

**Let's All Help!**  
**Campaign to**

**FREE ALL**



**POLITICAL PRISONERS**

through **GENERAL, UNCONDITIONAL**  
& **OMNIBUS AMNESTY**

## Background

There is an ongoing protracted armed conflict in the Philippines with deep socio-economic and political roots. Social discontent and political dissent are met with repression. Thus, trumped-up charges, illegal arrests and detention, torture and unjust conviction on false political and/or criminal charges constitute continuing violation of people's rights.

Political prisoners (PPs) are those who were arrested, detained and imprisoned for acts that further their political beliefs. They are arbitrarily denied their liberty and due process of law. They are charged with political offenses such as rebellion and sedition. More often, they are charged with criminal offenses to deny the political nature of their alleged offenses, and to reduce them to being plain criminals. They are charged with murder, arson, kidnapping, robbery-in-band, illegal possession of firearms, among others. These are mostly non-bailable offenses meant to keep them in jail as court hearings proceed at snail's pace.

PPs include those who were suspected as members/supporters of the CPP-NPA-NDFP, MILF, MNLF and other groups like ASG and JI simply because they are in areas where there are government anti-insurgency and anti-terrorist campaigns.

There are 360 PPs reported to Karapatan (August 31, 2011). The majority were arrested under the corrupt and repressive Arroyo regime as they are among its most determined opposition. But despite Pres. Noynoy Aquino's *matuwid na daan* (righteous path) there are already 77 people detained under his watch.

Political prisoners, their families, people's organizations, human rights groups and Church institutions here and abroad call for the rectification of the injustice against the PPs. They demand freedom for all political prisoners. Those who were also falsely charged but are not yet arrested or are temporarily released are included in this campaign.

Presidents Corason Aquino and Fidel Ramos granted unconditional pardons before. P-Noy also granted conditional amnesty to some 400 AFP and PNP personnel who allegedly rebelled against the GMA government. It was done. It can be done.

## Our Specific Call

Grant general, unconditional and omnibus amnesty to all:

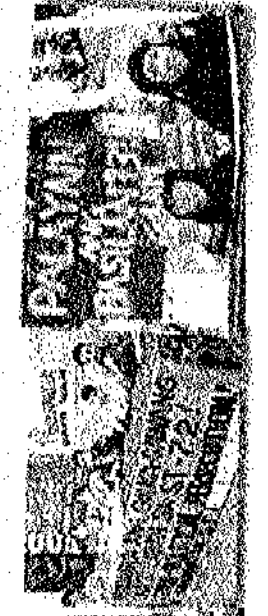
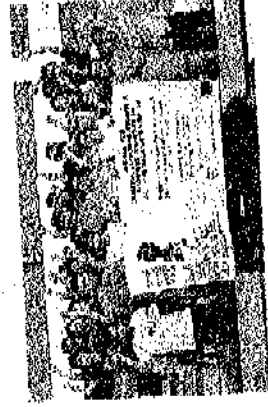
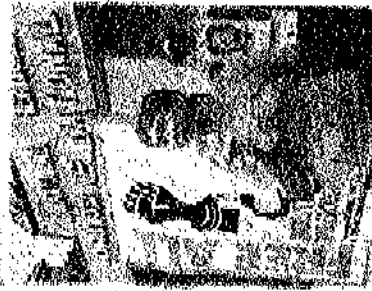
- a. Political prisoners ("alleged political offenders" according to the government); or
- b. Those arrested, charged or detained for political offenses or for any act to further thereto;

common crimes but in fact are alleged acts to pursue one's political beliefs; and being suspected as supporters/members of revolutionary and other armed groups since they are in militarized communities.

**General** means all political prisoners, alleged political offenders or others, who are defined in the preceding paragraphs and covered by the effectivity of an Amnesty Proclamation.

**Unconditional** means no precondition is set before they are released. They will not go through a tedious application process and will not be required to plead guilty or make any admissions. They only need to be covered by the definition and effectivity of the Proclamation. They only have to be included in a pre-screened list and accept the General, Unconditional and Omnibus Amnesty Proclamation.

**Omnibus** means that all charges or offenses as defined in the Proclamation are covered by the amnesty.



## What you can do to help Free Political Prisoners?

1. Sign the online petition for the campaign at [www.ipetitions.com/petition/free\\_all\\_political\\_prisoners](http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/free_all_political_prisoners)
2. Send short notes to the facebook and twitter accounts of Pres. Noynoy Aquino, Executive Secretary Paquito N. Ochoa, Jr. and DOJ Sec. Lella de Lima.
3. Fax a short letter or send a postcard to appeal for the release of all political prisoners through the grant of general, unconditional and omnibus amnesty.

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**Paquito N. Ochoa**  
Executive Secretary, The Executive Office  
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4. Solicit signatures for the campaign.
5. Join prison visits to jails where the PPs are. Please get in touch with Selda which organizes periodic visits.
6. Join other campaign activities: forum, discussions, attendance in sessions in the Senate and Congress, visits to the offices of media management, congresspersons and senators, etc.
7. Enjoin your family members, other relatives, former classmates and officemates and various others to also join any of the campaign activities.
8. Issue a statement or write a letter to the editor in support of the campaign to free PPs.
9. Write a letter of support to political prisoners to relay your support to the campaign for their release. Course the letter to the Selda email addy [selda\\_phil@yahoo.com.ph](mailto:selda_phil@yahoo.com.ph) or its address.



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