

# 2016

KARAPATAN YEAR-END REPORT  
on the Human Rights Situation in the Philippines



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Philippines



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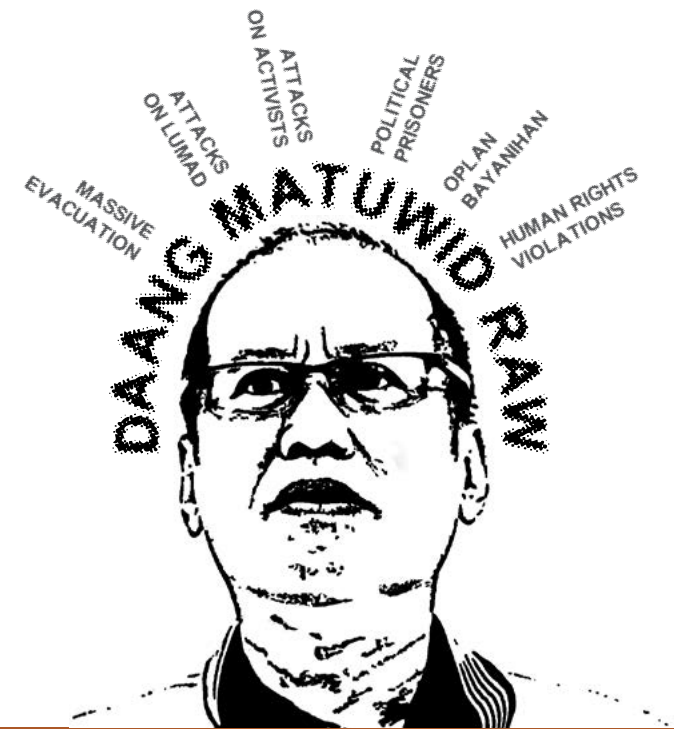
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IN THE PHILIPPINES

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**A**s soon as Rodrigo Duterte became the evident winner in the last presidential elections, the public shut off BS Aquino from their minds and turned their attention to Duterte who espoused “change” during his electoral campaign. BS Aquino had been a dead weight on the shoulders of the Filipino people in the past six years. Never mind if up to the last minute, he acted under the illusion that he was the guardian of democracy like no other.

The outcome of the 2016 presidential elections showed a clear repudiation of the BS Aquino regime’s “daang matuwid” (“righteous path”) which had locked the people in deeply-rooted poverty and tragedy, and subservience to foreign dictates. Needless to say, his road was steeped in people’s blood.

As expectations with the newly-elected president Duterte rose, so did the concerns on his style of leadership, which BS Aquino and his ilk immediately hyped and muddled to cover up the responsibility and accountability of his outgoing presidency.

Drowned in daily news headlines and social media discourse were the Commission on Audit’s report on the missing billions of funds during the Aquino presidency involving the Departments of Social Welfare & Development, of Justice, and of Agriculture.

BS Aquino's effort to white-wash his regime's dirt, especially its human rights record, included the immediate creation under the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) of a task force on extrajudicial killings directed against Duterte. The move seemed like an exercise of the CHR's regular mandate, if it is indeed an independent body unaffected by interests of Aquino's Liberal Party. However, the CHR is a tainted agency because under the BS Aquino regime, it did nothing much in terms of substance to address the killings and other rights violations by BS Aquino's armed forces. Mostly, the CHR absolved BS Aquino's regime of its accountability, just as it was silent on and allowed the promotion of military officers involved in cases of human rights atrocities and/or had pending cases before courts for such violations.

As the Liberal Party-led CHR prepared for what it expected as rights violations during the Duterte presidency, it kept its eyes away from BS Aquino's last ditch-effort to sow terror. During the last few weeks of BS Aquino in Malacañang, there were more victims of political killings, and unceasing harassment through the issuance of warrants of arrest based on trumped-up charges against church people, human rights workers, and leaders of people's organizations who had helped evacuees in UCCP-Haran in Davao City. Included in this list was the arrest of National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) peace consultant Eduardo Genelsa.

The arrest of Genelsa happened just as the Duterte government and the NDFP were preparing for the

resumption of the formal peace talks and the release of political prisoners, particularly incarcerated NDFP consultants.

### Political Prisoners

On June 29, 2016, Eduardo Genelsa, 60, was arrested in Sitio Sangi, Brgy. Bongabong, Pantukan, Compostela Valley. He was in the community to discuss the forthcoming peace talks between the Duterte administration and the NDFP. He was there to validate complaints against the operations of St. Augustine Gold & Copper Ltd, a mining company in the area.

A composite team made up of the 46th Infantry Battalion and 10th Infantry Division of the Philippines Army (PA), the Philippine National Police (PNP), and the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP) arrested Genelsa, whom they detained at the Compostela Valley Provincial Rehabilitation Center. He was among the 22 NDFP consultants imprisoned under the Aquino regime.

Meanwhile, the situation of 117 (as of June 30, 2016) ailing political prisoners provided the impetus for the new administration to immediately release political prisoners on humanitarian grounds, and to render justice for the violation of their rights.

Jose Andaya, 70, was the latest political prisoner who succumbed to death while in detention. On May 8, Andaya died inside the Tinangis Penal Farm, Pili, Camarines Sur. The medical certificate issued by the Bicol Medical Center on October 20, 2015, showed that Andaya suffered

**TABLE 1**

Political Prisoners as of  
as of June 30, 2016 end of BS Aquino term

REGION	TOTAL NO. OF PPS	WOMEN	NDFP CONSULTANTS	ARRESTED UNDER BS AQUINO
Ilocos	1	0	0	1
Cordillera Administrative Region	6	0	1	5
Cagayan Valley	8	1	0	4
Central Luzon	9	0	1	3
National Capital Region	212	18	12	61
Southern Tagalog	17	2	0	8
Bicol	34	2	0	31
Western Visayas	7	1	1	6
Central Visayas	4	0	0	2
Eastern Visayas	32	7	2	27
Northern Mindanao	23	1	2	16
Caraga	31	0	0	31
Soccsargen	8	0	0	7
Western Mindanao	10	0	0	10
Southern Mindanao	101	5	3	82
ARMM	21	0	0	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>304</b>

SICKLY 122

ELDERLY 34

ARRESTED MINOR 12

from hypertensive cardiovascular disease and congestive heart failure. Andaya was arrested on April 24, 2015 by members of the Philippine National Police, on trumped-up charges of murder.

On January 8, 2016, NDFP peace consultant Eduardo Serrano, 62, died of cardiac arrest. He endured eleven (11) years of imprisonment for charges filed against a certain “Rogelio Villanueva”. It was another case of mistaken identity that the military stuck to until the end of Serrano’s life because they had collected the cash reward under the pretense that they caught a communist leader. Serrano was rushed to the hospital because of a heart attack two weeks after the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 98 ruled that he was not Villanueva and that his detention was a “mockery of justice”. Serrano died at the Philippine Heart Center where he had undergone angioplasty.

There were at least twelve (12) political prisoners who suffered the same fatal end. Aside from Andaya and Serrano, the following political prisoners died while in detention because of the lack of proper medical attention, inhuman jail conditions and the Aquino government’s indifference: Alison Alcantara and Benny Barid (New Bilibid Prison), Ester Montes (Eastern Samar), Nenino Cabarles and Renato Abadiano (Samar Provincial Jail), Crisanto Fat (Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, Bago City, Negros Occidental), Melchor Renomeron (Compostela Provincial Rehabilitation Center), Romeo San Andres (Aurora Provincial Jail), Gildo Gonzales (Makati City

Jail) and Willy Geocado (Sorsogon Provincial Jail).

In his last speech as president, the charlatan BS Aquino cautioned against one-man rule as he again recalled the sufferings of his father Ninoy as a political prisoner under the Marcos dictatorship. BS Aquino spoke in his usual apathetic way, unmindful of the fact that twelve detainees had died under his presidency due to general inattention and the tortuous process of getting court orders to seek proper medical care and hospitalization which could have been avoided with just a short message from Malacanang. Talking about his popular parents is Aquino’s convenient and consistent way out of his incompetence and political mediocrity.

At the end of BS Aquino’s term, there were 524 documented political prisoners, 304 of whom were arrested during the BS Aquino presidency.

### Attacks on Activists

The existence of political prisoners is a reflection of the continuing state repression and the government’s intolerance and hatred of the legitimate dissent of people who take the side of the poor and oppressed, as in the case of the activists and leaders of progressive organizations who assisted the Lumad evacuees staying at the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) – Haran Compound in Davao City.

Those who assisted the farmers and indigenous peoples when they evacuated were treated as “criminals.” Fifteen (15) human rights and relief workers, church people, peasant and IP leaders, and

teachers in Lumad schools, collectively known as the Haran 15, were slapped with warrants of arrests for trumped-up criminal charges of trafficking in persons, serious illegal detention, and kidnapping.

Those charged were: Honey Mae Suazo, Karapatan-Southern Mindanao (SMR) Secretary General; Rev. Jurie Jaime, Promotion of Church People’s Response (PCPR) – SMR; Sheena Duazo, spokesperson, Bayan –SMR; Ryan Lariba, spokesperson, Bayan – SoCSKSarGenDS; Tony Salubre, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) – SMR; Mary Ann Sapar, Gabriela Women’s Party (GWP) – SMR; Jaja Necosia, RCPA Productions – Broadcasting; Kerlan Fanagel, Sr., Secretary General of the Lumad group Pasaka; Sr. Stella Matutina, Panalipdan – Mindanao; Restita Miles, Rural Missionaries of the Philippines (RMP); Isidro Indao, Pasaka spokesperson; Kharlo Manano, National Secretary General of Salinlahi Alliance for Children’s Concerns and spokesperson of the Save Our Schools (SOS) network; Rius Valle, Children’s Rehabilitation Center (CRC) – SMR; Jimboy Marciano, SAMA-AKO-KMU; and Pedro Arnado, Chairperson of KMP –SMR.

The charges were instigated by Aquino’s military henchmen who coerced a number of individuals to file complaints against the Haran 15. The complainants included Datu Kalumpot Dalon, Datu Laris Landahay, Libara Angkomog, Juvanie Angkomog, Toto Angkomog, Limar Mansomoy-at and Tata Angkomog-Lundia, all residents of Sitio Inayaman, Brgy. San Jose, San Fernando, Bukidnon.

They had evacuated together with more than 167 residents from their town, but they left the evacuation center sometime in February 2015 to return to their communities where the soldiers were still encamped. They were under the custody of the Eastern Mindanao Command of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) under General Eduardo Año, when they filed the complaint.

Attached to the criminal complaint was a so-called “rogue gallery” which contained names and photos of 55 other activists. The “rogue gallery” was created by the AFP Eastern Mindanao Command. The list was an assortment of names which included the late labor leader Crispin Beltran and environmentalist Francis Morales, who died in May 2008 and November 2014, respectively. It also included NDFP peace negotiations panel adviser Jose Maria Sison and panel member Juliet de Lima who have been in the Netherlands since the 1980s.

On April 5, 2016, acting Davao City Prosecutor Loverhette Jeffrey P. Villordon designated by the national office of the Department of Justice (DOJ), granted the motion for reconsideration of the military-backed complainant Datu Kalumpot Dalon reversing the dismissal of the cases against the 15, and recommended the filing in court of the trumped-up charges against them. On September 8, 2015, Davao City Investigating Prosecutor Samuel Atencia issued a resolution dismissing the trumped-up charges for insufficiency of evidence.

It was only on June 28, 2016, during a forum on peace in Davao City, that a journalist showed Kerlan

Fenagel a photo of a warrant of arrest against him and 14 others based on said trumped-up cases. It was only then they learned that a warrant had been issued for their arrest.

The Lumad sought refuge, in batches, at the UCCP-Haran since the first quarter of 2015 due to military operations in their communities and forced recruitment of lumad to the AFP's paramilitary groups such as the Alamara. The church compound served as the evacuees' temporary shelter which continued to be a target of military and police threats and harassment.

The revival of the case against the supporters of Lumad evacuees came after the burning of the evacuation center within the church compound. At dawn of February 24, more than five hundred evacuees woke up to the smell of gasoline, as they saw their tents aflame. Five makeshift houses were already consumed by fire before it was put out. Leaders at the evacuation center reported the incident to the police for investigation. During the investigation, police saw a gasoline container that could have been used to start the fire. According to reports, three men aboard a motorcycle were sighted by a number of evacuees; a white cap that belonged to the perpetrators was left behind, stuck in the cyclone wires. It was also reported that as early as December 17, 2015, the Alamara paramilitary group had been threatening to burn the evacuation center.

Five persons were injured during the fire. Three were brought to the hospital, including two children who sustained burns when the canvas roofs melted and fell on

their hands and feet. But the patients were rejected by the hospital's emergency service for the ridiculous reason that they did not receive any advisory from 911.

Prior to the UCCP-Haran burning incident, human rights worker Honey Mae Suazo, secretary-general of Karapatan-SMR and one of the human rights defenders assisting the evacuees, experienced harassment. On January 30, 2016, Suazo and two other Karapatan staff volunteers observed that while they were talking in a restaurant they were under surveillance by three men. On February 3, 2016 at 5:30p.m., an unidentified motorcycle-riding man on board a red XRM motorcycle and wearing a helmet was observed standing in front of the gate at Suazo's residence in Davao City. Other forms of harassment happened on February 11 onward. Suazo had been under surveillance by the 10th IDPA and Eastern Mindanao Command because of her Karapatan work exposing human rights violations committed by the military, police and other state agents.

In Compostela Valley, trumped-up criminal charges of kidnapping were also filed against peasant leaders Renante Mantos, Angelito Chavez, and Allan Montecalvo.

Mantos is the chairperson and spokesperson of Hugpong sa Mag-uuma sa Walog Compostela (HUMAWAC). Chavez, also a member of Humawac, had been interrogated in his residence and accused of being a supporter of the NPA. Montecalvo is the spokesperson of Indug Katawhan (People Rise

Up). Humawac and Indug Katawhan are strong advocates against militarization and foreign large-scale mining in Compostela.

The three learned about the kidnapping charges after three women from Malamodao, Maco, Compostela Valley reported their ordeal to Karapatan-SMR. On the evening of January 6, Ivy Joy Matayab, Arlene Camporeondo, and Jenny Fe Matayab were forcibly taken out of their houses by men in civilian clothes and were brought for questioning to an isolated place, after a trek of several hours. They were released in the evening of the next day. After a few days, the women were shocked to hear that their names were placed as complainants for a kidnapping case against Mantos, Chavez, and Montecalvo. On January 6, with the assistance of Karapatan-SMR, the women executed affidavits attesting to the innocence of the peasant leaders.

Days later, Ivy Joy and Jenny Fe, who were cousins, could not be contacted by Karapatan workers to process their affidavits. It turned out that the two were courted and became girlfriends of military personnel. Soldiers courting local young women has been used in counter-insurgency operations to facilitate acceptance by the communities where troops conduct combat operations, and to sow disunity among community residents while covering up human rights violations they are committing.

#### **Attacks against self-help schools for the Lumad**

In Surigao del Sur, teachers of a self-help school Alternative Learning for Community and Agricultural Development, Inc. (ALCADEV) and Tribal Filipino Program of Surigao del Sur (TRIFPSS) and community leaders and members of Malahutayong Pakigbisog Alang sa Sumusunod





(MAPASU), were falsely charged with child trafficking and child abuse.

Complaints were filed by minors Reneboy and Saniboy Acebido who evacuated together with their grandmother to the Tandag City Sports Complex immediately after the September 1, 2015 massacre of ALCADEV director Emerito Samarca and MAPASU leaders Dionel Campos and Datu Juvello Sinzo by the Magahat-Bagani paramilitary group and elements of the 36th IBPA.

Reneboy and Saniboy were taken from the evacuation center by their mother Rosalinda Tejero on September 5, 2015 and were brought to the custody of the 401st Infantry Brigade of the Philippine Army at New Leyte, Brgy. Awa, Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur. Rosalinda and her two sons filed affidavit-complaints on December 17, 2015 at the Municipal Police Station of Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur. In his affidavit, Reneboy alleged that community leaders and teachers Joan Sinzo, Bebot Enriquez,

Rolando Enriquez, Dionel Campos, Annabelle Campos, Reynaldo Campos, Ronald Bage, Jalandoni Campos, Josephine Pagalan, Genasque Enriquez, Julieta Trimidal, a certain Dindo, Baby Rivas and Tata Enriquez taught them to “fight the government.” He also alleged that he heard from these individuals that in due time, Jorge Madlos aka Ka Oris would become the Philippine president. Reneboy also claimed that he was instructed to bury the cadaver of Jestoni Galdiano and Renz Rivas, both killed during the NPA attack against Datu Calpet Egua at Brgy. Sta. Irene, Agusan del Sur. Saniboy confirmed that they were brought by his mother and her new husband to the military camp of the 401st Infantry Brigade and that they were closely guarded by soldiers and members of the paramilitary group Magahat.

ALCADEV teachers Reynaldo A. Campos and Ronald Bague filed their individual counter-affidavits, denying the accusations of the Acebido brothers. Campos is a BA Philosophy graduate and a volunteer teacher of history and agriculture and a first year adviser in ALCADDEV. Bague is a math, science, and agriculture teacher and third year adviser at the same school.

Literacy coordinator Annabelle Campos, para-teacher Jenalyn Campos, and Manobo para-teacher Julieta Trimidal, 28, all of TRIFPSS ALS (Alternative Learning School) stated in their counter-affidavits that both boys had attended Han-ayan Tribal Filipino Community School-ALS TRIFPSS, and had difficulties in their classes.

The teachers and leaders said the false charges against them were harassment suits meant to discourage them from being active in their campaign to defend Manobo ancestral land, culture and tradition.

Other forms of threats and harassment continued, most especially by paramilitary groups, against teachers in other self-help schools for lumad children like the teachers and students of Salugpongong Ta ‘Tanu Igkanogon Community Learning Center Incorporated (STTICLCI) in Sitio Nasilaban, Brgy. Palma Gil, Talaingod, Davao del Norte.

Rodel “Ang-angoy” Butanlog, an Alamara member, had been threatening teachers and students of STTICLCI. Carrying a long firearm, he repeatedly entered the school premises telling the students and teachers to leave the school or be killed. The teachers had to go for a Christmas break leave earlier than scheduled to elude Ang-angoy’s threats.

On January 8, 2016, teachers Chrisanto Billote and Renelyn Sumile were at Brgy. Sto. Nino, Talaingod on their way to their respective schools in Sitio Dulyan and Sitio Laslasakan, Brgy. Palma Gil after the Christmas break. They noticed Ang-angoy at a distance along the road to Sitio Dulyan. Wary of his threats, the teachers avoided him and decided to take another route for safety.

The next day, teachers Serita Lawian and Richard Celis in Sitio Tibucag, Brgy. Dagohoy, and four students were set to return to Sitio Tibucag, and resume their classes. They departed from Brgy. Sto. Niño at around 2:30p.m. and arrived in

Sitio Tibucag, at around 6:30p.m. One of their drivers, Obello Bay-ao, told them that the day before when he was driving one of the students, they chanced upon Ang-angoy in Brgy. Sto. Niño proper. Ang-angoy told Obello that he would wait for the teachers to arrive in Brgy. Sto. Niño to monitor their arrival at Sitio Tibucag. He threatened to go to Tibucag on January 9 to kill the teachers since nobody knows him in Tibucag. Ang-angoy further said that after Sitio Tibucag, he would proceed to Sitio Nasilaban, Dulyan and Kamingawan, all in Brgy. Palma Gil, to go after the teachers of Salugpongong as he claimed they were members of the New People’s Army (NPA).

STTICLCI teachers and their principal, Ronie Garcia, along with the SOS Network, filed a formal complaint/blotter of these incidents of grave threat, at the Philippine National Police (PNP) in Talaingod on January 19, 2016. The case was also filed at the Brgy. Palma Gil council.

The STTICLCI is a community-based school built through the combined efforts of tribal leaders and the Rural Missionaries in the Philippines (RMP) in 1997.

### Political killings

In Mindanao, where the majority of AFP troops were deployed, the killing of people struggling against their miserable economic and social conditions continued. Just as BS Aquino’s term was about to end, there were reports of the US-supported regime’s fascist attacks against poor peasants and



indigenous peoples.

Coming from six municipalities in North Cotabato – Makilala, Mlang, Tulunan, Magpet, Roxas, Antipas, Arakan and Kidapawan – some 6,000 farmers barricaded the Davao-Cotabato highway in Kidapawan City on March 30, 2016 to demand their calamity food aid of

15,000 sacks of rice, and the pull-out of military troops that continued to wreak havoc in their lives and their communities.

The BS Aquino government responded with bullets.

The Philippine weather bureau PAG-ASA, as early as 2015, warned of the adverse effect of El Nino

(drought) that would impact on more than half of the country. On January 20, 2016, the province of North Cotabato was placed under a state of calamity because of the drought. By placing areas officially under a state of calamity, the provincial government was allowed to use five percent of its revenue share (Internal Revenue Allotment or IRA) for disaster relief. Reports had it that local government's mitigation measures were largely diverted to the large agricultural plantations in the province away from farmers' communities. The farmers knew there was enough, if not more than enough, government funding for drought victims, that as food producers they were entitled to government support after their land dried up and their crops destroyed.

The farmers' three-day mass action ended violently on April 1, 2016, when the Kidapawan police open fired on the protesters. The incident left two dead, with at least 11 injured, and at least 80 illegally arrested and detained.

Enrico Fabligar, one of the two killed, was a bystander who lived close to where the violent dispersal happened. Darwin Sulang, 21, one of the farmer protesters, was shot in the head.

Of the wounded farmers, seven were hospitalized. As per the findings of the National Fact-finding and Humanitarian Mission led by Karapatan, and based on the account of the protesters and evidence of the gunshot wounds, the police seemed to be more intent on killing the farmers than de-mobilizing them.

Ronald "Allan" Diampas, a

farmer from Arakan Valley, was shot in the mouth by a policeman at close range. Antipas farmer Victor Lumundang sustained a bullet wound in his neck. Mark Anthony Delgado, whom the PNP and the AFP claimed as an NPA commander, was a farmer from Magpet. He suffered gunshot wounds in the left leg and was beaten up by the police during the dispersal.

Many farmers were hauled off and brought to the Kidapawan Gym during and after the dispersal. In many of the accounts, the Kidapawan police told the farmers they would be brought home, only to find themselves brought to and detained at the Kidapawan Convention Hall or the Kidapawan Gymnasium. A total of 45 men were detained at the gym while 29 women and four minors were detained at the Convention Hall. Among those detained were three pregnant women and six elderly men and women. Even the wounded farmers who were brought to the hospitals were also charged with direct assault.

The four minors were released on April 5, along with two men who were able to post bail. Those who were still detained eventually posted bail on April 16 with the help of performing artists Aiza Seguerra and Liza Dino, and assisted by the paralegals of Karapatan and Sagipp. Pro bono legal counsel came from the National Union of People's Lawyers (NUPL), Union of Peoples' Lawyers in Mindanao (UPLM), and the Public Interest Law Center (PILC).

The local government, through North Cotabato Governor Emmylou Talino-Mendoza, the PNP, and the AFP propaganda machineries

**TABLE 2** Victims of Extrajudicial Killing and Enforced Disappearance under the Noynoy Aquino Government  
BY REGION  
July 2010 to June 2016

REGION	EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLING	ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE
Ilocos	3	--
Cordillera Administrative Region	9	--
Cagayan Valley	7	2
Central Luzon	13	1
National Capital Region	11	--
Southern Tagalog	22	4
Bicol	67	4
Western Visayas	15	4
Central Visayas	7	--
Eastern Visayas	17	2
Northern Mindanao	36	--
Caraga	30	6
Socskargen	9	2
Western Mindanao	26	1
Southern Mindanao	52	1
ARMM	9	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>29</b>
Women	33	0
Organized	139	11

spouted all stories they could invent to justify the use of guns and to cover up the violent dispersal.

The farmers were accused of carrying guns and being members of the NPA –allegations belied by all the farmer-witnesses who gave their testimonies. When asked during the Senate inquiry and in spite of the video footage which showed the scene, North Cotabato Police Chief Alexander Tagum denied that his men shot at the farmers. Tagum even implied that the farmers shot their fellow farmers. The Senate hall rang with derisive laughter during Tagum’s testimony.

To justify the killing of 21-year old Darwin Sulang, the PNP brought in a certain rebel returnee Charlie Pasco who claimed that Sulang was an NPA member and had a .38 caliber pistol during the protest action. Pasco could not give any proof of his claims. He was reportedly seen in Digos City four days before the Tagum massacre receiving cash reward from the government.

Ebao Sulang, Darwin’s father, related that, “on April 8, 2016, a certain Lito Palma who is a personnel of Governor Mendoza and a certain Antaw, a board member of the First District of Cotabato, came to our house. Palma told me, ‘Gusto nga ariglohon lang ang pagkamatay ni Darwin sa lumad nga pagka-ariglo’” (“We want to amicably settle with you Darwin’s death based on the lumad tradition”).

“Naa na miy abogado dili na lang ko sa negosasyon. Ipalutao na lang nato ang hustisya sa pagkamatay,” (“We already have a lawyer so I don’t want to negotiate. Let us give justice for the death (of my son)”)

Ebao told Talino’s emissaries. But on April 13, Ebao Sulang and the rest of his family were forced to leave their homes after receiving information that soldiers were coming to his house to harass them.

During the standoff and to cover up the crimes they committed against the farmers, the authorities shifted the blame to the protesting farmers and progressive groups. As expected they threatened to arrest the farmers and accused the protesters of carrying firearms. Liberal Party presidential candidate Mar Roxas obliquely justified the killings by saying that there were “groups which instigated the farmers to protest.” This same line was echoed by BS Aquino when he finally spoke of the incident days later.

Adding insult to injury, a day after the massacre, the Secretary of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) Mel Senen Sarmiento, a presidential alter-ego, awarded medals to the police officers who conducted the violent dispersal. Gov. Mendoza reportedly paid off village officials to mobilize people to support the rally in support of the police and local government officials who were responsible for the violent dispersal.

BS Aquino belittled and blamed the peasant movement. He refused to recognize that the poor farmers were able to organize and demand for government subsidy and accountability.

On April 25, at least 94 national and local officials, police and military officers were charged for their participation and involvement in the various human rights violations committed against the

North Cotabato farmers. Charges of murder, frustrated and attempted murder, torture and physical injuries, illegal arrest and detention and other civil and political rights violations were filed by the farmer-complainants, including families of those who were shot during the dispersal, as well as the farmers who were illegally arrested and detained by the police.

Several other political killings of peasants and indigenous peoples in Mindanao were reported during the last six months of the Aquino presidency through the implementation of Oplan Bayanihan, the counter-insurgency program adapted from the US COIN Guide.

On April 24, Datu Arnel Nayer, 35, was found dead along the mountain road from Sitio Kalatingga to Sitio Banban, Brgy. Camam-onan, Gigaquit, Surigao del Norte. The day before, Nayer was among the six Mamanwa who went to their farms in Sitio Kalatingga to dig sweet potatoes. At around 1p.m., they were resting on the mountain side road when they saw a score of soldiers in full combat gear about 20 meters from them. A few minutes later, more soldiers came and from ten meters away, they opened fire at Nayer and his companions.

Datu Arnel’s companions, Lino Mansumay, 25, Anthony Anrique, 55, Esmoter Anrique, 55, Ronel Anrique, 27, and Binbin Patusa, 26, survived because they were able to run away. Mansumay suffered splinter wounds at the back of his left shoulder and arm. All, except Datu Arnel, were able to return home.

In November 2015, Datu Arnel’s Mamanwa community in

Sitio Kalatingga evacuated due to aerial bombings by the 36th IBPA and other augmentation forces from the 4th IDPA.

Earlier in the year, in Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, on January 5, at 5 p.m, Jover Lumisod, 61, was with his grandson Rofil, 15, in their farm at Sitio Kilap-agan, Can-ayan feeding their chicken, when Bino Dela Mance fired at them using an M203 rifle. Dela Mance was with some members of Alamara and Magahat paramilitary groups and



some elements of 8th IB-PA. Jover died instantly. Rofil’s father, Robert, who was inside the hut during the shooting immediately grabbed his son when he heard the gunshots and escaped.

Robert narrated that Dela Mance had previously expressed his intention to kill residents of Sitio Kilap-agan for being NPA supporters or members. Robert added that last December 29, 2015 at about 10:00 a.m., their farm hut was burned to the ground by the Dela Mance paramilitary group which was also responsible for many killings

in Bukidnon. It was reported that 15 sacks of corn grains, 30 kilos abaca hemp, 10 plastic containers, a sprayer and a gallon of herbicide were damaged by the fire.

On January 11, Ricky Penaranda, 44, president of Fishermen Landless Association of Magum in Mati City, Davao Oriental was shot dead about 200 meters from the Mati Police Station.

Penaranda went to the Mati Police Station to assist his friend Robert Quillope who was illegally arrested that day by the Mati Police operatives for some land dispute issues. Some ten minutes after Quillope entered his detention cell, a police told him "*Wala na si Ricky, patay na, gipusil paggawas niya sa Police Station*" ("Ricky is gone. He died. He was shot after coming out from the police station.").

Ricky was aboard his motorcycle and about to start its engine when a man on a motorcycle went near him and shot him. According to a witness, Ricky managed to wrestle with the gunman but failed to get the .45 pistol. He then tried to escape but the gunman fired at him and he was shot at the back. Ricky died immediately. The perpetrator was wearing a black sweatshirt and a cap. There were policemen in uniform during the time of the shooting but they did not arrest or go after the perpetrator.

Prior to the killing, Robert recounted that Ricky received death threats for assisting a peasant family in their 12-hectare land dispute with a certain Rey Manuel Dimayuga and former Mati Police Ferdinand Mabandos.

On January 18, Christopher Matibay, a member of Barug

Katawhan, told his wife that the man on a motorcycle just five steps away from them was a certain "Mike," an intelligence officer who had tailed him in the past. Matibay and his wife were at a waiting shed in Block 4, Brgy. Lambajon, Baganga, Davao Oriental for a ride to claim government assistance through the Pantawid sa Pilipinong Pamilya Project.

Christopher told his wife to buy some rice. His wife hesitated but eventually walked toward the nearest store. After taking around 30 steps, she heard gunshots. She looked back and saw another man walking away from the waiting shed, then sped away in Mike's motorcycle. Matibay died instantly.

Matibay had joined the month-long campaign, Manilakbayan ng Mindanao in Metro Manila and was about to go back home. Matibay left behind four children.

On January 30, Teresita Navacilla, 60, died after three days in a hospital in Tagum City, Compostela Valley. On January 27,



Navacilla was shot in the nape while tending her store in Purok Bardown, Sitio Gumayam, Bgy. Kingking, Pantukan, Compostela Valley. Earlier that day, she visited her neighbor Giovanni Gutierrez, who was illegally jailed because the 46th IBPA accused him of being an NPA member. Navacilla was the chair of Purok Bardown. She was one of the conveners of the Save Pantukan Movement, a network opposed to large-scale mining, particularly that of the NADECOR-St. Augustine mining company. She also opposed the human rights violations committed by the 46th IBPA.

On April 27, at around 5 a.m., some 27 armed men in civilian clothes arrived at Sitio Kaulayanan, Lirongan, Talakag, Bukidnon. They first went to the house of Michael Sib-ot, 27, and told him they were soldiers and ordered him to bring out "the guns". Sib-ot ran out of the house towards the church of Mt. Olive. Bursts of gunfire came from soldiers. As he was about to step into the church premises, he was hit through the chest. Sib-ot died instantly. Afterwards, the men raided and searched the other houses for the alleged guns.

Paramilitary groups in Western Visayas also had their killing spree. In Brgy. Siol, Leon, Iloilo, Sixto Cargas Calceña, was killed around 7:30 a.m. on January 31, 2016 on his farm where he also resided. He was cutting wood to prepare for charcoal-making. Two men approached him and using handguns shot him on the face and at his back. Calceña was brought to the Aleosan District Hospital, Alimodian, Iloilo, around 30 minutes ride away, but was pronounced dead-on-arrival.

Calceña was a respected member of the community, having served as a barangay kagawad of Siol for four (4) years and that of neighboring Brgy. Nagbangi for six (6) years. He recently served as a barangay tanod of Siol. Calceña was active in the peasant movement for many years. Their organization, Leon United Peasants Alliance (LUPA) was tagged as an "NPA front organization" and its members were under threat from the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Buncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), a paramilitary group. Many believed the killing of Calceña was in retaliation for the December 22, 2015 NPA killing of an RPA-ABB member named Jessie Capilastique in Brgy. Lanag, Leon. There were rumors spread in Leon that the RPA-ABB would kill four (4) more persons.

Bicol region had the most number of victims of extra-judicial killings at 66 as of June 30, 2016, with two of the victims killed in the last six months of BS Aquino's presidency.

Rolan Casiano, 32, was shot dead on April 27 at Lower Sta. Cruz, Ragay, Camarines Sur, while at the wake of a relative. Soldiers shot Casiano near a river in the vicinity of the house where the wake was held. According to witnesses, around twenty (20) soldiers were seen around the house. The people at the wake were surprised to hear a gunshot and someone suddenly shouted "*Dapa! Lahat ng lalaki huban ng damit! Walang tatakbo! Pasok sa loob! Walang tatayo at babarilin!*" ("Get down! All men, take off your clothes! Don't run! Get inside! Don't stand up or you will be shot!"). At least fifteen (15) armed

men in civilian clothes came in and pointed their guns at the people. Then, they saw the dead body of Casiano being carried to the municipal hall.

Casiano was an active member of the Camarines Sur People's Organization. Before the incident, he had mobilized members of his community for the May 1 rally. The 49th IBPA and PNP wrongly tagged Casiano as one of the 32 individuals charged in court of Labo, Camarines Norte for an alleged raid by the NPA. In order to justify Casiano's killing, Southern Luzon Command Public Information Officer Col. Angelo Guzman said that Casiano was killed during an encounter with the NPA and the 49th IBPA. Later on, the PNP claimed that they were serving the arrest warrant to Casiano when he resisted and that the NPA fired at them first.

On May 6, 2016, farmer Nelson Erepol, 28, was shot by two unidentified men at the Erepol residence in Bentuco, Gubat, Sorosogon. At 8:30 p.m., Nelson's siblings, Liza and Sara, noticed two men standing outside their house. The men said they had a letter to deliver to Nelson who was outside the house, as well. His mother Rosalina told Nelson and the two men to come in. Just as Nelson was entering through the door of their house, the two men shot him and continued to do so even after he fell on the ground. The other members of the family dropped to the ground. They saw the gunmen leaving after the rounds of gunshots.

After 30 minutes, village officials went to the Erepol residence, where eleven (11) M16 shells were

recovered. Nelson was declared dead-on-arrival at the hospital. The beleaguered family decided to leave their house. The family suspected that the men were soldiers from the 31st IBPA, who had previously strafed and ransacked their house. The military accused them of being NPA supporters, after an encounter between the soldiers and the NPA on February 23.

### Children not spared

There were 31 minors killed by the US-backed BS Aquino government. Three were killed in the last six months of his term.

Lumad Alibando Tingkas, 15, a Grade 3 student at self-help school for the lumad STTICLCI in Talaingod, Davao del Norte, was killed by Joven Salangani, a member of the Alamara paramilitary group.

On January 17, 2016, at around 3 p.m., Tingkas, with his brother, Romy and Idol Maas were walking home to Sitio Bayabas, Barangay Palma Gil, Talaingod when they saw Salangani who asked them "*Asa si Donato Salangani?*" ("Where is Donato Salangani?"). They then replied "*Wala mi kabalo*" ("We don't know."). As Alibando Tingkas walked past Joven Salangani, the latter shot him in the chest killing him instantly. The assailant fired at Romy and Idol, but they were able to run and jump off a small cliff to escape. They reached Sitio Laslasakan to call for help.

Salangani is from Sitio Barobo, where the 68th IBPA had a detachment. The Alamara paramilitary group and the 68th IBPA had a long list of rights violations in Talaingod.

On March 21, 2016 at

**TABLE 3** Victims of Extrajudicial Killing and Enforced Disappearance under the Noynoy Aquino Government  
BY SECTOR  
July 2010 to June 2016

REGION	EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLING	ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE
Church	3	--
Entrepreneur	6	1
Environmentalist	6	--
Fisherfolk	6	--
Government employee	8	--
Indigenous people	96	3
Minor	31	2
Peasant	264	26
Teacher	2	1
Urban poor	13	--
Human rights worker	6	--
Worker	10	0
Youth & students	11	0
Health	1	--
Moro	8	1
Transport	11	1

around 4:15 am after attending the barangay fiesta, Charish Ann Solitario, 15, together with her sister Mae, 13, and five other companions namely Cindy Banabanay, 16, Regine Carido Rasonado, 14, Wilson Montebon, 25, Micheal Montebon

Carampatana, 17, and Mark Hipone Zarraga, 21, were onboard a tricycle and about to leave Prk. Housing, Brgy. Banquerohan, Cadiz City.

As they reached Purok Azucena, persons identified as members of the Philippine Army, chased them

and for no apparent reason, fired their long firearms several times at the tricycle where the Solitario sisters and their companions were riding. When the tricycle stopped, Carampatana fell down because of a

not injured confronted them but the soldiers told them to bring the victims to the hospital. The soldiers casually boarded their own tricycle and left.

Mae rushed her sister and the others to Cadiz City Emergency Clinic. Mark Zarraga and Charish Solitario were declared dead-on-arrival, while the other three wounded were transferred to another hospital.

The soldiers involved in the shooting were later on identified as Sgt. Zosimo Mariquit, Pfc. Pat Lopez, Pfc. Jhonryl Postrado, Pfc. Franklen Delamor, Pfc. Gerald Dator and Pfc. Darrel June De Leon.

On April 27, at around 5 a.m., some 27 armed men in civilian clothes arrived at Sitio Kaulayanan, Lirongan, Talakag, Bukidnon. They first went to the house of Michael Sib-ot, 27, and told him they were soldiers and ordered him to bring out “the guns”. Out of fear, he ran out of the house and towards the church of Mt. Olive. Bursts of gunfire from soldiers were fired at him. As he was about to step into the church premises, he was shot right through the chest. Sib-ot died instantly.

Afterwards, the men in teams raided and searched the other houses for so-called guns.

Edjan Talian, 6, just woke up that morning and went out to fetch water some 200 meters away from the community towards the direction of Mt. Olive Church. He died instantly after being shot by the same armed men.

“Those were not our men. They were probably the NPA,” said a certain Capt. Macababdad of 1st Special Forces Battalion on the

killers of Talian and Sib-ot. But residents of Sitio Kaulayanan said they were certain it was the 1st Special Forces Battalion-Philippine Army. Many residents saw how the armed men in civilian clothes even greeted the men in uniform when they passed by each other that day.

The 1st Special Forces Battalion even tried to bribe the parents of Edjan with PhP100,000 to keep them from filing a case and to keep mum about the incident. Rommel Talian, 34, who earlier was shot and wounded by the same soldiers, was even pressured to admit to the killing of Edjan. Edjan’s parents, however, were determined to file a criminal case in court.

### Frustrated Killings

There were those who survived to tell their tale.

Arnel Neverio, 19, managed to live, even after a bullet grazed his skull. He was shot by soldiers of 49th IBPA on March 19. Neverio, a farm worker, was alone weeding grass in a pineapple farm in Salvacion, San Lorenzo Ruiz, Camarines Norte, when four soldiers with armalites came and told him to approach them.

Instead of going in their direction, Neverio ran away to escape. He heard a series of gunfire. The fourth shot grazed his skull. He felt dizzy, collapsed and rolled over. But he quickly managed to get up and ran. He immediately sought help from relatives and barangay officials who took him to the Camarines Norte Provincial Hospital. He was later transferred to Bicol Medical Center for an urgent operation. Neverio was on his third day of a seven-day

contract to weed the pineapple field, when the incident happened.

On February 4, Umayamnon tribe member Albert Ticulan, 32, of Sitio Saloringan, Canangaan, Cabanglasan, Bukidnon was almost killed by his own cousin, Allan Ginumbay who was recently recruited as a member of Alamara. Albert and his older brother Dionor were on their way to Rogelio Ganancia’s house in Brgy. Endalasa, Malaybalay City to get the chicken the latter promised them. The brothers passed by a cousin’s house, Allan Ginumbay, and decided to stay there for a while. Allan’s sister, Ali, informed the Ticulan brothers that her brother was at the store nearby drinking with other Alamara members. Ali even accompanied the brothers to where Allan was drinking. Allan and his companions were about to leave when they arrived. Upon seeing them, Allan sat down to chat.

Allan told Albert that they decided to be members of the Alamara to avenge the death of their uncle, Jayme Balanban, who was meted punishment by the New People’s Army (NPA) for crimes against the community. Albert said that their uncle was killed because of their uncle’s own wrongdoings. Allan got angry and accused Albert of taking the side of the NPA. He then took out his 9mm gun and pointed it at Albert’s forehead.

When Ali, who was seated beside Allan, saw this, she hit Allan’s arm to divert the direction away from Albert. The gun was fired hitting Allan’s younger brother, 21-year old Yake Ginumbay, also an Alamara member who was seated at

The 1st Special Forces Battalion even tried to bribe the parents of Edjan with PhP100,000 to keep them from filing a case and to keep mum about the incident.

bullet wound in his legs. Montebon was hit in the legs and arms. Zarraga and Charish Ann Solitario were hit in their heads and died instantly. Tricycle driver Jerry Mesa, 31, was wounded in his legs.

As soon as the soldiers approached them, Mae Solitario and her companions who were

the left side of Albert. While Allan and Ali were scrambling for the gun, the others were busy trying to help Yake. During this time, Albert and Dionor thought it best to leave.

The Ticolan brothers went to Rogelio Ganancia's residence and arrived there at 8:30 in the evening. They narrated the event to Rogelio and his neighbors at Purok 5, Endalasa, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon. All got distressed about the incident.

After this incident, threats, harassment and forced recruitment of residents to the paramilitary group Alamara led by Allan Ginumbay and Alamara leader Mankolobi Bucalas resulted in the forced evacuation of four families, with 24 individuals, on February 12 and 13 from Purok 5, Endalasa to the capitol of Malaybalay City.

Residents of Purok 6A Baroboan, Brgy. Carromata, San Miguel Surigao del Sur were constantly terrorized by the 2nd Special Forces Battalion through indiscriminate firing in the past months.

On January 22, Pampias Ventura, 48, a Lumad farmer and member of the indigenous peoples' organization TIPJUNGAN, was cutting falcatta in his farm when he saw at least 50 soldiers in full battle gear with their guns aimed at him. He was told to come towards them but he instead ran as fast as he could while shots were fired at his direction. He ran straight to his community to seek refuge.

On March 11, Benjie dela Pena, 25, and Zaldy Maca, 34, were attending to their separate farms also in Purok 6A Baroboan, 200 meters from each other. Dela Pena was in

a stream when he saw soldiers with their guns aimed at him. He ran to escape but was hit in the back. Zaldy, a village councilor, upon hearing the gunshots, tried to see what was happening. He then saw two soldiers were already in his field, with their guns aimed at him. He also ran towards his community.

It took a while before Zaldy and some of the residents could bring Benjie to a hospital. They were prevented by the soldiers from taking a pumpboat. The soldiers instead forced them to use a vehicle accompanied by them. Dela Pena was closely guarded at the emergency room. Reggie Go, officer of the 402nd Brigade, forced him to admit that he was an NPA member, an allegation denied by dela Pena. Zaldy Maca was also in the hospital assisting dela Pena. Maca was told to go out of the hospital at times when Dela Pena was interrogated and pressured to say to the media that he was shot and found in the forest. Fearing for his life and security with the soldiers in the hospital, dela Pena left the hospital and sought sanctuary.

On May 21, 2016, around 3 p.m., Magdalena Rey Binongkasan, 26, was staying in their farming hut which was 2 kilometres away from their community in Linao-Linaouban, Brgy. Olave, Buenavista, Agusan del Norte. She was with her two-year old son.

While she was boiling water, she saw a man pass by carrying a long firearm and wearing civilian clothing. After a while, she heard gunshots. She panicked and grabbed her son to run to the nearest bushes for cover. She was hit and wounded in her left thigh.

With her son, she ran directly to the house of Inday Binongkasan, her mother-in-law, and asked for help from her community. The residents took care and hid Magdalena, fearing that the armed man might come looking for her. At that moment, residents of the community heard a series of gunshots in the nearby fields, where elements of the 23rd IBPA were patrolling.

After two days, the Chief of Police of Buenavista summoned Magdalena to give her a copy of the blotter report on the shooting. Upon Magdalena's arrival at the police station, she saw officials of the 23rd IBPA who requested to talk to her regarding the blotter report, but she refused to talk to them. After getting the report from the chief of police, Magdalena immediately went home.

There were a total of 624 victims of frustrated killings documented during the BS Aquino regime.

### **Fake surrender**

Even a mentally disabled person was not spared from the soldiers and paramilitary's deception in their attempt to use civilians as "trophies" by faking their surrender as "rebel returnees."

Ronaldo Delunan, 26, originally from Purok Tumbaga, Barangay Canangaan, Cabanglasan, Bukidnon, went to his aunt's place in Lanao del Sur to find work. He was accosted on January 16 by Marido Binalo and Brando Dumogan, village councilors of Barangay Indalasa, Malaybalay City. He was forced to ride in a motorcycle and was transported from Wao, Lanao del Sur to Barangay Freedom,

Cabanglasan, Bukidnon. He was brought to Dante Dela Mance, leader of Alamara paramilitary group. Delunan was repeatedly interrogated by the Alamara members, who threatened to kill him unless he admitted his membership in the NPA. He escaped on his third day of custody. He sought refuge among some elements of 8th IBPA, where he was eventually traced.

Ronaldo's parents, Eduardo and Adelen, learned about what happened to their son five days later. Worried because of his disability and for his safety, they rushed to Sitio Binoutan, Managok, Malaybalay City, Bukidnon and found him at a relative's house accompanied by Alamara leader Imboy Gayaw and two other members and some elements of the 8th IBPA. Eduardo wanted to bring Ronaldo home but the soldiers insisted the latter should be brought to the 8th IBPA headquarters instead. Ronaldo agreed but asked his father to go with him so Eduardo conceded to his son's request.

At the battalion headquarters, Ronaldo underwent a series of tactical interrogations. The following morning, the soldiers informed Eduardo to go home and bring back a firearm for his son's release to "legalize" Rolando's surrender through the so called balik-baril (return gun) program of the government. Eduardo went home, not knowing where to find a firearm in exchange for Rolando's release. A week passed, but Eduardo could not produce a gun. He then sought help from Karapatan-Bukidnon chapter.

On January 27, 2016, soldiers brought Rolando to Freedom,

Cabanglasan, Bukidnon. Upon hearing of Karapatan’s effort to facilitate the filing of a writ of habeas corpus for Rolando, the military sent messages through Rolando’s relatives that they would release him from their custody.

Rolando was finally released to his parents by the 8th IBPA on February 2, 2016. Rolando’s parents planned to file charges against the 8th IBPA.

**In the six years of his presidency, BS Aquino had continued the same oppressive and anti-people policies of his predecessors and did nothing to improve the dire conditions of the masses whom he called his “boss” in his public relations inspired pronouncements.**

**His “icon of democracy” public relations packaging which capitalized on his parents’ legacy ran dry due to the violations of human rights and people’s rights perpetrated by the BS Aquino administration under the Oplan Bayanihan. The so-called yellow magic dissipated. What was left were the tracks in his “daang matuwid” – the bloodied tracks of the Filipinos killed, injured, jailed, died of criminal negligence, poverty, and all other sufferings.**

**BS Aquino’s “daang matuwid” that embraced Oplan Bayanihan merely perpetuated the same social structures that cause oppression and exploitation, and specifically the brutal violation of people’s rights.**

**The US-Aquino regime proved incapable of addressing the basic problems of the Philippine society as it adhered to neo-liberal globalization, political repression, puppetry and deception.**

Violation of Civil and Political Rights  
under the Noynoy Aquino Government  
July 2010 to June 2016

**TABLE 4**

<b>VIOLATIONS</b>	<b>No. of Victims</b>
Extrajudicial killing	333
Enforced disappearance	29
Torture	248
Rape	12
Frustrated extrajudicial killing	625
Illegal arrest without detention	1,177
Illegal arrest and detention	640
Illegal search and seizure	296
Physical assault and injury	581
Forced eviction and demolition	11,768
Violation of domicile	1,172
Divestment of property	849
Destruction of property	4,253
Forced evacuation	108,738
Threat/harassment/intimidation	209,768
Endangerment of, Threat against Civilians due to Indiscriminate Firing, Bombing, Artillery Fire, Landmines, etc	92,786
Forced/fake surrender	330
Forced labor/involuntary servitude	126
Use of civilians in police and/or military operations as guides and/or shield	1,840
Use of schools, medical, religious and other public places for military purpose	82,123
Restriction or violent dispersal of mass actions, public assemblies and gatherings	24,699

Violation of Civil and Political Rights  
under the Noynoy Aquino Government  
FIRST SIX MONTHS: July 2010 to December 2010

**TABLE 5.1**

<b>VIOLATIONS</b>	<b>No. of Victims</b>
Extrajudicial killing	41
Enforced disappearance	4
Torture	46
Rape	2
Frustrated extrajudicial killing	46
Illegal arrest without detention	95
Illegal arrest and detention	75
Illegal search and seizure	28
Physical assault and injury	27
Forced eviction and demolition	120
Violation of domicile	425
Divestment of property	95
Destruction of property	327
Forced evacuation	1,769
Threat/harassment/intimidation	2,155
Endangerment of, Threat against Civilians due to Indiscriminate Firing, Bombing, Artillery Fire, Landmines, etc	639
Forced/fake surrender	19
Forced labor/involuntary servitude	9
Use of civilians in police and/or military operations as guides and/or shield	296
Use of schools, medical, religious and other public places for military purpose	2,693
Restriction or violent dispersal of mass actions, public assemblies and gatherings	315

Violation of Civil and Political Rights  
under the Rodrigo Duterte Government  
FIRST SIX MONTHS: July 2016 to December 2016

**TABLE 5.2**

<b>VIOLATIONS</b>	<b>No. of Victims</b>
Extrajudicial killing	19
Enforced disappearance	2
Torture	6
Rape	--
Frustrated extrajudicial killing	28
Illegal arrest without detention	414
Illegal arrest and detention	30
Illegal search and seizure	33
Physical assault and injury	69
Forced eviction and demolition	60
Violation of domicile	86
Divestment of property	41
Forced evacuation	13,734
Threat/harassment/intimidation	18,675
Endangerment of, Threat against Civilians due to Indiscriminate Firing, Bombing, Artillery Fire, Landmines, etc	17,107
Forced/fake surrender	5
Forced labor/involuntary servitude	9
Use of civilians in police and/or military operations as guides and/or shield	5
Use of schools, medical, religious and other public places for military purpose	14,097
Restriction or violent dispersal of mass actions, public assemblies and gatherings	1,500





**R**odrigo Roa Duterte won in the May 2016 national elections on the rhetoric and avowed platform of “change,” sealed by the public’s discontent over and rejection of BS Aquino’s presidency. In the six years of the US-Aquino regime, the Filipino people were plunged into new depths of unmitigated poverty, corruption, subservience to foreign dictates, and continuing suppression of people’s resistance.

Upon Duterte’s inauguration as president, there were perceived efforts to veer away from the ways of the previous Aquino administration, a sign of the openness for discourse that was not present in the previous administration.

In his first 100 days, Duterte moved to negotiate peace with the NDFP and released nineteen (19) political prisoners, most of whom were NDFP consultants arrested by the Aquino administration. These acts, despite objections from the military, were a welcome development after years of impasse due to the US-Aquino regime’s implementation of a bloody counter-insurgency program, Oplan Bayanihan, and the GRP’s (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) deliberate efforts to sabotage the peace process.



At his first State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 25, 2016, Duterte declared a unilateral ceasefire (CF) which was meant to force the NDFP to reciprocate with its own unilateral CF. Duterte's CF would last for less than a week after violation by his own military and paramilitary units in Kapalong, Davao del Norte which was being blamed on the NPA. It was revived in the last week of August after the NDFP declared its own unilateral CF in support of the resumption of peace talks.

The unilateral CF became instrumental in the return to their communities of displaced Manobo communities in Lianga, Surigao del Sur, after more than a year in an evacuation center. It was also within Duterte's 100 days that

the Department of Justice (DOJ) withdrew trumped-up charges filed against advocates and activists who supported the Lumad evacuees in Davao City. He called the attention of the paramilitary groups on atrocities they committed.

Meanwhile, the Duterte government's effort to dialogue with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) is seen as a positive step towards a genuine peace process that will address the roots of the Moro people's struggle for their right to self-determination.

His critique of the US military presence in the country and his calling attention to US hypocrisy regarding human rights are rare statements from a head of State in a

country considered by the US government as its main ally, headed by a puppet president, in Asia.

Pres. Rodrigo Duterte's statement in the September 2016 ASEAN Leaders' Summit calling attention to the past and present atrocities of the US government and military in the Philippines, especially in Mindanao, and other countries was welcomed by the progressive and nationalist groups. He also urged the US soldiers in Mindanao to leave, amid several documented reports of human rights violations by US troops.

According to the Philippine Department of National Defense, in a recent congressional budget deliberations, there are around 107 US military personnel in Mindanao conducting various surveillance and drone operations. They include 50 US Marines, 17 US army, 20 US Special Forces, plus US Navy and civilian personnel.

The US government is indeed a shameless hypocrite. While displaying concern for human rights in the Philippines in its criticism of Duterte, it has an undeniable record of perpetrating and instigating the worst forms of human and people's rights violations in the country and the world over. It is guilty of its war on terror and interventionist proxy wars and coups against peoples in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, and against its own citizens.

Pres. Duterte was called on to take concrete steps to end US intervention and presence in the Philippines by abrogating existing Philippine government agreements with the US including the US-RP Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT),

US-RP Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA), US-PH Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA) and all agreements legitimizing US presence and intervention in the Philippines.

Also unprecedented are his offer of four cabinet positions to the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and his appointment of the NDFP-nominated progressive and nationalist leaders from the people's movement as Secretaries of the Department of Agrarian Reform and Department of Social Welfare and Development, Under-Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment and cabinet-level Head of the National Anti-Poverty Commission.

Duterte also made positive pronouncements to end contractualization of workers and demolition of urban poor homes, and to put a stop to graft and corruption in government. Progressives in the Duterte administration also made possible some immediate reforms beneficial to the people, including efforts to distribute land to farmers in Hacienda Luisita and other big landholdings of landlords and agricultural corporations and the moratorium on the conversion of agricultural land, repatriation of some displaced OFWs in the Middle East, the audit and suspension of at least 20 companies engaged in destructive mining operations, among others.

While such developments have been possible, persisting challenges remain. Even while the GRP declared a unilateral ceasefire as a confidence-building measure after the first round of talks in August 22-26, 2016, the counter-insurgency

program Oplan Bayanihan remains operative and continues to target civilian communities, schools, progressive organizations, and others perceived as ‘enemies of the state.’ Deception tactics in the form of civic-military operations hidden under palatable names such as ‘peace and development programs’ have persistently been used to monitor and harass communities and organizations.

The more than 400 political prisoners, among them the sick, the elderly, women and the long-detained, have yet to be released through general amnesty as Duterte promised or through other expeditious modes of release.

Drug-related killings hound the Duterte administration. Policemen, in pursuit of drug users, pushers, and syndicates, who kill and smugly give the excuse that the victim resisted arrest and/or fired at them (“nanlaban”) remain unprosecuted. Vigilantes have become pursuers, judge and jury who are encouraged to take the law into their own hands. There is utter disregard of due process and impunity under an unapologetic, iron-fisted state-created atmosphere. The use of the war against drugs to illegally arrest and detain social activists and harass civilians has started.

The burial of dictator Ferdinand Marcos at the Libingan ng mga Bayani (official hero’s burial grounds) has generated a maelstrom of protests from martial law victims and their families to the youth from various universities nationwide. Duterte’s political accommodation of the dictator Marcos’s family through alliance with them since

the national elections, his threat of the suspension of the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus, and mentions of the revival of the martial law enforcer Philippine Constabulary have contributed to the pervading threat of political repression suffered by the people under previous regimes even after the ouster of the tyrant Marcos.

The Duterte government has not taken steps to hold BS Aquino and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo accountable for their violations of civil, political, economic and social rights and the rights of the people. While Bayan and Bayan Muna partylist have filed charges of malversation, usurpation of powers and graft against BS Aquino and his budget secretary Florencio Abad over the controversial Disbursement Acceleration Program (DAP), Duterte has announced that he will not pursue charges against Aquino. Macapagal-Arroyo was released from hospital arrest due to the Supreme Court dismissal of plunder charges against her. Military generals known for human rights violations such as Ricardo Visaya and subsequently Eduardo Ano were appointed as AFP Chiefs of Staff, to the dismay of victims of HRVs and their kin.

Policy recommendations to put a two-year moratorium on land conversion, to legislate the PhP2,000 increase in the pension of retired members of the Social Security Systems, and to enforce labor policies to put an end to contractualization are being blocked by members of the administration’s economic team who adhere to neo-liberal economic framework.

**Oplan Bayanihan continues despite GRP’s unilateral ceasefire**

Despite the truce declared by the GRP with the CPP-NPA-NDFP, the state’s continuing implementation

of the counter-insurgency program Oplan Bayanihan allows the AFP and PNP to continue with political repression, militarization in rural and urban areas, various human rights and people’s rights violations, and sabotage the peace talks with

**TABLE 6**

July 2016 to Dec 2016

Victims of Extrajudicial Killing and Enforced Disappearance under the Rodrigo Duterte Government BY REGION

REGION	EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLING	ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE
Ilocos	--	--
Cordillera Administrative Region	--	--
Cagayan Valley	1	--
Central Luzon	5	--
National Capital Region	--	--
Southern Tagalog	--	--
Bicol	--	--
Western Visayas	--	--
Central Visayas	--	--
Eastern Visayas	--	--
Northern Mindanao	5	--
Caraga	2	--
Socsksargen	2	2
Western Mindanao	--	--
Southern Mindanao	4	--
ARMM	--	--
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>
Women	5	0
Organized	15	2

their reign of terror in the countryside and the targeting of leaders and members of progressive organizations and other civilians. Military actions contradict the Commander-in-Chief's pronouncements of seeking peace with the CPP-NPA-NDFP and the Moro liberation forces.

The AFP carried out militarization without let-up in villages perceived as CPP-NPA-NDFP strongholds through surveillance, threats, red-tagging and harassment of residents. Combat and intelligence operations are hidden behind civic-military operations, adopting the taglines of Aquino's "peace and development programs," "Community Organizing for Peace and Development," and "Bayanihan activities." The suspension of military operations outlined by the AFP is a sham as it actually means "clearing" of NPA-influenced communities as well as

the "neutralization of key leaders of local organizations." The directive to "neutralize" activists actually means extra-judicial killings, particularly targeting organized peasants and indigenous peoples.

Hermi Alegre and Danny Diarog, both 32, and Secretary General and Vice-Chairperson respectively of the Kahugpungan sa mga Lumad sa Sitio Kahusayan (Organization of Lumad in Sitio Kahusayan) were surrounded then shot by three riding-in-tandem men from the 84th IBPA on July 15, 2016 in Purok 1, Brgy. Manuel Dianga, Tugbok District, Davao City. The two came from a meeting with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) regarding ancestral domain. They were on their way home when they were ambushed. Alegre was declared dead on arrival after receiving multiple gunshot wounds in his lower back. Diarog, shot in his right leg and lower back, survived.

On August 14, Jessybel Sanchez, 42, Secretary General of Lumadnong Panaghiusa - Salugpongan TaTanu Igkanugon (LuPa-STTI), an organization of Lumad communities in Talaingod, Davao del Norte, was shot by two men on board a motorcycle. The assailants were believed to be elements of the 68th IBPA in Sitio Nanaga, Brgy. Sto. Nino. Sanchez was on her way home from a meeting about the community's petition and legal battle against the logging firm Alcantara & Sons (Alsons). Prior to the incident, she received calls and text messages from individuals who introduced themselves as members of the 68th IBPA. She was repeatedly told to appear in the army battalion's camp to "clear her name."

From July to December 2016, there have been nineteen (19) victims of political killings, nine (9) of them committed during the indefinite and ongoing ceasefire period declared by the GPH starting August 22 to December 31, 2016. Two of those killed were leaders of peasant and youth organizations.

On October 10, peasant leader Jimmy Saypan, 48, was killed. Saypan, Secretary General of the Compostela Farmers Association (CFA), was gunned down in Brgy. New Visayas, Montevista town in Compostela Valley province. He was on his way home from a solidarity program with delegates to the Manila-bound caravan of national minorities. He sustained three gunshot wounds and underwent an operation at the Davao Regional Hospital. Unfortunately, Saypan died the following day.

Members of the CFA, an affiliate of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng

Pilipinas (KMP), and other community residents believe that the killing of Saypan was planned by both the 66th IBPA and the Agusan Petroleum and Minerals Corporation (AGPET). The presence of the 66th IBPA in communities in Compostela, Compostela province is largely aimed at securing the mining operations of AGPET. This arrangement has resulted in a series of human rights violations including the killing of CFA leader Danny Qualvar in 2008 and the strafing of a cluster of houses in Brgy. Ngan, including the house of CFA chairperson Sabello Tindasan in 2015.

Weeks before the extra-judicial killing of Saypan, a series of lobbying actions were held calling for the immediate pull-out of the 66th IBPA from Compostela Valley. A dialogue, attended by Saypan, was held between the 66th IBPA and members of the CFA a week before the incident. The farmers stated that military presence in their villages has resulted in a string of human rights violations and have caused insecurity in the community. The CFA also demanded that the military comply with its own unilateral ceasefire declaration and immediately leave the area. The 66th IBPA rejected the farmers' demands.

Saypan was a known anti-mining advocate who exposed and rallied support for the end of mining explorations by AGPET. AGPET is a subsidiary of San Miguel Corporation. In 2012, the mining firm was granted exploration permits in villages in Compostela covering an area of 9,999 hectares, and another area in the boundary of Compostela and New Bataan towns



Peasant leader Jimmy Saypan (left).

**TABLE 7** Victims of Extrajudicial Killing and Enforced Disappearance under the Rodrigo Duterte Government  
BY SECTOR  
July 2016 to Dec 2016

REGION	EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLING	ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE
Church	--	--
Entrepreneur	--	--
Environmentalist	--	--
Fisherfolk	--	--
Government employee	--	1
Indigenous people	9	2
Minor	--	--
Peasant	19	2
Teacher	--	--
Urban poor	--	--
Human rights worker	--	--
Worker	--	--
Youth & students	--	--
Health	--	--
Moro	--	--
Transport	--	--

spanning 2,400 hectares. AGPET's permit expired in 2013, yet it continues its mining explorations with support from the military.

Three days after the killing of Saypan, on October 13, 2016, Joselito Pasaporte, 31, organizer of Panalipdan-Youth in Mabini, Compostela Valley and of agrarian reform beneficiaries in Brgy.

Tagnanan was also gunned down by two motorcycle-riding men believed to be agents of the 46th IBPA. Witnesses attest that his assailants went inside the Mabini Police Station, after the shooting.

Pasaporte organized among the youth to mobilize them in defending their ancestral land and to get them away from illegal drug

use. He registered in the police blotter in August a string of harassment perpetrated by the 46th IBPA, with soldiers loitering in the vicinity of his house. On August 15 Pasaporte was requested by a mother of a drug pusher and military agent known as "Jekoy" to convince her son to surrender to the police. When Pasaporte arrived at Jekoy's house, soldiers of the 46th IBPA surrounded and took pictures of him. From then on, Pasaporte experienced constant military surveillance.

At 10 a.m. on August 19, 2016, residents of Brgy. Owayan, Tangub City, Misamis Occidental heard gunshots coming from the farm of Elmer del Rosario, a 26-year old peasant. Worried for his safety and not knowing his whereabouts, village officials and residents went out on a search the next morning. They encountered a group of military personnel with badges of the 55th IBPA. When asked if they saw del Rosario, the soldiers denied any knowledge of the matter. Del Rosario's body was eventually found fifty meters away from the military's makeshift camp near the community. His body was buried in a shallow grave. He had a gunshot wound in his head; his face and body heavily bruised. His farming tools were recovered in the grave.

#### Paramilitary groups as perpetrators

On July 29, 2016, Jiffy Tagnipis, a teacher of the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines - Northern Mindanao Region (RMP-NMR) Literacy and Numeracy School, along with 10 students and 10 residents from Sitio Sel-angon, went

on a five-hour walk to sell their abaca product in Sitio Spring, Brgy. Kawayan, San Fernando, Bukidnon. They then proceeded to Sitio Tibugawan and slept there for the night to attend a wedding the next day.

In the morning of July 30, Brgy. Kawayan Mandatory Representative for Indigenous People Datu Arnold Manhura met Alde "Butsoy" Salusad, leader of a paramilitary group, New Indigenous People's Army for Reform (NIPAR), along the road in Sitio Spring. Along with 11 armed men from NIPAR, Salusad, dressed in military camouflage uniform and fully armed, proceeded to Sitio Tibugawan. Two residents were with them, forced to act as guides. Manhura said he pleaded with Salusad not to proceed to Sitio Tibugawan as the appearance of fully armed men might disturb the wedding festivities. Salusad disregarded Manhura's request.

At around 9 a.m. immediately after the wedding, Tagnipis heard two gunshots which alarmed the whole community. A few seconds later, there was a spray of bullets. Armed men, led by Salusad, were seen on top of the hill overlooking the community. They fired at the whole community but concentrated at the house where around 80 individuals were gathered for the wedding. Makenet Gayoran, 20, was shot in the chest and died instantly. She was six-months pregnant and was carrying her nine month old baby. The shooting lasted for 10 minutes.

After the shooting stopped, Tagnipis gathered the wounded residents and assisted in bringing them

to the Bukidnon Provincial Hospital in Malaybalay City. The shooting wounded five children, all students of the RMP-NMR Literacy and Numeracy School. Myrene Dumala, 15, was hit in the sole of her right foot; Mary Anne Tagabilog, 15, in her left arm; Aroto Balagbag, 8, in his right calf; Mike Balagbag, 7, also in his calf; Che-che Bangonan, 16, got wounded. Two farmers, Kambo Bangonan, 28, and Poras Sedom, 28, were also wounded.

months before the incident. He threatened to punish the community if Datu Jeffry “Jimboy” Mandagit does not surrender. Datu Jimboy is the chairperson of Kaogalingong Sistema Igpapasindog tu Lumadnong Ogpaan (KASILO), an indigenous people’s organization. He is the tribal chief of Sitio Tibugawan, Brgy. Kawayan, San Fernando, Bukidnon. Salusad alleged that Datu Mandagit is a member of the NPA. The latter was among the leaders who accompanied the Tigwahanon families that evacuated to the UCCP-Haran in Davao City a year ago due to intensive military operations in their communities.

Salusad and NIPAR, backed by the 8th IBPA, were responsible for the killing of Dao Brgy. Captain Jimmy Liguyon in March 2012. On March 20, NIPAR openly admitted to having killed Liguyon, in a statement read over the dxDB, a local radio station. Despite an April 2012 warrant of arrest

issued against Butchoy and his father Benjamin, they remain scot free, terrorizing communities in Bukidnon. The Salusads and the 8th IBPA were also responsible for the killings of Abundio Mantugohon (January 11, 2012), Datu Erning Mantugohon (October 10, 2012), Mabini “Toto” Manobia and Zaldy Ambayot (October 17, 2013). Benjamin Salusad is a regular member of the 8th and 68th IBPA, and thus enjoys the military’s protection.

Totong and Rita Gascon, a farmer couple, were killed on September 13 by four members of the Bagani paramilitary group which indiscriminately fired at the couple’s hut in Sitio Kiatao, Brgy. Lanao, Arakan, North Cotabato. The paramilitary men also ransacked the house and took PhP11,000 in cash, which the couple earned from selling their corn crop. Prior to the incident, elements of the 39th IBPA and the Bagani paramilitary group conducted military operations in the area. On August 24, members of the Bagani stopped by the couple’s house. Totong told them to stay away.

The Bagani paramilitary group is also responsible for the killing of Italian missionary Fr. Fausto Tentorio in October 2011. Despite witnesses and evidence, the perpetrators among the Bagani group and the military have not been charged in court.

The continuing collusion of powerful business group David M. Consunji, Inc. (DMCI) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) resulted in two more victims of enforced disappearance in Sultan Kudarat.

On November 14, at around 7 p.m. in Sitio Tanghal, Brgy. Margues, Esperanza, Sultan Kudarat, Manobo farmers David Mogul, 24, and Maki Bail, 36, were forced by two known assets of DMCI, Onteng Saliling and Bibang Galing, to board the motorcycle that Onteng was driving. The Manobo farmers, both residents of Sitio Tinukeg, went to Sitio Tanghal at 5pm that day to buy food in preparation for farming the next day. Residents in Sitio Tanghal said they

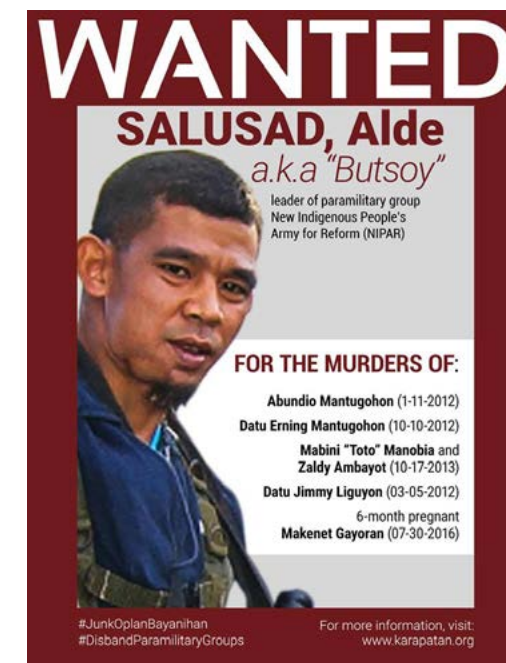
heard the sound of a motorcycle on the bridge going to Sitio Tinukeg, where it stayed for about 20 minutes before finally leaving.

Around 7 a.m. the next day, families of Mogul and Bail started looking for them. They searched near the bridge, since residents reported the motorcycle that they heard the night before, and they



The shooting forced all 48 families from Sitio Tibugawan to evacuate. Residents from nearby communities, including 110 families from Sitio Alimpolos, Brgy. Kawayan, 70 families from Brgy. Mabuhay and 200 families from Brgy. Salumayad, all in San Fernando, also evacuated. To avoid Salusad and his men, the families fled and evacuated to a covered court in Brgy. Kawayan.

The community has been receiving threats from Salusad



found a pair of slippers, a .38 caliber gun, junk food, and Bail’s bag with PhP500 in it. A resident also testified that he saw the two Manobo farmers with Saliling and Galing. To this date, Mogul and Bail have yet to be found.

The two farmers are members of the Kesasabanay Dulangan Manobo (KEDUMA), an

organization opposed to the logging and mining projects of David M. Consunji, Inc. (DMCI), which drove peasants and Manobo tribes away from their farms and ancestral land in Sultan Kudarat. On April 30, 2015, KEDUMA public information officer John Calaba, 28, was sitting in front of his house at Brgy. Salangsang, Lebak, Sultan Kudarat when members of the Consunji company guards invited him for a meal. Calaba was never seen again.

DMCI company guards and assets are part of and trained by the AFP as Special Civilian Armed Auxilliary (SCAA). DMCI has employed the AFP's SCAA as early as 2008 to "secure" its business interests in the different parts of the country such as in Mobo, Masbate, in Sta. Cruz, Zambales, and in Sultan Kudarat. The SCAA, a paramilitary group similar to the CAFGU (Citizen Auxiliary Force Geographical Unit) was created specifically to protect

the interests of mining corporations and other similar destructive businesses. BS Aquino openly endorsed the use of SCAA in 2011.

In October, Duterte called on the AFP to "control" the paramilitary groups involved in ceasefire violations. But the president still has to order the disbandment of paramilitary units as his response to the persistent demands to rescind Executive Orders 246 and 546, which are presidential decrees by former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and BS Aquino's order for the creation of investment defense forces. All of them legitimize the creation and operations of paramilitary groups in the country, especially in Mindanao.

#### Bloodied lands

Despite Duterte's avowed support of land reform and appointment of an NDFP nominee as Department of Agrarian Reform

Secretary, killing of peasants struggling for genuine agrarian reform continues. Big landlords and hacenderos collude with government officials and state security forces in suppressing the peasant movement and preventing the breaking up of land monopoly.

Ariel Diaz, 52, chairperson of Intermunisipal na Alyansang Magsasaka Laban sa Malawakang Dayuhang Pangangamkam ng Lupa sa Hilagang Isabela (Intermunicipal Alliance of Farmers against Foreign Landgrabs in Northern Isabela) and DAGAMI, was shot by three men in Brgy. Villa Pereda, Delfin Albano, Isabela on September 7, 2016. Diaz sustained three gunshot wounds – two in his neck and one in his stomach.

Diaz led farmers in Isabela in defending their right to land. There have been several attempts to displace them by the landlord Pereda clan who contracts farmers to grow cassava. The Peredas also lease land to corporations such as Beidahuang, a Chinese company that profits from BT corn plantations, and Green Future Innovations – Ecofuel Land Development Inc., a local company which engages in bioethanol production and sugarcane plantation. He was a victim of harassment and threats prior to his killing by Pereda's armed goons supported by the Philippine National Police.

On December 9, around 2,000 farm workers led by the Madaum Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association Inc. (MARBAI) entered the 145-hectare land fenced by the Lorenzo family-owned Lapanday Foods Corporation (LPC) in

Madaum Village, Tagum City, Davao del Norte. Six years ago, part of the land was ordered for distribution to the farmers but the agribusiness company maintained its control over the land. The farm workers



Ariel Diaz

entered the area for the first time in six years and encamped inside the plantation to assert their claim over said area.

On December 12, at around 7:30am, at least 30 Lapanday private security guards, wearing masks and black sweatshirts, started firing at the farmers with shotguns. The firing lasted for 30 minutes and resulted in the wounding of seven farmers namely Jose Valucos, Rico Saladala, Jojo Gomez, Belardo Francisco, Emanuel Buladaco, Taldan Niparanun and Joseph Bertulfo, all members of MARBAI.



They were brought to the Davao Regional Hospital in Tagum City.

DAR Secretary Rafael Mariano issued a cease and desist/status quo order on December 14 prohibiting LFC, its officers, employees and persons acting for and in its behalf from forcibly evicting MARBAI farmers from the said landholding and “from disturbing their peaceful possession and occupation of the subject property.” Even with such order, MARBAI farm workers were again attacked by more than fifty (50) private armed guards of LFC at around 3 a.m. on December 29. A member of MARBAI recounted that they were tied and forced out of their makeshift camps. As of this writing, the guards are still occupying the camps set up by the farm workers.

In July and September, two incidents of massacres were recorded in Mindanao and Central Luzon.

Three Higaonon farmers were killed at 6 am on July 12, while three others survived after they were fired at by some 13 security guards of the Tagbagani Security Agency in Sitio Inalsahan, Brgy. Lupiagan, Sumilao, Bukidnon. Remar Mayantao, 34, Roger Suminao, 33, and Senon Nacaytuna, 50, were in their makeshift tents, together with survivors Lilian Mayantao, 15, Albert Mayantao, 28, and Ely Dalito, 44. Mayantao was shot with his hands raised in surrender. His throat was later slit by the guards. Nacaytuna attempted to run but tripped; a guard shot him in the chest with a shotgun. Suminao was hit in his forehead and left cheek. The

wounded were brought to the provincial hospital in Malaybalay City.

The land claimed by the Higaonons overlaps with those being developed and converted into a ranch by RAMCAR Inc. RAMCAR hired guards from the Tagbagani Security Agency to fence the area despite word from the NCIP and other concerned agencies which declared part of the land as part of Higaonon’s ancestral domain.

Between 2:00-3:00 in the afternoon of September 3, armed men affiliated with Palayan City Mayor Adrienne Mae Cuevas, together with a certain Col. Rigor of the Nueva Ecija Criminal Investigation and

Detection Group (CIDG), open fired at farmers in Sitio Minalkot, Brgy. San Isidro, Laur, Nueva Ecija. Farmers Emerenciana Mercado Dela Rosa, 53, Violeta Mercado De Leon, 55, Eligio Barbado, 55, and Gaudencio Bagalay, 58, were killed during the shooting spree. The farmers participated in the land cultivation activity (bungkalan or collective farming) of the Alyansa ng mga Magbubukid na Nagkakaisang 3100 (ALMANA 3100).

At 10am, 60 members of ALMANA 3100 entered Lot 28 of Sitio Minalkot, which covers part of the 3,100 hectares for distribution under the government’s land reform program. The farmers were there to start building huts, while others were preparing the land for planting.

At around 2pm, several armed men divided themselves into two groups positioned in opposite directions. They then opened fire at the farmers for about 30 minutes. Eligio Barbado was fixing the roof of his hut when he was shot. He attempted to run but was hit. He was the first casualty of the shooting. The rest of the farmers scrambled to hide inside the huts and in the grassy area behind. Most huddled together in a bunkhouse.

After the shooting, Angelita Milan, 55, and a 17 year-old boy who was with his 5 year-old sibling, were found wounded. Milan was immediately brought to the Dr. Paulino J. Garcia Hospital in Cabanatuan City while the 17 year-old had his wounds treated. Gaudencio Bagalay, Emerenciana Mercado dela Rosa, and Violeta Mercado de Leon, were later found lifeless in an old hut,

huddled together under a wooden bed.

By 3:00 pm, three officers of the Philippine National Police (PNP)-Palayan arrived at the scene along with two soldiers from the 71st IBPA. However, they refused to investigate, citing that it was under the jurisdiction of PNP Laur, not theirs. Bagalay sustained 21 gunshot wounds, while de Leon and dela Rosa had multiple gunshot wounds. Dela Rosa’s body was severely mangled, with her arm almost severed from her torso. Their remains were immediately brought to a funeral parlor. Given the state of their corpses, dela Rosa and Bagalay were buried just three days later.

Military officials and politicians in Nueva Ecija claimed the land as private property despite the Certificates of Land Ownership Award (CLOA) granted to the farmers under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). This explains the harassment, threats, and extreme violence committed against the farmer beneficiaries.

### **Unrelenting Military Operations, Continuing Ceasefire Violations**

Immediately after Duterte’s inauguration, on July 1, the first violation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) occurred with the killing, torture and mutilation of NPA fighter Noel Gulmatico, 57, an hors d’combat.

In the morning of July 1, 2016, an armed encounter between the NPA and some 20 elements of the 39th IBPA led by Capt. Danny Boy Tapang occurred near Sitio Buaybuay, Basak, Poblacion, Magpet, North Cotabato. By noontime, the





soldiers requested individuals from the barangay to assist in clearing operations. Peter Paul Arnaiz, one of the residents enlisted, saw the soldiers bringing two bodies to a funeral home in Magpet. At 3 p.m., Floranie Gulmatico, daughter of Noel, positively identified her father.

The post-mortem examination had the following observations from medical examiner Dr. Charles Marquez, who was requested by Gulmatico's family: "Enucleated eyes were done purposely and were in no way were enucleated by gunshot wounds or high-speed projectile objects like bullets. The presence of the punctured wound on the right fronto-parietal area of the head seemed to have no hole created on the skull. This may be a punctured wound by the sharp object used to enucleate the deceased.

"It is the opinion of the undersigned that the deceased had either been tortured or mutilated after he was captured. And his cause of death may be due to Massive Blood Loss secondary the transected blood vessels on the submandibular area and massive internal bleeding in the chest secondary to gunshot wound. The deceased had signs of torture and/or mutilation."

On July 7 and 8, 2016 in Brgy. Pichon in Caraga, Davao Oriental, an estimated 11,500 individuals were forcibly displaced due to aerial bombings launched by the 67th IBPA. The Mandaya Ancestral Defense Unit (MANADU), a paramilitary group working closely with the military led by Tribal Chief Cooper Banugan, justified the attacks, claiming that the residents were harboring rebels.

At 10 a.m. on July 7, residents observed two helicopters hovering over their community. Then suddenly bombs were dropped. In a resident's estimate, 12 to 18 bombs were dropped in the community. The soldiers said they were pursuing NPA rebels. At 2pm, families from Sitio Lanipga, Sitio Hanginan and Sitio Bente Nuebe evacuated and sought refuge at the village hall. In a list by the village local government unit (LGU), about 52 households evacuated from Sitio Lanipga, 44 households from Sitio Hanginan and 30 from Sitio Bente Nuebe.

The residents said that during the incident, their purok chairman in Sitio Hanginan was held captive by the military. He was subsequently released after interrogation.

The LGU also said that almost 17 sitios were evacuated by residents who expected that their community would be targeted next. Some of the evacuees stayed with their relatives in the nearby area within the village, while some went to the town center.

On July 8, 2016 at around 9:00 in the morning, another round of aerial bombings forced the residents of other villages to evacuate.

On July 26, a day after Duterte declared a unilateral ceasefire with the CPP-NPA-NDFP during his SONA, abaca worker Gerald Domingo, 25, was tortured by soldiers of the 86th IBPA and elements of the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU) conducting operations in Brgy. Tucao, San Miguel town, Catanduanes. The soldiers passed by Teves's working area and asked him if he had seen members of the NPA. When Teves replied that he did not see any, the

soldiers took him to a nearby hut and tortured him.

Gerald's hands were tied behind his back with a nylon rope, which was also tied around his neck. His feet were wired to the trunk of a narra tree while his face was covered with a plastic bag. He was kicked three times on the back. The soldiers tortured him for 30 minutes while his 49-year old uncle, Undang Teves, was likewise being interrogated. When asked whether he has seen any NPA members, Teves was forced to say yes in order to save his nephew from further torture. After the incident, Gerald and his uncle filled out a police blotter. Gerald was taken to the Eastern Bicol Medical Center in Virac for medical examination.

On the same day, some fifty members of Bayan-Catanduanes, who participated in a week-long caravan of Bicolanos to Manila in time for Duterte's SONA, received information from their relatives that

soldiers were roaming the communities, asking for the names of those who participated in the caravan.

From July 22 to August 8, soldiers from the 47th IBPA led by Capt. Mario Acbang continued military operations in Brgy. San Vicente, Trinidad, Bohol, where members of a progressive farmer group Trinidad-Talibon Integrated Farmers Association (TTIFA) reside. On July 31, while TTIFA members were celebrating their 26th anniversary at a training center, soldiers of the 47th IBPA roamed nearby.

Meanwhile, military operations continued in different parts of Mindanao unmindful of the Commander-in-Chief's on-and-off-and-on unilateral ceasefire. As long as Oplan Bayanihan continued to be implemented by the AFP with the help of the PNP, local government units and some national government agencies, the GRP unilateral ceasefire declaration remained to





be just a deception. The CPP and its military arm, the NPA, which stuck to their unilateral ceasefire declaration took defensive action against GRP's violations of its own unilateral ceasefire.

The phenomenon of internally displaced persons continued in the countryside. On August 4, some 218 individuals from Purok 8, Brgy. Zillovia, Talacogon, Agusan del Sur walked 14 kilometers for five hours from their community to seek refuge at the village gymnasium. Two weeks before that, soldiers from the 26th IBPA encamped in their community and resided in people's houses. They interrogated residents and prevented them from going to their farms to attend to their crops.

Thirty soldiers of the 25th IBPA arrived at Km 56, Purok 4, Sitio Tagbawi, Brgy. Rizal, Monkayo, Compostela Valley province and stayed there for an hour. Afterwards residents were startled by a series of gunfire, which lasted for two hours.

A helicopter thereafter arrived and dropped three bombs on Palos Dos where the farmlands of residents were located. At 1pm, the military returned and indiscriminately fired at the residents and their houses. Luckily no one was hurt. On August 6, Lt. Lamberto from the 25th IBPA arrived and ordered everyone not to go to their fields in Palo Dos. After the announcement, the military stayed encamped in the community.

The bombings and gunfire prompted 23 families from nearby Purok 5, Brgy. Parasanon, Maragusan town to move to Purok 7. Residents suffered destruction of their crops. According to reports, the 25th and 66th IBPA were positioned in Sitio Tagbawi, Brgy. Rizal, while elements of the 71st and 69th IBPA were stationed in Maragusan.

At least five farmers became victims of illegal arrests and detention during these military operations in Compostela Valley communities.

On August 5, soldiers from the

25th IBPA interrogated, tortured and illegally arrested three farmers who were gathering logs in Sitio Inuburan in Brgy. Rizal. The three heard gunshots from the nearby village. They boarded a wrecker truck, after hurriedly packing their belongings. One of them, Rose Em Sayson, accidentally broke her neck, while alighting from the truck, and died. The four other farmers – Sadam Tawede, 21, Romel Saguiwan, 19, Michael Alvarez, 27, and Matot Madjaque - borrowed a motorcycle.

On the way, they were accosted by soldiers of the 25th IBPA who were manning a checkpoint, and accused them of being NPA members. They were forced to step down from the truck and were interrogated and beaten up. When Tawede denied the military's accusations, he was shot in the leg. The others were then forced to falsely admit to being NPA members. They were taken and forced to carry the military's backpacks. Alvarez and Saguiwan were brought to the Monkayo police station while Tawede was brought to the Eastern Mindanao Command, before being transferred to a hospital. Madjaque, who was able to escape, reported the incident.

On August 7, farmer Romy Escuardo, 29, left his house in Brgy. Parasanon in Maragusan town to harvest baguio beans. The next day, when he failed to come back, his mother Esterlita was informed by a neighbor that her son was arrested and brought by soldiers from the 71st IBPA to Tambuang. Escuardo's family went to Tambuang and was told that Romy was transferred to the 71st IBPA camp in Mawab, Compostela Valley.

Since September 27, around 600 soldiers of the 24th IBPA have encamped in Brgy. Bazar, Salladapan, Abra. They patrolled around and monitored movements of residents in the guise of development projects and consultations.

Similar cases have also been documented in four provinces in CARAGA, Mindanao where elements of the 29th, 30th, 36th, 41st, 75th IBPA, 3rd Navy Command Post, and 3rd Special Forces were deployed in 14 municipalities in the provinces of Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte, and Surigao del Sur. Since August 20, at least 20 to 30 soldiers have been deployed in each of the 61 peasant and lumad villages, where most cases of harassment, threats and surveillance of the residents occurred. The soldiers tried to coerce the residents to "surrender and return to the fold." They specifically targeted members of people's organizations who participated in protest actions. Encamped in the communities, the soldiers conduct "census" of household members, looked for male residents, summoned the residents for barangay meetings and forced them to be part of so-called Bayanihan teams. The Unyon sa Mag-uuma sa Agusan Del Norte (UMAN), Kahugpongong sa mga Mag-uuma sa Surigao del Sur (KAMASS), Nagkahiusang Mag-uuma sa Surigao del Norte (NAMASUN), and Nagkahiusang Mag-uuma sa Agusan del Sur (NAMASUR) – all affiliates of KMP – were red-tagged and their members and leaders called in by the military to 'clear their names.'

Several human rights and GRP ceasefire violations were also

documented in the Bicol region.

In Masbate, the Alpha Company-31st IBPA, 9th IBPA and troops from the CMO of the 9th ID began their military operations in Dimasalang and Cawayan on October 6, 2015 and are still in the community as of this writing. At least 100 soldiers were stationed in Dimasalang while 60 are in Cawayan. No pull-out of troops from the villages nor return to the barracks materialized after the cease-fire declaration was announced.

In Cawayan, residents of Brgy. Cabungahan and Brgy. Calapayan Proper were invited for questioning and interrogation. On November 3, at around 10:30am, farmer Jesus Gomez, 46, was forced to go to the village hall in Sitio CTN, Purok 5 in Brgy. Cabungahan, where he was interrogated by soldiers on the number of times he joined rallies and on who invited him to these rallies, on why he was holding meetings in the village, and on the monthly dues of his organization Cawayan Farmers Association (CFA). Allie Sabarles, 40, was called in at 11:00am that day, and was also interrogated about CFA and its president, on the monthly dues of the organization, about whether he has seen NPAs in the village and about a resident's house where the NPAs allegedly celebrate their anniversary. Gomez and Sabarles were asked to identify individuals in a video shown by the soldiers; both however said they do not recognize anyone in the said video.

On the same day, soldiers went to the residences of farmers Edito Sabares, 46, and Dominador Sabares, 45, accusing both as NPA members. Edito was asked if he attended

meetings organized by NPAs and if he pays their monthly dues. Dominador was accused of allowing NPAs to stay in his house and of participating in an ambush of soldiers. Both denied the accusations.

On November 4, around 300 residents of Brgy. Calapayan were told to go to the village hall where more than 30 elements from the 9th IBPA are encamped since the second week of October. The soldiers said they had a "wanted" list of residents whom they planned to interrogate. Marline Simbahanon, 46 and a member of CFA, was invited for questioning. She was asked about the whereabouts of her husband and if he is a member of the NPA, and how much monthly dues and sacks of rice are given by the residents to NPAs. Marline denied the accusations of the soldiers.

In Brgy. Buracan and Brgy. Cabrera in Dimasalang town, residents and members of farmers' organizations were harassed and called in for meetings and questioning by soldiers. They were told that census activities will be conducted and that those who will join rallies will no longer receive assistance from the 4Ps program. Soldiers also invited several male residents to join the CAFGU.

Brgy. Cabadisan, San Pablo and Bagong Silang, Camarines Sur saw the arrival of not less than 110 soldiers of the 49th IBPA from June to September 2016. They stayed in the barangay hall, health center, 4Ps building and barangay outpost. The soldiers followed a kind of reliever system wherein when one unit leaves, another takes its place. The 49th IBPA which was deployed to

Mindanao by end of October 2016 was replaced by the 31st and the 22nd IBPA.

Since the month when Duterte assumed the presidency, soldiers have been coming in and out of said villages interrogating residents, conducting surveillance, asking each household whether residents have relatives who were members of the NPA, and telling people to surrender. Soldiers also engage in gambling and drinking sprees.

Jovita Argente, wife of political prisoner Ramon Argente, was harassed and interrogated by the soldiers. They took her picture and contact number. They also told her that should there be NPAs who come to visit her, she should inform the soldiers. Bayan Muna members and couple Angel and Helen Mendoza were twice summoned by the soldiers for interrogation.

The military set up fox holes around the barangay hall in case of an "NPA attack." In Bagong Silang, soldiers took pictures and thumbprints of residents to "clear their names."

Meanwhile in Sorsogon, at least 100 elements of the 31st IBPA arrived in Brgy. Sinibaran and left only on October 6. They encamped at the barangay hall and occupied houses of farmers who were working in their fields. Soldiers conducted a census and summoned several residents for interview. They took the profile of individuals and organizations in the area. Government troops advised residents not to join rallies because the NPA is allegedly behind it.

Military encampment in the communities also affected

the schools and their students and teachers.

On October 11, 2016, Lumad School Diya Menuwa, an indigenous school run by the Center for Lumad Advocacy and Services (CLANS), was red-tagged by the police and several government agencies. A tarpaulin with texts calling the school "illegitimate," and its teachers and developers as persons who spread the "communist ideology" was hanged in Sitio Buna, Brgy. Kipunget in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat. It bore the logo of the LGU of Palimbang, NCIP, Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Education (DepEd), the Philippine Marine Corps, and the PNP. In a caravan held the next day, flyers with the same messages were distributed around the community.

A meeting of barangay officials called on October 13 and attended by Sultan Kudarat Mayor Abubacar Maulana and representatives from LGUs accused the school for lumad



children of being part of an “NPA’s maneuver to spread communism.” The DepEd supervisor advised against sending students to CLANS and recommended instead DepEd schools in Dumulol, even if they are quite far from the lumad communities. The meeting concluded with an announcement from the municipal administrator that a PhP5,000 reward will be given to individuals in exchange for pictures of teachers and staff of CLANS. The school was forced to close down and no date has been set for the resumption of classes as of this writing.

The AFP must stop its encampment in communities and harassment-intimidation of residents and people’s organizations. Troops should pull out from these communities and return to their military camps. And only with the elimination of counter-insurgency programs like Oplan Bayanihan and the halting of military/combat operations in the countryside can there be viable ground for the progress of peace negotiations.

The continuing militarization in rural areas and the human rights violation which result from it make a mockery of both the unilateral ceasefire declarations and the GRP-NDFP peace process. Moreover, it casts doubts on GRP’s capacity to fully implement agreements and commitments that it is party to.

### **Filing of Trumped-up Charges and Criminalization of Political Acts**

In addition to the harassment, red-tagging and the “neutralization” of leaders of people’s organizations and the



common folk, the continuation of the so-called “legal offensives” of the State has resulted in the continuing filing of trumped-up charges and criminalization of political acts against human rights defenders and members of people’s organizations.

On August 19, 2016, while the release of NDFP peace consultants was underway, Amelia Pond, 64, regional coordinator of the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines (RMP) in SMR and a volunteer teacher in the same institution, was illegally arrested by elements of the CIDG in Lahug, Cebu City. The alias warrant of arrest was for a certain Adelfa Toledo. Pond remains incarcerated in the Compostela Valley Provincial Rehabilitation Center where she was eventually transferred after being detained in Camp Sotero in Cebu City. Pond is under detention for fabricated charges of double murder and frustrated murder.

Less than a month later, 72-year-old Marcos Aggalao was arrested on September 10, by at least

20 members of the Kalinga Provincial Police and the 503rd Brigade. He was interrogated for three days before being committed to the Bureau of Jail and Penology (BJMP) in Tabuk. As per regulations specified in the Comprehensive Agreement on the Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL), Aggalao is to be considered hors d’ combat after having retired from the New People’s Army due to ill health and advanced age. His arrest, therefore, is a violation of the CARHRIHL. Both Aggalao and Pond add to the list of elderly and sickly political prisoners.

Two KMP leaders were illegally arrested on separate occasions. On August 12, Antonio Pajalla, 59, KMP vice-chairperson was accosted by elements of the 416th Police Provincial Mobile Group in Catumbon, Catanauan, Quezon while on his way to the Anakpawis provincial office. He was released the same day through the efforts of a human rights quick reaction team which immediately responded.

A few days later, Jonathan Moico, 33, KMP-Bikol coordinator and spokesperson, was arrested by elements of the PNP-San Fernando in Brgy. Lupi, San Fernando, Camarines Sur on August 16. Moico was flagged under the case of Alarm and Scandal but was released after 13 hours. Moico has been the object of malicious attacks by Lani Golpe, a barangay kagawad, who accused him of stealing, among others. Golpe worked in cahoots with PNP San Fernando. Moico filed a case of Abuse of Authority and Conduct Unbecoming of a Public Official against Golpe at the Sangguniang

Bayan, but this proved futile because of the election ban.

Apart from peasant organizations, youth groups which have openly expressed support for the resumption of the GRP-NDFP peace talks have also become targets of the military. John Claudio Maniquez, 21, Jay-R Suplaag, 21, and Jerry Eden, 26, are all members of Panalipdan-Youth in Pantukan, an organization advocating for the protection of ancestral lands. The three have just finished hanging makeshift cloth streamers calling for support to the ongoing peace talks in the evening of September 19 when ten soldiers from the 46th IBPA, started following them onboard a truck. Alarmed, the three started running. Eden and Suplaag were able to escape, but Maniquez was caught, body-searched and interrogated. He was questioned about the whereabouts of his two companions and was forced to admit to being an NPA member. Maniquez was eventually brought to the PNP station in Pantukan where a gun was planted in his belongings. He was eventually charged with illegal possession of firearms and explosives. Meanwhile, Suplaag and Eden have sought sanctuary.

The state’s legal offensive found a convenient ally in the Duterte government’s war on drugs. Charges of drug use and “pushing” are being used against suspected activists and identified members of progressive organizations. An example was the arrest on drug charges of four farmers in San Jose Del Monte (SJDM), Bulacan. On October 6, three of them – Rowel Reola, Alfredo Ravelo, and Lito Natural – were arrested by elements of the SJDM police.

**TABLE 8**

as of December 31, 2016

Political Prisoners

REGION	TOTAL NO. OF PPS	WOMEN	NDFP CONSULTANTS	ARRESTED UNDER BS AQUINO	ARRESTED UNDER DUTERTE
Ilocos	0	0	0	0	0
Cordillera Administrative Region	8	0	0	7	1
Cagayan Valley	7	0	0	7	0
Central Luzon	6	0	1	3	0
National Capital Region	153	12	3	43	0
Southern Tagalog	21	2	0	14	1
Bicol	36	1	0	33	3
Western Visayas	6	0	0	6	0
Central Visayas	4	0	0	2	0
Eastern Visayas	32	7	0	25	0
Northern Mindanao	22	1	0	16	0
Caraga	29	1	0	29	0
Soccsargen	17	1	0	15	2
Western Mindanao	8	2	0	7	0
Southern Mindanao	103	7	0	78	8
ARMM	19	0	0	9	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>471</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>15</b>

SICKLY 122

ELDERLY 34

ARRESTED MINOR 10

Their houses were searched without warrants. The police, along with other armed men wearing bonnets, entered their houses and pointed their guns at other family members. Reola was mauled and Ravelo held at gunpoint. They were charged with drug cases. They are all members of the Karahumi Farmers Association (KFA), an affiliate of the KMP.

Less than two weeks later on October 19 another member of KFA-KMP, Ronnie Gaitero, was arrested on drug charges. It was only on November 8 that the case against Reola, Ravelo and Natural was dismissed for lack of probable cause. Gaitero, however, remains in jail.

On November 21, the PNP announced that criminal charges would be brought against leaders of national minorities and people's organizations who participated in the rally led by Bayan and Sandugo in front of the US Embassy. Sandugo is a movement of indigenous and Moro peoples recently formed on October 19. The dispersal by the PNP was violent and brutal with a young woman tribal leader, Piya Malayao, run over on her legs. Surprisingly no bone was broken. Several others were injured by the police car that hit some of the rallyists. True to its fascist nature, the PNP has the gall to file charges against the victims. The latter filed their own charges against the police.

On October 19, 2016, around 200 elements of the Manila Police District (MPD)-PNP led by Senior Supt. Marcelino Pedrozo violently dispersed an estimated 1,500 individuals, representing various indigenous groups and different sectors, holding a protest action

outside the US embassy. The protest was against the continuing militarization in their communities and the role of the US in these violations as well as the continued plunder of natural resources and violations of national sovereignty.

Just as the protesters were getting ready to wrap up the program, Pedrozo gave an order to disperse. He was earlier seen berating his men for letting the rallyists off easy. Canisters of tear gas were thrown and a police vehicle rammed through the protesters which injured many. Drivers of jeepneys were also mauled by the police, forcing people out of the vehicles and dragging them off to be arrested.

At least 39 protesters were illegally arrested but were eventually released, while 11 of those gravely injured were brought to the Philippine General Hospital. Malayao, 28, secretary general of Katribu, Valeria Catubigan, 61, a Lumad peasant and member of KASALO-CARAGA, Nicole Soria, member of Kabataan Partylist, and Raymark Sumalbag, 23, member of Piston, were among those severely injured. The violence done against indigenous groups protesting in front of the US Embassy was reflective of the everyday violations that they experience in the countryside.

There are 401 political prisoners still behind bars despite GRP commitment to their release in the light of peace talks

Informal talks between the GRP and NDFP negotiating panels on June 14-15, 2016 proved promising as previously signed agreements such as the CARHRIHL and JASIG

were reaffirmed, and the release of peace consultants and political prisoners addressed as a priority item in the agenda. However, the July 27 schedule for the formal talks was postponed to August 22 as detained NDFP consultants remained in jail. Eventually, through the granting of bail by local courts, 19 NDFP consultants were temporarily released from prison to participate in the talks in Oslo, Norway.

The first round of the peace talks resulted in commitments for the reconstitution of the JASIG list and the release of political prisoners through a general amnesty, prioritizing releases on humanitarian grounds. In the second round of talks held on October 6-9, the NDFP reiterated and reminded the GRP to fulfill its commitment to release political prisoners.

However, the release of all or a substantial number of political prisoners (PPs), especially those who are ill, elderly, the women, and those who have been imprisoned for more than ten years, did not take place. Adding insult to injury, false announcements about supposed release of PPs were made by OPAPP Chief Jesus Dureza and GRP Panel Chairman Sec. Silvestre Bello III. Included in the disinformation was the supposed signing of a bilateral ceasefire agreement on December 10. These were all met with indignation and intensifying disappointment from the PPs and their families.

As of October 31, 2016, of the 401 political prisoners waiting to be freed, there are 130 who are sickly, 33 elderly, 33 women, and 49 imprisoned for more than ten years.

At least 296 of the PPs were arrested by the BS Aquino government based on trumped-up charges, defective warrants, perjured testimonies, and fabricated evidences to implicate the innocents. In Duterte's four months in Malacanang, 15 more political detainees were arrested and incarcerated.

Three NDFP consultants, Leopoldo Caloza, 59, Emeterio Antalan, 57, and Eduardo Sarmiento, 66, remain at the New Bilibid Prison for being wrongly convicted. Antalan's and Caloza's 20 cases had been dismissed but they were convicted on what would have been their last hurdle in court. Duterte still has to push through with his promised presidential pardon for the three.

Many more should be immediately be freed on humanitarian grounds. Moreta Alegre, 70, is detained at the Correctional Institute for Women while husband Jesus Alegre, 71, is at the New Bilibid Prison. The Alegre couple, and their son Selman, 41, have been in jail for more than 11 years. Ramon Argente, 56, suffered a heart attack and underwent quadruple heart by-pass. Miguela Peniero, 50, detained in Taguig City Jail - Female Dorm, Camp Bagong Diwa (TCJ-CBD), suffers from hyperthyroidism and is diagnosed with cancer. Rhea Pareja, 31, also detained at TCJ-CBD has been diagnosed with pulmonary tuberculosis stage 4. Others suffer from hypertension and a variety of heart ailments, undoubtedly made worse by jail conditions.

The release of 401 political prisoners, more than to bolster confidence in the peace negotiations, is

essentially a matter of justice and an obligation of the GRP. Political prisoners should not be held hostage to impositions by the state. A general, unconditional, and omnibus amnesty should be granted to all political prisoners as an effort to partially correct the wrongs and

injustices done to them. The more than 400 political prisoners who are languishing in jail, made worse by the snail-paced justice system, are not criminals. On the contrary, they are individuals, members of organizations who keep the essence of genuine democracy alive.



**Once more, it is affirmed that the way forward is to advance the people's movement for genuine change**

**The next months and years will remain a big challenge for the majority of poor Filipinos aspiring for real social change.**

**While Duterte continues to criticize US intervention and is willing to continue the peacetalks with the NDFP and the Moro movements, much is still left to be desired. There is a widening gap between his pronouncements and his policies, ranging from the economic to the military. His economic policies still adhere to neoliberal globalization, pursuing the same economic strategies of his predecessors. His campaign promise to put an end to contractualization of labor remains a rhetoric. Duterte has spoken against unequal treaties such as Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), the Visiting Forces Agreement and the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) but they are still in full swing.**

**While the same social structures that breed oppression and exploitation continue to exist, with the same military and police machinery, which is steeped in militarist orientation that violate the rights of the people, still intact, and with continued US interventionism, even Duterte will have a difficult time to make good his promise of "change." Ultimately, it is through the people's struggles and movement that real, substantial and comprehensive change will be realized.**

# #IsoliMoNinakawNyo and #MarcosNoHero Campaign 2016



04 Feb 2016

Launch of CARMMA, QC Sports Club



22 Feb 2016

CARMMA National Gathering



13 Nov 2016

#BlackToBlock protest during the bar exams led by NUPL

8 Nov 2016

UP Diliman: Thousands gathered to condemn Supreme Court's decision allowing Marcos' burial at the LNMB



25 Feb 2016

EDSA People Power 2016 commemoration 2016 barricaded by policemen



04 May 2016

Voltes V, a popular Japanese anime censored by Marcos in the 70's for 'encouraging rebellion', was revived during CARMMA's protest action in Cubao, Quezon City



Martial law victims led by SELDA filed a petition to secure a TRO to block hero's burial at LNMB

15 Aug 2016



Press briefing of ML victims, civil libertarians and millenials in response to SC decision on Marcos' burial

10 Nov 2016



29 Aug 2016

Gathering on the eve of the International Day of the Disappeared to commemorate martial law's desaparecidos



18 Aug 2016

Protest action at the gates of Libingan ng mga Bayani



18 Nov 2016

Indignation rally of tens of thousands of protesters in Taft Avenue, Manila, and later in UP Diliman and Katipunan Ave, Quezon City, after the hasty secret burial



25 Nov 2016

Black Friday Protest at Luneta Park



10 Dec 2016

International Human Rights Day, protesters marched from Liwasang Bonifacio to Mendiola where the effigy of Marcos was burned

18 political prisoners eligible for parole



**DIONISIO ALMONTE**  
 A former senator and congressman, Almonte was arrested in 1988 for alleged involvement in the assassination of President Ferdinand Marcos. He was sentenced to life imprisonment but was granted parole in 2011.

**FREE Dionisio Almonte**



**MARIA MIRAFEL TORRES**  
 A human rights activist, Torres was arrested in 1988 for her involvement in the anti-Marcos movement. She was sentenced to life imprisonment but was granted parole in 2011.

**FR Mirafel Torres**



**MIGUELA PENIERO**  
 A human rights activist, Peniero was arrested in 1988 for her involvement in the anti-Marcos movement. She was sentenced to life imprisonment but was granted parole in 2011.

**FR Miguel Peniero**



**RUBEN RUPIDO**  
 A human rights activist, Rupido was arrested in 1988 for his involvement in the anti-Marcos movement. He was sentenced to life imprisonment but was granted parole in 2011.

**FREE Ruben Rupido**

# #FreeAllPoliticalPrisoners Campaign 2016

Government reneged on promised release of detained activists



**EMETERIO ANTALAN**  
 A human rights activist, Antalan was arrested in 1988 for his involvement in the anti-Marcos movement. He was sentenced to life imprisonment but was granted parole in 2011.

**FREE Emeterio Antalan**

'Nada': Duterte releases of prisoners bilateral ceasefire



**LEOPOLDO CALOZA**  
 A human rights activist, Caloza was arrested in 1988 for his involvement in the anti-Marcos movement. He was sentenced to life imprisonment but was granted parole in 2011.

**FREE Leopoldo Caloza**

Ocasio's death rates commitment of political prisoners



**EDMAR SAMIE**  
 A human rights activist, Samie was arrested in 1988 for his involvement in the anti-Marcos movement. He was sentenced to life imprisonment but was granted parole in 2011.

**FREE Edmar Samie**

**PANAWAGAN NATIN: LAHAT NG MGA HIRAPONG ULTIKAL!**

Sa pangkalahat, nananawagan tayong para sa:

- GENERAL**  
 Available ang pagpapaligay sa lahat ng talagang politikal na mga hirapong ultikal.
- UNCONDITIONAL**  
 Maging pangkalahat ang pagpapaligay sa lahat ng talagang politikal na mga hirapong ultikal.
- AT OMNIBUS**  
 Lahat ng mga kaso o salit sa hirapong ultikal sa pangkalahat na pangkat ng mga hirapong ultikal.
- AMNESTY**  
 Pangkalahat na pangkat ng mga hirapong ultikal.

**KARAPATAN - SELDA**

**IPALAKAS AT TIRAGUYOD NG MGA HIRAPONG ULTIKAL!**

Magkaroon ng pagpapaligay sa lahat ng talagang politikal na mga hirapong ultikal.

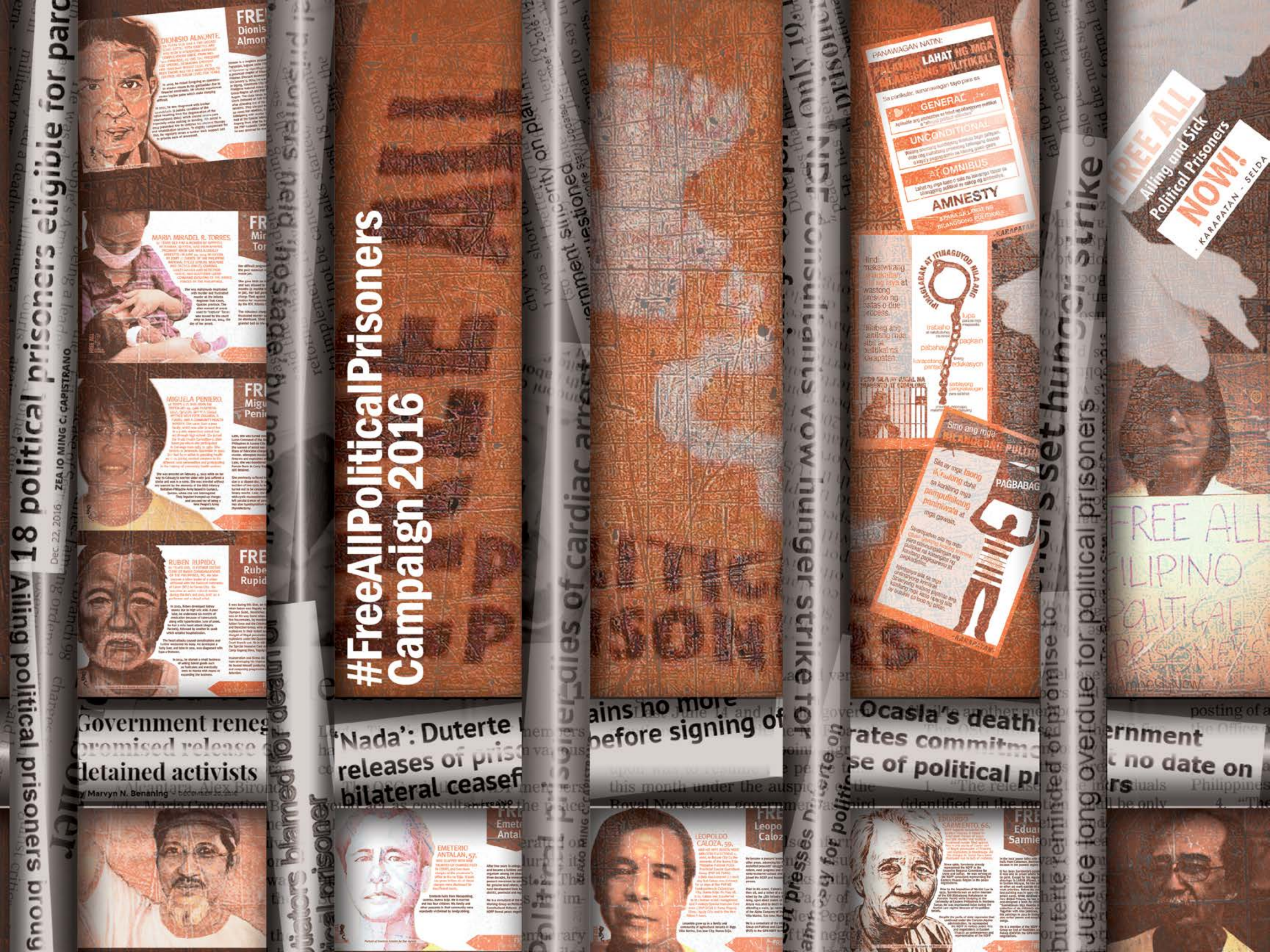
**PAGBABAG**

Sino ang mga hirapong ultikal? Sino ang mga talagang politikal na mga hirapong ultikal? Sino ang mga talagang politikal na mga hirapong ultikal?

**KARAPATAN - SELDA**

**FREE ALL Ailing and Sick Political Prisoners NOW!**  
 KARAPATAN - SELDA

**FREE ALL PHILIPINO POLITICAL PRISONERS**



# FRAGILE HOPES

by Sharon Cabusao-Silva

*for Freedom  
and Just Peace*



**T**here was euphoria among political prisoners when news of the resumption of peace negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) swept the country.

A new president had just been elected, and prospects for change lit up hopes for many. The country had seen decades of ruin and despair under a succession of plunderous and anti-democratic presidencies. These governments simply refused to talk peace, and instead implemented US-directed counter-insurgency programs which resulted in massive cases of human rights violations and the arrest of hundreds of political dissenters, revolutionaries and activists.

In his first backdoor meeting with NDFP panel member Fidel Agcaoili, newly-elected President Rodrigo Duterte had apparently proffered a general amnesty as the quickest way to release all political prisoners. Human rights advocates, political prisoners and their families and the NDFP welcomed this development with much optimism. The promised general amnesty would have to be done with Congressional concurrence.

Hopes for the political prisoners' freedom would be quickly doused, however. In a matter of days, President Duterte would revise his statement and predicate the political prisoners' release on the success of the peace negotiations, contingent on a "final peace agreement."

Nineteen (19) consultants of the NDFP were eventually released after complicated negotiations and costly and tortuous legal procedures. They were allowed to fly to Oslo, Norway to participate in the opening of the formal peacetalks. But they were released only on bail, on provisional liberty, with the likelihood of being returned to jail should the peace negotiations fail.



The successful opening of the peace negotiations between the NDFP and the GRP panels in August figured prominently on national news. The country was exhilarated by the prospects of peace, and various sectors - the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, peasants, women's organizations, urban poor, trade unions, politicians and even sections of the country's elite - either signified intentions to support, or had become open to dialogues with both parties.

Prior to the opening, both parties had declared indefinite unilateral ceasefire. The two panels then agreed to work out a "single unified bilateral ceasefire" agreement in sixty days, from August 26, 2016.

The release of political prisoners, however, remained unfulfilled months after, despite sustained campaigns by several sectors and the insistence of the NDFP panel.

There were talks of pressure being exerted by the US on President Duterte, through the top brass of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, against the release. This was made apparent by changes in the political stance of President Duterte after visits to several military and police camps in the country. His presidency was apparently in a "fragile" state, having been elected into power without the solid backing of powerful forces in the country but largely on the basis of a popular vote. President Rodrigo Duterte was said to be walking on thin ice, and still needed to consolidate his control over the state's armed forces.

The second round of formal peacetalks under the Duterte administration began in October with the NDFP panel putting the release of all political prisoners at the fore of the agenda.

"The release of all political prisoners is a matter of justice and (is) in compliance with the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL)," the NDFP stated.



Women political prisoners at Taguig City Jail.

The GRP responded with claims that the draft for a general amnesty has already been forwarded to the President, promising to provide the NDFP panel with a copy in due time. The GRP also committed to release the "prisoners listed by the NDFP" in accordance with the CARHRIHL, pending the approval of the proposed amnesty.

Several public announcements by OPAPP Chief Jesus Dureza and GRP Panel Chairman Sec. Silvestre Bello III on the release of political prisoners were called "deliberate misinformation" by human rights and peace advocates, to provide unjustifiable excuses for the non-release of the political prisoners.

Relatives of political prisoners have also sought the attention of Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende during his official visit on November 22.

To date, however, there has been no substantial number of political prisoners released in line with the peacetalks after August, compelling NDFP panel member Benito Tiamzon to belie claims by the GRP that a bilateral ceasefire agreement was being readied by both parties for end November or early December.

Tiamzon cited continuing military operations in the countryside, the non-release of political prisoners through the peace process and the continued arrest of individuals based on trumped-up charges as "disincentives that make the ground untenable, and which endangers even the fragile unilateral ceasefires already in place".

He cited the 16 cases of political killings and 16 frustrated extrajudicial killings from July to September, and the case of five farmers arrested in October on drug charges in what was actually a land dispute case.

### **Political prisoners conduct hunger strike, fast for immediate release**

On December 3, the International Day of Solidarity with Political Prisoners of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), more than 200 political prisoners started their hunger strike and fast to amplify the call for their immediate release. They were supported and joined by their relatives and supporters and hundreds of ordinary inmates. A solidarity fast center was mounted on Mendiola bridge in Manila, while international human rights organizations also wrote letters of appeal to President Duterte.

Prior to the said protest actions, on November 25, peasant organizer Bernabe Ocasia from Samar, imprisoned at the Manila City Jail, was rushed to the hospital after suffering a major heart attack due to stress and inhuman conditions inside jail. He died on November 28, after a cardiac arrest following three days in coma.

Ocasla's name was in the list of political prisoners submitted by the NDFP to the GRP, among the 130 ailing detainees. They are suffering from life-threatening or serious medical conditions. As in the rest of the country, harsh jail conditions contributed to their worsening medical condition. This is the reason why their immediate release was crucial, for they could have better medical treatment outside jail.

Ocasla is the first political prisoner who died while in detention under the Duterte administration. There are twelve (12) other political prisoners who suffered the same fate during the BS Aquino administration.

Ocasla suffered indignities in the hospital, which are considered violations of UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. He was brought to the hospital from jail three hours after his heart attack. He remained heavily guarded and handcuffed even when he was already in a state of coma, while jail guards did not allow his relatives and hospital staff to change his wet and soiled shirt, in both instances saying that these were ruses to allow his escape. They jeered at his daughter's plea to be handcuffed herself instead of her unconscious father.

Ocasla's family and Karapatan were correct in asserting that "accountability for the death of political prisoner Bernabe Ocasla lies squarely on the Government of the Republic of the Philippines." Instead of immediately fulfilling its commitment to release all political prisoners, especially the ailing and elderly, the Duterte administration, through its GRP peace panel, spewed mere rhetorics instead of actually releasing them.

Duterte's statement on December 8, referring to the political prisoners as his "last cards" in the peacetalks with the NDFP, did not also help assuage fears that the GRP is setting the stage to renege on its commitment to release all political prisoners.

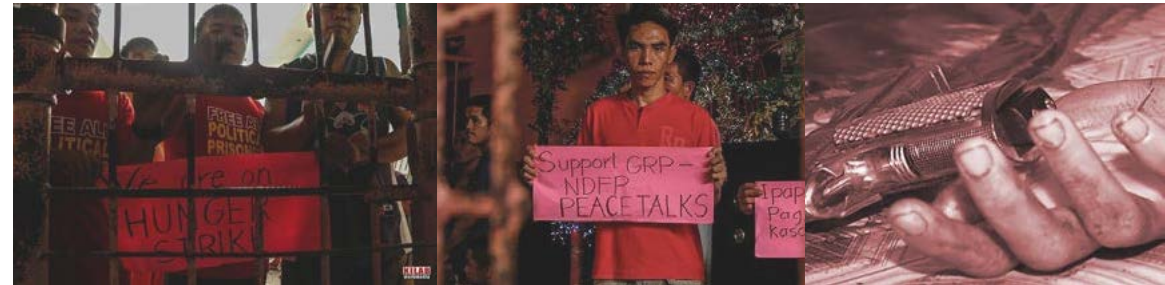
Political prisoners are victims of trumped-up charges or were imprisoned because they had committed themselves to organizing and rousing people for genuine social change.

Now they are being victimized all over again by a Presidency that holds them hostage to its self-serving plan of wringing a long-term ceasefire from the revolutionary movement without granting the just demands of the people for socio-economic reforms, respect for human rights, and the release of all political prisoners.



*\*Sharon Cabusao Silva is a former political prisoner and works with GABRIELA as spokesperson of its campaign to free political prisoners, Free Our Sisters, Free Ourselves. She was released on June 2016, after a local court dismissed charges against her and one of her co-accused.*

## #Duterte100Days



### Significant achievements, intensifying contradictions

*Report of the National People's Summit on the status of the People's Agenda during Duterte's first 100 days in office - October 5, 2016*

President Rodrigo R. Duterte was swept into office by a vote of more than 16 million, based on a promise of change and on a commitment to stamp out criminality and corruption. His first 100 days in office have yielded some positive developments but have also brought to the fore intensifying contradictions and growing challenges from forces opposed to change and forces pushing for more radical reforms.

On June 29, hundreds of people's organizations, cause-oriented groups, institutions and individuals gathered at the University of the Philippines Diliman Film Center for the National People's Summit in support of the People's Agenda for Nationalist and Progressive Change (People's Agenda). The Summit laid out a 15-point agenda for change as well as more

specific recommendations contained in five areas of concern: Economy, Progressive Social Policy, Peace and Human Rights, National Sovereignty and Foreign Policy and Governance and Democracy.

The highlights of the agenda include genuine agrarian reform, national industrialization and economic sovereignty, economic relief for working people, an end to contractualization, independent foreign policy, resumption of the peace talks with the NDFP, campaign against corruption, a pro-people social policy and a progressive social policy in relation to health, education, housing and social protection. The People's Agenda also includes short-term proposals for the first 100 days of the administration.

Last September 30, organizers of the Summit met again to report on the progress

of the People's Agenda. It is against these demands and proposals that we assessed the performance of the Duterte administration; identifying the positive outcomes as well as negative aspects, shortcomings and stark differences. The Duterte regime is full of contradictions and it is necessary for the people to identify the progressive aspects and support these while countering the reactionary and anti-people aspects. It is necessary for the people's movement to maintain its independence even as it engages in principled unity and struggle with the Duterte administration.

The most outstanding achievements of the Duterte administration in its first 100 days have to do with the resumption of the peace talks with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the historic, unprecedented assertion of national sovereignty and an independent foreign policy. These two important thrusts of the administration have the potential of paving the way for meaningful change, pro-people reforms and nationalist development.

In the peace talks with the NDFP, Duterte has already accomplished more in his first 100 days compared to Aquino's entire six year term. Major achievements include the affirmation of previously signed agreements, the release of 22 political prisoners who are protected under an immunity agreement, reconstitution of the list of protected persons, reconvening of the Joint Monitoring Committee for a human rights pact signed by both sides, acceleration of discussions on socio-economic, political and constitutional reforms, recommendation for a general amnesty for political prisoners and the existence of unilateral ceasefires from both sides. The peace talks with the NDFP are premised on addressing the root causes of the

armed conflict as a way of achieving a just peace. Duterte has shown interest and seriousness in pushing the peace talks forward.

In the field of foreign relations, Duterte has rightly criticized US intervention and has sought an end to unequal relations while opening new relations with other countries not aligned with the US. So far, Duterte has called for an end to US war games in the Philippines, an end to joint patrols in the West PH Sea, a review of the EDCA, the pull-out of US troops in Mindanao as well as seeking new defense ties with Russia and China. All these steps are signaling a possible end to PH dependence on US military aid and equipment. Duterte also aims to use the favorable ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in addressing the Philippine's dispute with China, but he will do so without any US intervention.

The presence of progressives in the Duterte administration has also made possible immediate reforms beneficial to the people. These can be clearly seen in the undertakings of the Department of Agrarian Reform and the Department of Social Welfare and Development. The DAR has sought to distribute land in Hacienda Luisita and rectify a previous, unjust land distribution scheme. The DSWD for its part has stood firmly against pork barrel practices involving lawmakers and their constituents. The DOLE and DSWD also worked for the swift repatriation of displaced OFW's in the Middle East.

The leadership of the National Anti-Poverty Commission meanwhile ended questionable contracts for so-called overpaid consultants. Also notable are the actions of the present Environment Secretary in relation to the audit and suspension of at least 20 companies engaged in destructive mining operations.

The President is committed against corruption and has warned corrupt officials in the police, military and the civilian bureaucracy including local government units against committing the same. So far, investigations in both houses of Congress have focused mainly on the drug trade and have not uncovered the other misdeeds of past administrations. The Department of Transportation for its part showed responsiveness when it stopped the basis for so-called "tanimbala" scams at the airport. The government's Freedom of Information, while positive and was implemented early, should continuously be tested due to the many listed exemptions. Duterte should be credited for not renewing the license of online gambling firm PhilWeb Corporation owned by Roberto Ongpin because of the proliferation of its gambling operations and the failure to pay correct taxes.

The human rights record of the Duterte administration meanwhile has generated the most criticism because of the President's handling of the "war on drugs". There have been serious allegations of summary executions and extra-judicial killings of suspected drug dealers and users by state security forces. These have been blamed on the President's often public endorsement of the killings of suspected criminals. The number of dead, even by official police estimates, is alarming and has reinforced impunity among law enforcement institutions.

The Duterte administration meanwhile has made important contributions in other areas of human rights. Through the peace talks for example, we were able to see a favorable climate for the return of the Lumad to their communities. Some 1,500 Lumad evacuees in Tandag, Surigao del Sur were finally able to return

home on September 2 after the military pulled out from Lianga. Through the peace talks, there is a possibility that a general amnesty proclamation for political prisoners can be realized under the present administration.

Indigenous people's rights have also been upheld by government with the suspension of destructive mining operations in the countryside. Duterte should also be cited for respecting the people's right to peaceably assemble and to air grievances as shown by his first State of the Nation Address. In another unprecedented move, rally participants were allowed to proceed near Batasang Pambansa, without any police blockade. Duterte also took time to meet with the rally leaders inside Batasang Pambansa after the SONA. He did the same for rally organizers during his inauguration in Malacanang.

Duterte's inclusive framework for peace talks with Moro rebels asserting their right to self-determination is also commendable. It remains to be seen though how the talks will progress given the different peace deals entered into by the Philippine government with the two main Moro groups.

We have also taken note of efforts by the government, through different departments, to gather inputs and proposals from various sectors and groups. Public participation in governance is appreciated, and hopefully will go beyond formal "summits" and "conferences".

### **Challenges and Contradictions**

The administration's economic agenda is one of the major battlegrounds under the Duterte presidency. Various sectors are opposing the neo-liberal economic framework of the administration's economic team as contained in the so-called 10-point economic agenda.

Economic managers still look to foreign investments and the opening up of the economy as the main drivers of economic growth.

There have been campaigns opposing budget cuts in health services, anti-people tax reform measures, continuation of failed public-partnership programs as well as the drive to further open up the economy to foreign investors. The fight to end the regime of contractualization is still seen as an uphill fight because of lack of concrete initiatives on the part of the DOLE. While a national minimum wage is now being studied, the oppressive regional wage boards still remain. Duterte has assailed the dominance of oligarchs but it remains to be seen how far he will actually go in dismantling their hold on the economy.

National industrialization can still be realized through the peace talks and through Duterte's efforts at developing beneficial economic relations with countries not aligned with the United States. Land reform shows promise but will expectedly be met by resistance by big landlords and by public officials who favor land-use conversion, such as the NEDA chief.

Contradictions between the people and the Duterte administration exist in areas such as health care where a P446.8 million budget cut has been imposed on 12 specialty hospitals and where corporatization of public hospitals is being encouraged. While it is good that Duterte ordered the DOH to learn from Cuba, it appears that the DOH leadership failed to truly understand the Cuban health care system and apply its best practices in the Philippines.

Contradictions likewise exist in the area of education where the K-12 program remains. It is gearing the educational system as suppliers of cheap labor for big corporations while intensifying the

overall commercialization of education. In the field of public transportation, a public-private partnership for infrastructure and services has remained the main thrust of the DoTr. Groups have questioned the Transportation Department's accommodation of big business interests in the construction of a common station for the LRT-MRT train lines. Many have also criticized the appointment of Noel Kintanar, a top executive of the Ayala Corporation, as undersecretary for rails and tolls where the Ayala group has huge investments.

Duterte has succeeded in exposing for the first time the enormity of the drug problem and its links to officials from different levels of government. The President has exposed the links between bureaucrats, politicians, security forces and the drug syndicates. His approach, however, will continue to reap criticism as the body count in the war on drugs continues to rise. The President cannot go on publicly condoning or encouraging the killing of suspected criminals through his anti-drug rhetoric. Such an approach not only justifies the violations of due process but also reinforces impunity among state security forces.

Various groups are now calling on the government to address the socio-economic roots of the drug problem, along with the demands for a comprehensive rehabilitation program.

The President meanwhile is correct in denouncing the US and EU for human rights hypocrisy and for their hypocritical use of human rights as a tool for destabilizing regimes that assert independence from imperialist dictates.

The most serious challenge to the Duterte administration may yet come from the United States and other imperialist powers that seek to counter the Philippine president's assertion of sovereignty. Overt and covert US interventions

against regimes asserting independence have been well documented. The public should remain vigilant against moves by foreign governments to unseat Duterte because of his independent stance. The President appears to be well aware of this. He has also made extra effort to go around military camps and solidify AFP support for his administration.

Duterte also faces challenges from within his administration, from officials who wish to retain neo-colonial relations with the US. On several occasions, at least three cabinet officials (Lorenzana, Yasay, Esperon) have openly contradicted the president on matters of foreign policy especially on issues involving US troops and military agreements. Duterte needs to put in writing his foreign policy and leave no room from misinterpretation or deliberate distortion by his officials.

The people's movement needs to rally around the progressive aspects of the Duterte administration while engaging in principled struggle and opposition with the negative aspects. We are a long way from fulfilling the People's Agenda for Change, but positive steps have been taken in some areas. The only sure way for the People's Agenda to advance is for the people to struggle for their just demands. These demands include national sovereignty, genuine democracy, economic reforms and a just peace. A lot more needs to be done after Duterte's 100 days. Current developments show that it will not be all smooth sailing and that the people should prepare for more intense struggles and contradictions between the different contending forces. ###

# ILLEGAL DRUG TRADE

## CAN BE ELIMINATED WITHOUT CURTAILING RIGHTS

by Cristina Palabay, August 22-23, 2016

**P**res. Rodrigo Duterte has repeatedly stated that one of the biggest problems in Philippine society is the proliferation of illegal drugs and the evils that come with it. The heinousness of crimes brought about by drug addiction is undeniable - the rapes and murders of women and young girls, even babies and mothers, the butchered bodies, and all else inhuman. While it is true, that this problem should be cut to the core, the solution is not as easy as one would exterminate termites.

Duterte's crusade would have been easier if the government bureaucracy is not corrupt. Policemen are mandated to seize illegal drugs being peddled in communities, protect the residents especially the youth from these harmful substances, and put the dealers/suppliers to jail. But many of them have been doing exactly the opposite.

Some elements among the police force, most of the time in cahoots with local government officials, protect the government bureaucrats, big syndicates and those involved down the line of the drug trade. Why? Because they profit from the illicit trade and are actually part of the whole racket.

After buy-bust operations when dealers or syndicate bosses are arrested, court proceedings take years to reach the trial phase or, with even less probability, a conviction. Drug lords influence court decisions with guns, money and grave threats with the help of their patrons from government. If ever arrested, prison becomes the drug lords' den; and worse, a satellite laboratory for illegal substances. With the

right amount of money, guns and political connections, the drug trade proliferates, whether drug lords are behind bars or scot free.

Pres. Duterte apparently knows this, so he took another route to solve the problem. Forcible surrender and order of battle listing by the Philippine National Police (PNP) against suspected drug lords and members of drug syndicates are causing nationwide outcry by the opposition invoking due process. But what is more worrisome and truly condemnable are the arbitrary and extrajudicial killings of small-time suspected pushers and users, including minors, mostly from the poor sectors.

The killings are either done as punishment in the name of Duterte's campaign against drugs or are perpetrated to silence those who might turn witness and expose details of the drug manufacture and trade. Either way, the drug-related killings in poor communities have become too rampant.

Duterte should say the word and act on it: Stop the Killings! Otherwise, his anti-drugs quips encourage, rather than decisively halt the rampant killings without due process of suspects in drug-related cases. The President should prosecute and hold accountable the perpetrators of the extrajudicial killings, including those from the police.

The illegal drugs business preys on the large populace of the poor. Poverty makes them increasingly vulnerable to the drug trade, many of them using drugs to temporarily escape from their unaddressed problems of hunger, joblessness, lack of social services and of opportunities. The easy cash that the drug trade offers is too tempting for the hungry.

It is enraging to see that the drug business makes profit by taking advantage of the poverty of the many, while it is the poor person's blood that is shed when government tries to eliminate the drug menace. The police enjoys too much of their authority that the abuses against civilians speak of one thing - impunity.

Enlisting the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in the anti-drugs campaign is even more alarming, given the sordid human rights record of the military and its propensity to use the campaign for counter-insurgency purposes. The use of the military, vigilante groups and other mercenaries in so-called wars against drugs is a concept that has been peddled by the United States

**DUTERTE SHOULD  
SAY THE WORD  
AND ACT ON IT:  
STOP THE KILLINGS!**

government in countries such as Mexico and Colombia through the Merida Initiative. It is a form of military intervention which justifies American military and financial support for governments to maintain and protect US political and economic influence. It has been proven that US-funded drug wars have not eliminated the drug menace, but have targetted the civilian population in countries struggling for change. What the US government has so often swept under the rug is its own role in the proliferation of the drugs through covert operations of its intelligence agency and the military industrial complex.

Pres. Duterte’s hatred of the evils of the drug trade may be out of his sincere concern for the people, but a purely law enforcement method usually results in human rights violations. The drug menace can be eliminated without curtailing the basic rights of the people, especially of the poor. In fact, it is through upholding the rights of the people, especially social and economic rights, that the people can repudiate the use and trade of illegal drugs.

The government should instead strive to improve the living conditions of the Filipinos, especially the marginalized, by providing them secure jobs with living wages, free education and health care, and land to cultivate. By encouraging the people to organize themselves into unions, cooperatives, community and sectoral organizations, they will learn more and more that united efforts bear more fruits than isolated individual striving. It is through empowering the people and helping them provide for their needs that they will turn away from drugs. There will be no need for them to sell drugs for little cash.

THE SYSTEM THAT BREEDS THE PROLIFERATION OF DRUGS IS THE SAME ONE THAT CAUSES UNREST AMONG THE FILIPINOS. THUS, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE ROOT CAUSES OF POVERTY AND OTHERS THAT GIVE RISE TO ARMED CONFLICT BE ADDRESSED THOROUGHLY. THE PEACE PROCESS AND THE PEOPLE’S MOVEMENT FOR MEANINGFUL, COMPREHENSIVE AND FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE ARE WELCOME EFFORTS AT THIS POINT.

# ACRONYMS

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines	EDCA	Enhanced Defence Cooperation Agreement
AGPET	Agusan Petroleum and Minerals Corporation	EU	
ALCADEV	Alternative Learning for Community and Agricultural Development, Inc.	GRP	Government of the Republic of the Philippines
ALMANA 3100	Alyansa ng mga Magbubukid na Nagkakaisang 3100	GWP	Gabriela Women's Party
ALS	Alternative Learning School	HUMAWAC	Hugpong sa Mag-uuma sa Walog Compostela
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	IB	Infantry Battalion
BJMP	Bureau of Jail Management and Penology	IBPA	Infantry Battalion, Philippine Army
BS	Benigno Simeon (Aquino)	IDPA	Infantry Division, Philippine Army
CARHRIHL	Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law	IHL	International Humanitarian Law
CARP	Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program	ILPS	International League of Peoples' Struggle
CBD	Camp Bagong Diwa	IRA	Internal Revenue Allotment
CF	Ceasefire	ISAFP	Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines
CFA	Compostela Farmers Association	JASIG	Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees
CFA	Cawayan Farmers Association	KAMASS	Kahugpong sa mga Mag-uuma sa Surigao del Sur
CHR	Commission on Human Rights	Karapatan	Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights
CIDG	Criminal Investigation and Detection Group	Kasalo-CARAGA	Kahugpong sa mga Lumadnong Organisasyon sa Caraga
CLANS	Center for Lumad Advocacy and Services	KEDUMA	Kesasanabanay Dulangan Manobo
CLOA	Certificates of Land Ownership Award	KFA	Karahumi Farmers Association
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines	KMP	Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (Peasant Movement of the Philippines)
CPP-NPA-NDFP	Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front of the Philippines	LGU	Local government unit
DAP	Disbursement Acceleration Program	LPC	Lapanday Foods Corporation
DAR	Department of Agrarian Reform	LRT-MRT	Light Rail Transit - Metro Rail Transit
DepEd	Department of Education	LUPA	Leon United Peasants Alliance
DILG	Department of Interior and Local Government	LUPA-STTI	Lumadnong Panaghiusa - Salugpongong TaTanu Igkanugon
DMCI	David M. Consunji, Inc.	MANADU	Mandaya Ancestral Defense Unit
DOH	Department of Health	MAPASU	Malahutayong Pakigbisog Alang sa Sumusunod
DOJ	Department of Justice	MARBAI	Madaum Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Association Inc.
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment	MDT	Mutual Defense Treaty
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development	MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
		MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front

NADECOR	Nationwide Development Corporation	PP	Political Prisoner
NAMASUN	Nagkahiusang Mag-uuma sa Surigao del Norte	RMP	Rural Missionaries of the Philippines
NAMASUR	Nagkahiusang Mag-uuma sa Agusan del Sur	RPA-ABB	Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Bongcayao Brigade
NCIP	National Commission on Indigenous Peoples	SJDM	San Jose Del Monte
NDFP	National Democratic Front of the Philippines	SMR	Southern Mindanao Region
NEDA	The National Economic and Development Authority	SoCSKSarGen	South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Sarangani, General Santos
NIPAR	New Indigenous People's Army Reform	SONA	State of the Nation
NMR	Northern Mindanao Region	SOS	Save Our Schools
NPA	New People's Army	STTICLC	Salupungan Ta Tanu Igkanugon Community Learning Center
NUPL	National Union of Peoples' Lawyers	TCJ	Taguig City Jail
OFW	Overseas Filipino Worker	TRIFPSS	Tribal Filipino Program of Surigao del Sur
OPAPP	Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process	TTIFA	Trinidad-Talibon Integrated Farmers Association
OpBay	Oplan Bayanhan	UCCP	United Church of Christ in the Philippines
PCPR	Promotion of Church People's Response	UN	United Nations
PH	Philippines	UPLM	Union of Peoples' Lawyers in Mindanao
PILC	Public Interest Law Center	US COIN	United States Counter-insurgency
PNP	Philippine National Police	VFA	Visiting Forces Agreement



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on the Human Rights Situation in the Philippines

