

Gregorio “Gringo” Honasan, #31

Former secretary, Department of Information and Communications Technology

as of Feb. 5, 2025



Age and date of birth: 76 (March 14, 1948)

Party: Reform PH Party

Highest Educational Attainment: Masters in Business Management, Asian Institute of Management (1981)

Highest Government Position Held: Senator

Summary:

A soldier for 17 years, senator for 21 years, rebel for seven years and Cabinet secretary for two and a half years, Honasan wants to return to the Senate to push for unfinished reforms on land use, national security, freedom of information and food security.

Stance on Key Issues

On Poverty, Controlling Inflation and Jobs

- Argues that government aid (ayuda) should be subjected to audits and distributed by concerned government agencies. It should not be credited to lawmakers whose primary role is legislation.
- Advocates for a better function of the wage regulatory board and a more accurate assessment of cost of living across different provinces
- Emphasizes the need for more accurate data on poverty threshold for families to live with adequate food, clothing, shelter, education and tuition
- Urges labor groups to better organize themselves, and believes that contractualization should be ended

On Fighting Graft and Corruption

- Opposes a law against political dynasties, believing that some political families serve their constituents well; however says he is against political dynasties dominating local politics
- Favors punishment against turncoat politicians, knowing they change political parties depending on who wins
- Supports publication of public officials' statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) as part of freedom of information
- His political party, Reform PH, supports the establishment of a national anti-corruption task force and a public accountability portal to report corruption and provide access to government performance records.

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Stance on Key Issues

On West Philippine Sea

- Believing that “the Philippines doesn’t have an army, but the Philippines is an army,” he says the country as a whole should prepare for any threats to national security.
- Promotes amendment of Commonwealth Act # 1 (National Defense Act), specifically to modernize conscription policies, expand training programs, and increase the country’s defense budget, among other things

On The Drug War

- Opposed to a tokhang-style drug war
- Against death penalty for heinous crimes, including drug trafficking, saying people still kill each other even if killing has been outlawed since the time of Jesus Christ

On Disaster-preparedness

- His political party, Reform PH supports the establishment of early warning systems and creation of disaster management plans against natural hazards; wants to strengthen the Office of Civil Defense and the AFP for disaster relief operations and humanitarian assistance

Government Experience/Field of Expertise

- Secretary, Department of Information and Communications Technology (2019-2021)
- Senator (1995-2004; 2017-2019)
 - Authored the Clean Air Act (RA 8749), Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 (RA 9003)
 - Co-authored the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010 (RA 10121)
 - Chairman - Senate Committees on Agrarian Reform, Public Order and Dangerous Drugs, Public Information and Mass Media
 - Assistant majority leader - Commission of Appointments (2018-2019)
- Commandant - Special Operations School, Philippine Army Training Command, Fort Magsaysay, Nueva Ecija (1986 - 1987)
- Chief of Security - Ministry of National Defense (1981-1987)
- Aide-de-Camp to Juan Ponce Enrile, Secretary of National Defense (1974 - 1986)

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Issues and Controversies

- In 2020, the DICT, under Honasan’s leadership, admitted spending P300 million in confidential funds to conduct surveillance. Both the COA and former DICT undersecretary Eliseo Rio Jr., who resigned during that controversy, flagged irregularities in the funds’ disbursement.
- Charged with two counts of graft in 2017 over alleged misuse of his P30-million Priority Development Assistance Fund in 2012. He was cleared of both charges in 2021.
- As chief security officer of then defense secretary Enrile, Honasan led the Reform the Armed Forces Movement that withdrew support from the dictator Ferdinand Marcos Sr. in February 1986 and attempted to overthrow him. RAM was a breakaway group formed in 1982 composed mostly of junior military officers disgruntled by patronage politics and corruption in the AFP. The coup attempt led to the EDSA revolution that brought down the dictatorship and installed Cory Aquino as president.
- Led two of the most serious and bloodiest of seven coup attempts against the Cory Aquino administration. He was arrested in December 1987 in relation to the botched coup d’etat in August that year, during which the president’s son, Benigno Aquino III, was injured and three of his security men were killed. He escaped in April 1988 with 13 of his guards from a prison ship anchored in Manila Bay. Honasan led another coup attempt in December 1989. In 1992, then president Fidel Ramos granted him amnesty.
- Charged with rebellion for his alleged involvement in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny against the Gloria Macapagal Arroyo administration. The charges were dismissed in 2007.
- Arrested in 2006 after a nine-month manhunt for organizing a botched coup against Arroyo

Family Members in Government

- None