

Benigno Aquino III sworn in as Philippine leader

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Associated Press

06/30/10 12:32 AM EDT



Philippines President-elect Benigno Aquino III, middle, waves as he arrives at the presidential palace to escort outgoing President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and proceed to inauguration rites in Manila, Philippines Wednesday, June 30, 2010. Benigno will take his oath as the Philippines' 15th president Wednesday, promising change in a Southeast Asian nation long shackled by poverty, corruption and armed conflicts. (Rolex dela Pena/AP)

MANILA, PHILIPPINES — Benigno Aquino III has taken his oath as the Philippines' president.

He now leads the Southeast Asian nation his late parents helped liberate from dictatorship and which he promises to deliver from poverty and pervasive corruption.

Aquino was sworn in Wednesday at Manila's seaside Rizal Park as hundreds of thousands of people chanted his nickname.

Vice President Jejomar Binay took his oath before Aquino was sworn before a Supreme Court justice. Outgoing President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo accompanied Aquino to the venue then left to separately take her oath as a legislator in her northern Pampanga province.

Aquino and Arroyo are political nemesis.

30 June 2010 - 04H55

Aquino to take power in Philippines

<http://www.france24.com/en/20100630-aquino-take-power-philippines>



Incoming president Benigno Aquino listens during a mass at the tomb of his parents, democracy icon Corazon Aquino and senator Benigno Aquino at the Manila Memorial Park. Aquino will take power as Philippine president on Wednesday promising a new era of clean government for the corruption-wracked Southeast Asian nation.



Incoming Philippine President Benigno Aquino adjusts his glasses as he introduced members of his cabinet at a press conference in Manila. Aquino will take power as Philippine president on Wednesday promising a new era of clean government for the corruption-wracked Southeast Asian nation.

Benigno Aquino



Formally starts term as president of the Philippines Wednesday

50-year-old bachelor

Career

- ▶ Senator: 2007-June 2010
 - ▶ Congressman: 1998-2007
- Won the May 10 presidential vote

Political legacy

Mother: **Corazon Aquino**
President 1986-1992

Credited for leading the "people power" revolution against dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986

Father: **Benigno Aquino**
Senator 1967-1972

Murdered by Marcos gunmen in 1983 as he tried to return from exile to lead opposition

AFP

Profile of Benigno Aquino, who will be inaugurated as new president of the Philippines Wednesday.

AFP - Benigno Aquino was set to be sworn in as president of the Philippines amid festive celebrations on Wednesday after vowing a new era of clean government for the corruption-racked nation.

Thousands of people wearing the Aquino family's signature yellow braved stormy weather as they gathered from before dawn at a seaside park in Manila for the inauguration.

"I think he can reduce corruption and improve governance," Terlito Malaya, a 52-year-old high school teacher, said as he waited for the midday (0400 GMT) oath-taking ceremony.

"Poverty is also a very big problem and needs a permanent solution... but no-one should think right now that he will fail."

Aquino rode to the country's biggest election victory on May 10 on a pledge to end corruption and fight poverty that he said thrived during the nearly 10-year reign of outgoing president Gloria Arroyo.

Another crucial factor was his status as the son of Philippine democracy heroes Benigno and Corazon Aquino, who remain revered for their efforts to overthrow dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

His mother, Corazon, also earned a reputation as an incorruptible leader during her six-year term as president following the "people power" revolution that toppled Marcos in 1986.

Aquino admitted to feeling some anxiety on Tuesday as he named his cabinet and put the finishing touches to his first speech as president, in which he will outline how he intends to get the job done over his six-year term.

"It will be what sets the goalposts," he said of the speech, which will air live on national television along with the oath-taking.

"I want it to be understood by the vast majority of our people."

After promising to eradicate poverty during the campaign, Aquino has been careful to play down expectations, insisting that he is not Superman and that he is hoping to merely lay a solid foundation for his successor in 2016.

However he has also announced some headline-grabbing initiatives, including on Tuesday naming a retired Supreme Court chief justice to lead a Truth Commission that will probe and possibly prosecute Arroyo for alleged graft.

Aquino also pledged to scrutinise every project listed in the national budget to make sure taxpayers money is not being lost to corruption, adding he suspected Arroyo had painted a falsely optimistic picture of the economy.

"The first order of business will be for everybody (in the cabinet) to review their particular areas of concern," Aquino said Tuesday.

"We will have to study the lay of the land, study what the conditions are bereft of political spin."

Amid this backdrop, a fascinating part of Wednesday's events saw Aquino escort Arroyo in a car from the presidential palace to the Rizal Park venue for the oath-taking ceremony and turnover of power.

Aquino also said Tuesday he wanted peace talks to end decades-long communist and Muslim separatist insurgencies.

Another priority was to improve a judicial system where just 18 percent of criminal cases lead to convictions and a court verdict takes six years.

"Justice is really an aspiration rather than a reality," he said.

East Timor President Jose Ramos-Horta and US Trade Representative Ron Kirk will be among the foreign dignitaries to attend the inauguration.

Japan's state secretary for foreign affairs Osamu Fujimura and the deputy head of China's parliament, Yan Junqi, will also attend.