2006	8	8	8	8	7	14	7	8
October 2005	7	6	7	5	10	6	8	7

Question: Alin sa mga sumusunod na pangungusap ang pinaka naglalarawan sa inyong pananaw tungkol sa pagbabago ng Konstitusyon?

On the other hand, of Filipinos who favor charter change now, some view it as the solution to the country's current political crisis (27%), or believe it will contribute to national economic development (26%), or deem a change in form of government necessary to reduce politicking between the executive and legislative (24%). Nearly the same percentages of respondents in the rest of Luzon, the Visayas, and in Classes D and E cite these three reasons. However, the most often-cited reason among Metro Manilans is that charter change is the solution to the political crisis in the country while in Mindanao and in Class ABC, almost the same percentage of respondents favor charter change now because either it will solve the political crisis in the country or it will contribute to economic development in the Philippines (Table 5).

**Table 5**  
**REASONS FOR WANTING TO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION NOW**  
 October 2005 and March 2006 / Philippines  
 (Row Percent)

Which of the following best describes your opinion on Constitutional Change? (Base: Those who say that the Constitution <b>SHOULD BE</b> amended now)	LOCATION					CLASS		
	RP	NCR	BAL	VIS	MIN	ABC	D	E
			LUZ					
<b>This is the solution to the political crisis in the country</b>								
March 2006	27	35	25	26	28	34	27	26
October 2005	31	23	33	30	33	31	30	34
<b>This will help push economic development and progress in the country</b>								
March 2006	26	26	25	25	29	35	26	24
October 2005	28	15	35	21	27	16	32	24
<b>A change in form of government is needed to reduce the politicking between the executive and legislative branches</b>								
March 2006	24	18	26	27	22	22	25	23
October 2005	24	44	20	23	23	33	24	22
<b>It is easier to change an administration that is no longer trusted by the citizenry if the form of government is parliamentary</b>								
March 2006	11	11	13	7	12	5	10	14
October 2005	7	5	4	16	8	7	6	11
<b>There are many provisions in the Constitution, which do not necessarily have anything to do with the form of government, but needs to be changed</b>								
March 2006	11	10	11	15	9	4	11	13
October 2005	9	13	9	9	8	13	9	9

Question: Alin sa mga sumusunod na pangungusap ang pinaka naglalarawan sa inyong pananaw tungkol sa pagbabago ng Konstitusyon?

Interestingly, further regression analyses indicate that those who believe that President Arroyo is the best person to lead the country now (11%) are less inclined to have the constitution amended at present. On the other hand, those who think that President Arroyo is the most unacceptable leader to lead the country now (32%) also appear to be more supportive of changing the constitution now (*See Tables 6 and 7*).

**Table 6**  
**WHETHER IT IS APPROPRIATE TO AMEND THE PRESENT**  
**PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION AT THIS TIME OR NOT by**  
**BEST PERSON TO LEAD THE COUNTRY NOW**

February 18 - March 4, 2006 / Philippines

(Row Percent)

Best person to lead the country now (% saying)	Whether it is appropriate to amend the present Philippine Constitution at this time or not			
	YES, the Constitution should be amended now (43%)	NO, the Constitution should not be amended now, but it may be amended at sometime in the future (24%)	NO, the Constitution should not be amended now nor any other time (24%)	Don't Know/ Can't say (9%)
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (11%)	32	28	31	9
Others (89%)	44	24	23	9

**Table 7**  
**WHETHER IT IS APPROPRIATE TO AMEND THE PRESENT**  
**PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION AT THIS TIME OR NOT by**  
**PERSON NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE RESPONDENT TO LEAD THE NATION**

February 18 - March 4, 2006 / Philippines

(Row Percent)

Person not acceptable to the respondent to lead the nation (% saying)	Whether it is appropriate to amend the present Philippine Constitution at this time or not			
	YES, the Constitution should be amended now (43%)	NO, the Constitution should not be amended now, but it may be amended at sometime in the future (24%)	NO, the Constitution should not be amended now nor any other time (24%)	Don't Know/ Can't say (9%)
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (32%)	52	19	22	7
Others (68%)	39	26	25	9