



jon bustamante



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**Jose Maria Sison**

***Women in Revolution***

**&**

***National Minorities and the Right***

***to Self-Determination***

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***Sison Reader Series***

# **Book 17**

**Julieta de Lima**

**Editor**

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# Foreword

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*Sison Reader Series Book 17 combines Jose Maria Sison's articles, speeches, interviews, statements and messages on the struggle for women's liberation and all forms of gender discrimination as well as on national minorities and the right to self-determination from 1969 to 2022.*

His most important writings on these two subjects are guides to the development and advance of the struggle of women and the national minorities for equality and nondiscrimination.

Julieta de Lima

Utrecht, The Netherlands

June 15, 2023



# **The Lavaite Attitude and Conduct on Women's Liberation**

**September 15, 1969**

During his incumbency as commander-in-chief of the People's Army and as a top party person in authority, he was responsible for countless abuses against the masses. He was responsible for the disastrous line of allowing the entry of ruffians into the People's Army and encouraging them to abuse the people in the name of "economic survival." He is now so proud as a supposed "Christian" to criticize the erroneous bourgeois "revolutionary solution to the sex problem" of the Lava leadership but he was responsible for the malicious policy of using women as "bait" for men to enlist in the People's Army and he himself was no exemplar in his conduct towards women. (From "Treachery of Taruc as a Negative Example.")

# From Philippine Society and Revolution

1970

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## *Special social groups*

There is no social group in the Philippines that can be excluded from class analysis. When the Party gives special attention to such social groups as the fishermen, national minorities, settlers, women, and youth, it is not to obscure or discount the class content but to give due attention to certain common conditions that each social group peculiarly has or is in need of.

4. The women compose about one-half of the Philippine population and they cut through classes. The vast majority of Filipino women, therefore, belong to the oppressed and exploited classes. But in addition to class oppression, they suffer male oppression. The revolutionaries of the opposite sex should exert extra efforts to make possible the widest participation of women in the people's democratic revolution. They should not take the attitude that it is enough for the men in the family to be in the revolutionary movement. This attitude is actually feudal, and it would be to aggravate the old clan and clerical influence on women if they were to be kept out of the revolutionary movement. Women can perform general as well as special tasks in the revolution. This is an effective method for liberating them from the clutches of feudal conservatism and also from the decadent bourgeois misrepresentation of women as mere objects of pleasure.

# **The Women's Liberation Movement in the National Democratic Revolution**

**Message to the First National Congress of MAKIBAKA,**

**March 18-19, 1972**

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During the last two years, the Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) has contributed a great deal to breaching the wall of reactionary prejudices against women and preparing the way for the flood-tide of the women's liberation movement in the Philippines. Because the activities of the MAKIBAKA have been centered on urban areas, especially in the Manila-Rizal area, there is certainly quite a number of people who do not realize what a great inspiration the MAKIBAKA has given to the rise of women's associations in the rural areas. A significant part of the revolutionary mass movement today consists of women's associations at the barrio level of the type of the Samahan ng Kababaihang Makabayan. The vigorous campaign to form this type of association has been encouraged by the effective participation of the MAKIBAKA in revolutionary mass struggles. We can be certain that in a few years' time the women's liberation movement in both cities and countryside shall become a colossal force for revolutionary change under the banner of the national democratic revolution of a new type.

## ***The women's liberation movement in the national democratic revolution***

In a semifeudal and semicolonial society like the Philippines, it is inevitable that women like men suffer from the three systems of authority, such as political, clan and religious. In addition, however, women suffer from the authority of the

husband or what we may call "male authority." These four authorities that women have to contend with can easily be seen as expressions of the feudal-patriarchal ideology and system. Though in urban areas, there seems to be a blatant reign of bourgeois ideas and values, perceived in their most decadent forms as bred by a cultural imperialism, the feudal-patriarchal ideology and system persists as a countrywide base for prejudices against women. Decades of modern imperialist culture lay over centuries of feudal patriarchy in our history.

The women's liberation movement has every reason to exist and advance. Though women compose half of humanity, half of the nation and half of every revolutionary class, they have been prevented by the four systems of authority from fully unfolding and realizing their revolutionary capabilities. It is therefore necessary for women to unite, assert themselves and take their share in the most important endeavor, that is to say, in the present national democratic revolution.

It is extremely important for the women's liberation movement to grasp the line that political authority is the backbone of all the other systems of authority. By overturning that authority, we begin to overturn all the other systems. Political struggle, participating vigorously in the national democratic revolution now, is therefore the key link to the great cause of women's liberation. The women's liberation movement is basically a political struggle, with a revolutionary class character. The political authority of foreign imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism must be overthrown if Filipino women are to be liberated and achieve equality of the sexes.

As early as on the eve of the old democratic revolution, there was already some definite concern about the important role that women could play in effecting social change. The reformist Rizal gave focus to the contradictions between women and the feudal-patriarchal system in his "Letter to the Young Women of Malolos" and he made it a point in his novels to caricature women in a colonial and clerical milieu. In a more positive and revolutionary way, such historical figures as Gregoria de Jesus and Teresa Magbanua proved in the old democratic revolution that women can fight like men. The historical figure of Gabriela Silang also inspired the women then.

Alas, the old democratic revolution has been frustrated by US imperialism and its local reactionary stooges. The Maria Claras, Dona Victorias, Dona Consolacions and Sisters Putes and Rufas have merely taken new dress to set a

new colonial fashion. Their quiddities and weaknesses have been further cultivated by a persistent feudal-patriarchal system that is linked to cultural imperialism. To counteract the villains of the women's liberation movement, let us raise as our heroines the masses of women as well as their outstanding representatives who fight for the new democratic revolution. Liza Balandó, the woman worker who died in the hands of the US-Marcos clique at the May Day massacre of 1971, is one of the heroines whose revolutionary orientation and courage we must emulate and live up to.

### ***The women's liberation movement in the rural areas***

The majority of women in the cities belong to the working class. They are either wives, sisters or children of workers or they themselves are directly wage-earners in various enterprises. MAKIBAKA should pay special attention to this social fact in developing the women's liberation movement in urban areas. While MAKIBAKA has in its present early period drawn its membership mainly from the urban petty bourgeoisie, especially students and young professionals, it should vigorously promote the national democratic line, draw itself closer to the women of the working class and recruit members from this class. MAKIBAKA chapters can be established in factories and in working class communities.

There are more than enough issues that can be taken up by the women's mass movement under the banner of the national democratic revolution in the cities. For instance, the issue of rising prices and decreasing real income of the masses can easily arouse and mobilize the masses of women. This issue can be used to expose the evils of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Certain projects for the good of the community can be established to maintain continuous and daily interest in an urban women's association. "Cottage industries" can be set up to supplement the income of working-class families; nurseries and kindergartens can be set up to give women more time for productive work and for political work; free medical services and low-priced medicine can be worked out; and the like. To keep politics in command of economically ameliorative efforts, the women in urban areas should always be encouraged to engage in political discussion and participate in mass actions.

The trade union movement cries out for assistance from the women's liberation movement. There are certain lines of capitalist enterprises where women workers relatively abound, to cite some, the textile, shoe, cigar and cigarette and confectionery factories, airlines, marketing firms and stores, banks, eateries and

mass media. Activists of the women's liberation movement are most welcome by their fellow women here. Special attention should also be given to organizing and leading the domestic servants, mostly women, who are concentrated in major suburban subdivisions. In any work place where there are women workers or where women can work, it is necessary for the women's liberation movement to see to it that there are no discriminatory rules and practices against women, that women should have equal footing with men and should receive equal pay for equal work and that women should get the necessary privileges of maternity. Together they can push forward both the national democratic movement and the trade union movement.

The male workers also need the special assistance of the women's movement. They would be very grateful if their wives, mothers, sisters and children can be organized in support of the workers' struggle. A strike can easily weaken because there is no ample political preparation for those who depend on the worker's wages for their daily bread. Also, in the daily course of life, the menfolk should always be reminded that though they bring their wages to the hearth their womenfolk toil for them in back-breaking household chores and in that manner share their oppression and exploitation. The fact that many more women than men cannot realize their political productive potential shows how extremely rotten the present social system is.

We have dealt at length with the women of the working class. That is because they call for some basic attention and emphasis. With regard to the role of the women of the urban petty bourgeoisie, the MAKIBAKA has already amply indicated by words and deeds what direction they must take. This mass organization must continue to increasingly involve the women of the urban petty bourgeoisie in the revolutionary mass movement even as it strives to arouse and mobilize the women of the working class and develop links with the women of the peasantry. The few but influential women of the national bourgeoisie can also be encouraged to support the anti-imperialist front. But in the cities and major towns all over the country, the urban petty bourgeoisie—students, teachers, professionals and other women of self-sufficient means—will be more enthusiastic in supporting the aims of MAKIBAKA and in joining its chapters.

There is no doubt that MAKIBAKA has done much by way of advancing the national democratic cultural revolution of a new type. It should further do so. The role of women in any educational process can never be discounted. The old saying that mothers are the first teachers is completely true. If mothers and even

women who choose the teaching vocation are themselves miseducated, how can there be beneficent education for children? We have therefore the utmost concern that among Filipino women the spell of the four authorities be broken through the national democratic cultural revolution of a new type.

Other than MAKIBAKA, there are various women's associations. There are those "nonsectarian" or "nonreligious" ones that in the main distinguish themselves from others by the high professions of their members and that avow to be bourgeois liberal in standpoint. There are those that distinguish themselves from others by their religious affiliation and consider it most important to practice certain religious rites. There are those which find reason for their existence because their members are wives of the members of some male organizations. There are also the small circles of "high society" women as well as "social climbers" who always consider it their highest pride to be seen at some "exclusive" gathering of the wealthy and powerful. In varying degrees, these women's associations have reactionary views about themselves, about women in general and about the revolutionary mass movement. It is important for MAKIBAKA to seize leadership and initiative from these other urban-based organizations and distinguish allies and enemies among them.

### ***Perspective for the women's liberation movement***

The women's liberation movement must go through the national democratic revolution of a new type in order to go far in ending a long history of general degradation of women. As the national democratic revolution advances, the women's liberation movement is certain to accumulate strength through resolute and militant struggle.

When the national democratic revolution is completed and the socialist revolution begins, conditions for equality of the sexes shall be created by the large-scale implementation of agricultural cooperation and by the great strides of industrialization. With their full participation in politics and revolution, the women will have all the opportunities for doing away with the noxious notion that women are clinging vines. No one shall be allowed by policy to persist in such notion. Certainly women will no longer be regarded as mere social vases, social toys or child-bearing gadgets.

Throughout the period of the socialist revolution, the women will still have to struggle for the completion of their liberation. But then the basic conditions for

total victory shall be there and the odds shall be against those who wish to suppress or restrict their rights.

Long live the women's liberation movement!

Long live MAKIBAKA!

Long live the national democratic revolution!

Long live the Filipino women!

Long live the Filipino people!



## **From Guide for Establishing the People's Democratic Government**

**October 1972**

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Article 10. Women have equal rights with men in all spheres of political, economic, cultural, social and domestic life. Marriage, the family and the mother and child are protected by law.

# Message to GABRIELA

March 1983

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I congratulate you for holding this multisectoral convention of women, which you have fittingly called the General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Independence, Equality, Leadership and Action (GABRIELA). This comes as the most significant event in a ten-day celebration of International Women's Day.

It is admirable that you are determined to bring together into a broad democratic alliance, the women of all patriotic and progressive classes, sectors, organizations and circles. It is of urgent necessity for women from the working class, the peasantry, the middle strata, the upper classes and the various professions to unite and fight for democracy against the fascist dictatorship.

We are confronted with a tyrannical regime that is hell-bent on perpetuating the semicolonial and semifeudal system with the most barbaric means. The political and economic crisis of this ruling system is daily worsening, imposing intolerable suffering and misery on the broad masses of the people.

We are confronted with a tyrannical regime that reduces the overwhelming majority of women, especially those of the working class and the peasantry to abject poverty, stagnancy and deprivation. We are confronted with a tyrannical regime that takes pride in selling women as cheap labor and hospitality girls in the country and abroad.

The women's liberation movement is definitely a vital and integral part of the overall democratic movement. Women's rights are an inseparable part of the national and democratic rights that the entire Filipino people are fighting for.

Without the militant participation of women—half of the full force of the people—in the common struggle, victory cannot be won.

I am told that this convention is intended to sum up and consolidate the efforts of the Filipino women to liberate themselves through their militant participation in the people's struggle for national independence and democracy. I am told that you are to create new mechanisms and formulate new tasks for carrying forward the women's movement in the context of the struggle for national democracy.

Aware of your purposes, I am exceedingly pleased to give this message on women's rights in relation to the struggle for the restoration of democracy. I hope that I can shed light on the work of your convention as well as your future work.

# **Uphold the Militant Tradition of International Women's Day**

**March 8, 2009**

In solidarity and with utmost joy, the International League of People's Struggle joins today the celebration of women in general and their revolutionary struggle for emancipation and liberation from imperialism, feudalism and patriarchy. We remember and honor millions of women who trail blazed and paved the path for women's liberation movement.

Women have fought long and hard to protect their families, communities and peoples. In various periods in world history there have been women who led their people in fighting despotic rulers and invaders. Some examples are the heroic struggles of the Vietnamese Trung sisters in 39 AD, the Philippines' Gabriela Silang in 1763 and the women in the Paris Commune and Petrograd uprising.

We commemorate today the historic ties between the women's movement and the proletarian movement for the very concept of a day celebrating women and women's militant internationalism originated from the working class movement.

Women, such as Clara Zetkin, Alexandra Kollontai and Rosa Luxembour, have inspired others to the indispensable and imperative role of women in the struggle against imperialism, feudalism and patriarchy. (Photo International Women's Day Forum in Montreal, Feb. 28, 2009)

Especially at this time when the US imperialists have perverted the noble cause of women's emancipation against feudal patriarchy and so-called Muslim fundamentalism to justify invasion, occupation and wars of aggression, women need to reaffirm the militant and revolutionary traditions of their movement.

By reducing women's liberation to simply a matter of individual rights or a trivialized gender war against the opposite sex, US-led imperialism seeks to hide

the fact that its definition of equality is no more than the right to be as exploited and oppressed as the next propertyless person or being as mere sex object of male chauvinism and prurience.

US-led imperialism pretends to be an advocate of women's rights while transforming them into chattel for multinational corporations and commodity for the labor and sex markets. US-led imperialism proposes to bring "democratic rights" to women even as it maintains by brute force, in alliance with local reactionaries, economies that create an endless supply of impoverished women to exploit in their own homes or in sweatshops .

Under global capitalism, women comprise 75 percent of 1.3 billion who subsist on less than US\$1 per day. Majority of the 800 million impoverished and hungry are women and children even though women produce 60 percent of the world's food supply. In the developed countries, women's benefits from health care to overtime pay are under assault by corporate management.

Governments are also cutting social benefits, reducing pregnancy leaves and welfare support. Even within the United States itself, hard-won women's rights and welfare are eroded and eradicated to satisfy the lust for power and profits of monopoly and capitalists and the ruling classes.

Western nations, while reaping profits off underpaid migrant labor, enact xenophobic laws. To stifle protests against such unjust laws, the same governments pass legislation restrictive of rights and freedoms such as the Patriot Act that enable them to repress immigrants.

Roughly 50 percent of the world's migrants are women. Hence, the irony that these same governments that stoke anti-immigrant sentiments tolerate disguised forms of trafficking i.e., official programs for importing workers, the mail-order bride system, to mention but two.

This is the world that women's number one enemy, imperialism, has created for womankind: a world of oppression and exploitation of entire nations, the working people and women, a world of intolerable suffering and relentless violence unleashed by the imperialists and their minions.

But imperialism, feudalism and patriarchalism are facing the growing strength and active resistance of a determined women's liberation movement. All over the world, women are involved in different forms of struggle as they carry their fight

in the picket lines and trade unions, street demonstrations, parliaments and urban centers and they are engaged in people's war for liberation. To the women who must try to survive in this world of darkness, the revolutionary traditions of March 8 are both illuminating and enlightening. Let women assert their rights to those traditions and act in concert with their revolutionary brothers to change the world. Let them forge a strong women's anti-imperialist front and solidarity the world over.

The International League of Peoples' Struggle is more than ever resolved to promote the crucially important role and initiative of the women and women's organizations within and outside the League in advancing and realizing their own distinct demands as women, cooperating with the menfolk as equal partners and contributing to the general movement for national liberation, democracy and socialism against imperialism and all reaction.

Long live the women of the world!

Persevere in the struggle against imperialism and reaction!

Raise high the banner of the women's liberation movement!

**Message of Solidarity to GABRIELA**  
**on its 10th Congress and 25th Anniversary**  
**Celebration**

**October 24, 2009**

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On behalf of the International Coordinating Committee and all member-organizations of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I wish to express warmest greetings of solidarity to the GABRIELA on the occasion of its 10th National Congress on 25-27 October 2009 and the celebration of its 25th founding anniversary on 28 October in conjunction with the National Filipino women's day of action.

We salute and congratulate the leadership of GABRIELA as an alliance and all the allied women's organizations, institutions, desks and programs in the Philippines as well as the overseas chapters and support groups for all their achievements in advancing the cause of women's liberation in line with the the Filipino people's struggle for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes.

GABRIELA was born in the very crucible of the struggle against the US-directed Marcos fascist dictatorship in 1984, exactly when the people's struggle was peaking towards the overthrow of the hated regime. Since then, in twenty five years of militant struggle, GABRIELA has gained rich experience, has grown significantly in strength and has become the most outstanding patriotic and progressive women's formation in the Philippines.

We appreciate you for reviewing the history of GABRIELA in order to

understand the struggles, hard work and sacrifices needed to bring about victories from year to year and the current level of strength you wish to further build on. We commend you for your renewed resolve to raise higher your capacity for arousing, organizing and mobilizing the women along the national democratic line.

We are glad that you are responding to the challenges posed by the rapid worsening of the intertwined crises of the world capitalist system and the domestic semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system of big compradors and landlords. The US-instigated policy of “free market” globalization has accelerated the accumulation and centralization in a few imperialist countries and has resulted in the worst financial and economic crisis since the Great Depression.

The Philippine economy is laid prostrate by its agrarian and semifeudal character and by the Arroyo regime's subservience to US economic policy dictates. It has long been deprived of industrial development and land reform and even its agricultural production for domestic consumption has been severely damaged. The global crisis has reduced the demand for the Philippine export of raw materials, semi-manufactures and contract workers. Foreign debt service is expanding and yet new foreign credit is contracting.

The broad masses of the people in the world are undergoing acute suffering from mass layoffs, depressed incomes, soaring prices of basic commodities and services, increasing rent and homelessness, the breakdown of social services and other social ills. The women and their children of the toiling masses of workers and peasants are suffering the main brunt of the economic and social crisis. Most of those who belong to the middle class are also undergoing serious difficulties.

Social discontent is widespread and deepgoing. In response to the protests and just demands of the people, the US-directed Arroyo regime has engaged in the systematic and gross violation of human rights. Under the pretext of combatting terrorism, it has engaged in state terrorism and has collaborated with US military forces in carrying out military intervention and violating the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Philippines. The US and the Arroyo regime are inciting the people to wage armed revolution.

We welcome the three-year General Program of Action that you intend to promulgate. We support all the seven points in this program:



1. Fight the plunder and military intervention being carried out by the US with the collaboration of the puppet government.
2. Expose and oppose the “charter change” and other schemes that seek to increase the control and exploitation of the country by the US and the local exploiting classes.
- 3 Resist all forms of violence against women and invigorate the campaign for upholding the rights, welfare and dignity of women.
4. Consolidate the victories of the women's movement in the electoral struggle and raise this struggle to a new and higher level through the Gabriela Women's Party and the drive to increase the voices of women in both houses of Congress.
5. Uphold and carry forward the rights and welfare of children.
6. Expand the membership of the GABRIELA chapters and raise the organizational capabilities at every level.
7. Further carry forward and invigorate the work of GABRIELA among the overseas Filipino women and in the international women's movement.

We wish GABRIELA the utmost success in its 10th National Congress and in its celebration of its 25th founding anniversary. May these meaningful events inspire the further advance of GABRIELA. We wish you all the best in carrying out your program of action. We hope that this will bring about a new and higher level of political and organizational strength of GABRIELA in fighting for the rights and interests of Filipino women and the entire Filipino people along the national democratic line of struggle

# **International Anti-Imperialist Women's Conference in Montreal**

**December 5, 2009**

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The International League of Peoples' Struggle welcomes the initiative of the members of the Commission on Women to organize an international conference of women with the theme: "For a Militant Global Women's Movement in the 21st Century" Celebrating the Centennial of International Women's Day. The Conference will be held in Montreal, Canada in August 2010.

The call for this Conference was made at the session of Workshop on Concern No. 7 organized by ILPS Commission on Women, during the Third International Assembly (TIA) of the ILPS held in Hong Kong in June 2008. In the resolution of Workshop 7, one of the specific actions called for an International Conference of women to commemorate the centennial of International Toiling Women's Day on March 8, 2010. The International Conference shall lead to the formation of an anti-imperialist global women's formation, the International Women's Alliance.

The purpose of the conference is to assess the achievements, shortcomings and setbacks of the worldwide women's rights movement during the last 100 years, honor the pioneers and trailblazers of the struggle for women's rights and liberation, and to draw up an action plan for developing and advancing the women's rights movement, starting with the formation of a global anti-imperialist women's alliance.

Previous to that, in June 2005, the ILPS, during an International Coordinating Committee (ICC) meeting, supported the concept of a women's anti-imperialist league.

We invite other member-organizations of the Commission on Women to join the International Initiative Committee, being spearheaded by Gabriela, Philippines and Women of Diverse Origins, Canada. They will keep you informed of developments and details of this Conference.

Attached is the announcement of the International Anti-imperialist Women's Conference.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation.

Prof. Jose Maria Sison

Chairperson, International Coordinating Committee

International League of Peoples' Struggle

### ***Announcement***

## **International Anti-Imperialist Women's Conference in Montreal 2010**

### **"For a Militant Global Women's Movement In The 21st Century"**

### **Celebrating the Centennial of International Women's Day**

The world system of imperialism and capitalism is in deep crisis. Women are among the worst affected. Thus, they are on the front lines of the struggle against war and militarisation, and for survival, decent income, jobs, and basic human rights. They do this from a situation of multiple oppression or worse, working more for less pay, having less access to the wealth of the planet and taking more than their share of family responsibilities. They continue to bear the brunt of patriarchal values and backward social systems.

People around the world are organizing to oppose financial rescue operations that aim only to resuscitate an unjust and dying system -one that offers no future for humanity or the planet. There are workers, peasants, students, intellectuals—all organizing, sharing strategies, analyses and struggles to do away with this system and build alternative societies. Women are also organizing locally and internationally around their specific issues and in a global framework.

We have heard of each others' struggles, internationally and locally, have drawn

lessons from them, supported each other where possible. The time has come to link ourselves organizationally to form a powerful, progressive, anti-imperialist, women's movement in the world!

The need to link our struggles more effectively was discussed at the Women's Commission of the International League of People's Struggle in Hong Kong in June 2008. A resolution was adopted to organize an international conference of women in 2010 "to commemorate the centennial of International Toiling Women's Day leading to the formation of an anti-imperialist global women's movement".

The March 8 Committee of Women of Diverse Origins was represented at the meeting, and proposed to host such a conference. The resolution was adopted unanimously by the participants—women from Hong Kong, Taiwan, India, Australia, USA, Canada, the Netherlands and the Philippines.

The International Anti-imperialist Conference, "For a Militant Global Women's Movement in the 21st Century - Celebrating the Centennial of International Women's Day" will take place in Montreal in August 2010. It will culminate with the establishing of the International Women's Alliance (IWA).

The central focus of the conference will be: Imperialist globalization: the global financial and economic crisis, War and Violence against women.

An International Initiative Committee has been formed. It is headed by GABRIELA Philippines, the convenor of the Women's Commission, and Women of Diverse Origins of Montreal, Canada.

### ***The Conference Itself***

The Conference will be three days.

Registration will be the day before. In the evening of the registration day, there will be the formal opening of the Conference.

Day One will open with a keynote speaker. This will be followed in the morning by two other speakers and then workshops. The afternoon will also have two speakers and workshops.

Day Two in the morning will have two speakers and workshops.

The afternoon will also have two speakers and workshops.

Solidarity Evening will be on Day Two.

Day Three will discuss the formation of the International Women's Alliance the objectives, proposed constitution, and election of officers.

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***Participants to the conference:***

The conference will be composed of delegates from the major regions of the world, from progressive anti-imperialist women's organizations, women from mass-based (grassroots) progressive organizations of workers, peasants, youth, indigenous and aboriginal women from the marginalized sectors, women of the global south, migrant women and refugees and women in national liberation movements.

***Sessions for registered participants, sessions for the public***

The conference would include formal decision-making sessions, open to registered participants, as well as sessions and events open to the public at large.

# **Draw Inspiration and Lessons from the Struggle for Women's Emancipation**

## **Message of solidarity to the Montreal International Women's Conference**

**August 13, 2010**

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We, the International Coordinating Committee and all member organizations of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), convey our warmest greetings of solidarity to all the delegations and distinguished guests of the Montreal International Women's Conference, currently convened from August 13 to 16, 2010. We congratulate the hosts and organizers for their success in preparing this conference in accordance with the resolution of ILPS Commission No. 7 on the cause of women's liberation and rights against all forms of sexual discrimination, exploitation and violence.

We are glad that this conference is held in conjunction with the year-long celebration of the 100th anniversary of the International Women's Day. In this regard, we honor all the women who have fought, sacrificed and scored victories for the cause of women's liberation in close unbreakable connection with the struggle against imperialist domination and class exploitation.

Let us remember that the outstanding German proletarian revolutionary Clara Zetkin first proposed the annual holding of international women's day in the international conference of working class women in Copenhagen in 1910 under the auspices of the international socialist movement in order to inspire the unity and militancy of the working class women to oppose the extreme conditions of

exploitation to which they were being subjected under conditions of rapid industrialization and capital expansion.

Let us recall that in March of 1911 over a million women rallied to mark International Women's Day in several European countries. Since then, women in an increasing number of countries have become an ever more massive and significant force fighting for the right to vote, to hold public office, to equal pay for equal work vis-a-vis the menfolk, to maternity and child benefits and other better conditions as well as for the general upliftment, emancipation and empowerment of women through active participation in struggles for national liberation, democracy and socialism.

The march of women to celebrate International Women's Day served as the prelude to the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia. As soon as the Soviet Union was established, the Bolshevik Alexandra Kollontai asked Lenin to make the day an official holiday. In every major field of social endeavor, women have scored great achievements through their participation and equal partnership with men in revolutionary struggles for national and social liberation and in the course of socialist revolution and construction.

Women have also made great strides in fighting for their rights in the imperialist and dominated countries because of their perseverance in struggle and also because of the example of real emancipation and advancement of women in socialist countries and people's democracies. In capitalist countries, the bourgeoisie have enacted laws supposedly to respect certain rights of women but these are more formal than real and women still need to fight for their realization.

In the wake of the betrayal and reversal of socialism and the consequent adverse effects on the national liberation movements, the imperialist powers and their reactionary puppets have undertaken all kinds of offensives against the working people and distinctively against women. The basic exploitativeness of the monopoly capitalist mode of production which results in recurrent crises of production has been aggravated by the rapid taking of superprofits and overvaluation of monopoly assets through the financialization of entire economies made dependent on unsustainable debts of governments, corporations and households.

The extreme worsening of the crisis of the world capitalist system, now plunged

in protracted depression, has been brought about by the US-instigated policy of “neoliberal globalization.” This presupposes that the imperialist and other economies keep on growing so long as the financial oligarchy and the entire monopoly bourgeoisie can make superprofits and accumulate capital through the denationalization of client economies, liberalization of trade and investments, privatization of public assets and deregulation against the working class, women, children and the environment.

The policy of “neoliberal globalization” is coupled with the US-instigated policy of “global war on terror.” In the name of fighting terrorism, the imperialist powers and their puppets are emboldened to attack the fundamental freedoms and human rights, engage in state terrorism and justify foreign military intervention and wars of aggression waged by the US either unilaterally or multilaterally in collaboration with other imperialist powers.

Under the current global conditions of protracted depression and wars, the broad masses of the people suffer rapidly rising levels of oppression and exploitation, whether or not they are in the war zones where devastation of life and resources is at its worst. Everywhere in the world today, it is the women and the children who suffer the most. And it is of crucial importance that women throughout the world rise up against imperialism and all forms of reaction that bedevil them and the rest of the people.

We are elated that in holding your conference you are determined to draw inspiration and lessons from the long history of the women’s struggle for emancipation and rights against multiple forms of oppression, to discuss the long-running and current problems of women, to achieve consensus on the resolution of issues and to launch the International Women’s Alliance by ratifying its Basis of Unity and Constitution. We consider your conference as an undertaking of historic significance and a meaningful way of celebrating the centennial of the International Women’s Day and advancing the cause of women’s liberation and rights on a global scale.

We commend you for adhering to the purpose of International Women’s Day, which is to address the multiple oppression and exploitation that women suffer in the hands of the imperialists, feudalists and the patriarchalists. We agree with your determination to trace the milestones of the struggle of women for liberation and upliftment, examine the current social, economic, cultural and political situation of women, confront the rising level of class exploitation, the



global economic and financial crisis, the imperialist wars and violence against women and set forth the tasks for advancing a militant global women's movement in the 21st century.

We appreciate the comprehensive range of topics in your plenary sessions and workshops. You address the major problems besetting women in various situations and you seek to present the current and potential forms of resistance that women are waging for their liberation and rights.

It is but necessary and appropriate that you devote your attention to the plight and struggles of the most oppressed and exploited women: those who are workers and peasants, those who are forced to migrate, those who suffer racism, discrimination and genocide, those indigenous women who are being displaced from their ancestral domain, those in areas engulfed by imperialist wars and state terrorism, those subjected to religious oppression, sexual prejudices, restrictions of reproductive rights and violence and others.

We admire your resolve to emulate and support the struggles of women in all continents and countries and to give special attention to the outstanding concrete struggles of the women of Palestine, Afghanistan, India, Iran, the Philippines, Mexico, Tamil Eelam, Africa, Haiti, Guatemala, Aotearoa and elsewhere.

We look forward to your success at resolving issues during the conference and reaching consensus on your Basis of Unity. The time has come to form the International Women's Alliance in order to unite the women of Asia, Africa, Latin America, Middle East, North America and Europe and build a militant anti-imperialist and democratic women's movement. It is imperative and urgent for women to strengthen their ranks in order to uphold, defend and promote their rights against the escalating efforts of imperialist powers and puppet states to deprive them of their rights and further oppress and exploit them.

We are glad that you have the alliance as your organizational form. It is a broad framework for bringing together the grassroots women's organizations, sections of local trade unions that promote women's concerns, networks, alliances of women's organizations and all other women's formations that subscribe to the Constitution of the Alliance and to all plans and resolutions approved by the Assembly.

We support all your aims and purposes. May you realize them in all the years to

come.

# **Celebrate the Centennial of the First International Toiling Women's Day**

**March 8, 2011**

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We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, express our most militant greetings to women all over the world and join you in the celebration of the centennial of the International Women's Day. The history and current trend of militant women's struggle must be highlighted in the midst of the global depression and chaos that pervade the various regions of the world today.

The first International Toiling Women's Day was proclaimed in 1911, to mark the role of women in the industrial revolution and celebrate the gains of the women who marched to the streets to fight for their rights and welfare. During that time, the exploitation of women and children in the factories, in the fields and in their homes fed capitalism and allowed it to flourish.

One hundred years later, women continue to struggle, this time against global monopoly capitalism that unleashes the worst forms of exploitation on the toiling classes. Imperialism has worsened the condition of women. Although women produce 60 to 80 percent of the food, they comprise 75 percent of the 1.3 billion people who subsist on less than US\$1 per day. They are the majority of the more than 800 million people who are deprived of food security.

In the countries impoverished by imperialism and local reactionaries, women are displaced from their lands and livelihood as peasants and agricultural workers. As workers, they receive lower wages and are deprived of benefits—from health care and social security to overtime pay—as labor contractualization has become

the norm to extract more profits for the capitalists.

They comprise almost 50 percent of migrant workers who are forced to leave their families to seek employment abroad only to face discrimination and abuse in the host countries. The exploitative labor export policy in their home countries is within the imperialist scheme of extracting superprofits from cheap labor. In extreme circumstances, women fall prey to human trafficking and are forced into prostitution because of sheer lack of viable and decent employment opportunities and systematic deprivation of rights. With the current protracted global economic depression, women and the rest of the people are increasingly exploited and abused. As imperialism tries to save its decadent and moribund rule, it directs the servile local reactionary powers and its puppet regimes to adopt uniform measures of intensified exploitation through neoliberal economic policies, constitutional reforms, and outright repression under the US-instigated global war of terror.

The miserable conditions, made more intolerable by the global crisis, incite the people to resist and build their revolutionary strength. Across the continents, mass uprisings and revolutionary struggles for national liberation and democracy are toppling dictators and lackeys of imperialism and are opposing the intervention and aggression of the US and other imperialist powers. Women are rising up in great numbers with the men and taking a prominent role in all the mass struggles in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

In the current sweep of people's uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East, the authoritarian regimes of Tunisia and Egypt have collapsed. Those in Bahrain and Yemen are tottering. A full-blown civil war is in progress in Libya and the imperialist powers headed by the US are maneuvering to launch aggression and seize the oil wealth for themselves. As part of the people's movement, women in these countries have found their voices and raised their strength to fight for their rights, welfare, and emancipation, despite the deep-seated feudal and patriarchal culture.

There is no room for complacency as the struggle of the peoples against their oppressors intensifies and spreads. Imperialist powers led by US will not allow their grip on the global economy to loosen and slip with the fall of their lackeys and the rise of the people's movements across the world. They will try with might and main to retain or regain their dominance and apply measures for their client-states to appear stable.

As part of the people's revolutionary struggle, the women's movement is continuously challenged to maintain vigilance and engage in militant work against the imperialist powers and all their machinations. The seeds for the triumph of a people's democratic revolution have been planted and the ground is fertile to nurture the revolutionary fervor that is spreading across the world. It is essential for women to play their vital and crucial role in the people's struggle for national liberation, democracy and socialism.

Long live the toiling women of the world!

Resist imperialism and all forms of reaction!

Strive for women's liberation!

Fight for social revolution!

Long live the proletariat and peoples of the world!

# **Fighter for the Liberation of Women and the People**

**Tribute to Maita Gomez, July 13, 2012**

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Julie and I wish to express our most heartfelt condolences to the children and other relatives of Maita Gomez; and to all her comrades and friends. All of us are deeply saddened by her unexpected demise.

Until her cardiac arrest, we had thought that she had many more years to serve the people in their struggle for national liberation and democracy and the women in their struggle for gender equality and for their full participation in all social endeavors. Nevertheless, her life is full of significant and outstanding achievements in fulfilling her revolutionary commitment and in rendering service to the people and the women's liberation movement.

Since the resurgence of the anti-imperialist and antifeudal movement in the Philippines in the 1960s, the patriotic and progressive forces have always taken a special interest in the development of the women's movement and in the increased participation of women in the struggle for national liberation and democracy.

We are enlightened by the writings and deeds of revolutionary women leaders like Clara Zetkin and Aleksandra Kollontai and inspired by the heroic examples of Gabriela Silang, Melchora Aquino, Gregoria de Jesus and other revolutionary Filipino women leaders. We are guided by Mao's teaching that the women hold up half of the sky. The activists of the Student Cultural Association of the University of the Philippines, the Women's Bureau of Kabataang Makabayan

and the women in the labor unions, peasant associations and professional circles carried forward the progressive role of women.

As cadres of the national democratic movement, we were elated by the emergence of Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) from the Women's Bureau and women members of Kabataang Makabayan and the dramatic ways by which MAKIBAKA demonstrated the necessity and importance of the role of women in the struggle to achieve the radical transformation of society in all major respects. Even as MAKIBAKA was initially a small organization, its protest actions stirred the interest of women in various fields.

MAKIBAKA and its leading figure Lorena Barros succeeded in attracting to the progressive movement women who were nationally prominent. They included beauty queens who won in prestigious pageants and were known to be exceptionally intelligent. Among them was Maita Gomez, Miss Philippines of 1967. They used their celebrity status to advantage in denouncing not only the reactionary character of beauty contests but also the entire ruling system. They spoke on major issues affecting women and the entire people.

Maita Gomez was inspired and energized by the First Quarter Storm of 1970, the Diliman Commune of 1971 and the further mass protest actions until 1972. She wanted to be a revolutionary. And she availed of the opportunities in sight for learning about the revolution. She was influenced by the events that led to the making of MAKIBAKA. However, she received her initial education in Marxism-Leninism and Philippine society and revolution in the Humanist League of the Philippines which was a small and laid-back group in the University of the Philippines, under the influence of the Cultural Bureau of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

After the First Quarter Storm of 1970, in which large numbers of women activists participated, Lorena Barros came to our mountain camp in Barrio Dipogo in Isabelita to report on developments in the women's movement and to discuss plans regarding MAKIBAKA. She mentioned some former beauty queens being sympathetic to the national democratic movement and she regarded them as figures whose celebrity was effective for supporting the patriotic and progressive stand on national issues.

Lorena and Maita knew each other and the latter would eventually maintain an

enduring relationship with Lorena's family even long after her death

When martial law was proclaimed by the Marcos regime in order to impose a fascist dictatorship on the people, Maita decided to go underground in Manila. I was aware of her situation through the officers of the Education Department of the Party General Secretariat who were in charge of her. For a while I considered taking her into my outer staff in Nueva Ecija. There was then a possibility for posting her in the hacienda house of an ally. But comrades decided to assign her for underground staff work in Baguio City. The house she was in was raided by the enemy and she was arrested.

Through the National Liaison Committee of the Party, I came to know of her plan to escape from Camp Olivas and I monitored how she actually escaped, with the help of a military officer who brought her out of the camp with him. Then some comrades in charge of accommodating Maita became concerned about the motive and behavior of the officer and about the vulnerability of the underground house which was close to a police station. They were able to consult me. Thus, a plan was adopted and carried out by the Party organ concerned to separate her from him and further ensure her safety.

I leave others to narrate in more detail how subsequently she and her partner Joey Decena were at first deployed in a guerrilla zone in the Quezon-Bicol border area and how they were redeployed to a guerrilla zone in eastern Nueva Ecija in Central Luzon. In both guerrilla zones, they lived and performed duties as communist cadres and guerrilla fighters. In the latter guerrilla zone, Ka Joey died as a martyr in a battle. When Ka Maita fell sick, she was brought to Manila for treatment and recovery.

Other comrades can better narrate how as a result of certain tactics and certain circumstances, Ka Maita was able to surface and join the legal movement against the Marcos fascist dictatorship in the 1980s. She co-founded the Gabriela in 1984. This emerged as the largest patriotic and progressive alliance of women's organizations. She was also one of the principal leaders of the Women for the Ouster of Marcos and Boycott (WOMB). She co-founded in 1986 the first political party of women in Philippine history, Kababaihan para sa Inangbayan (KAIBA-Women for the Motherland).

Julie met Maita in 1984 and they became friends as they worked together in the movement to oust the Marcos fascist dictatorship. The three of us met at her



Ermita apartment after I was released from military detention in 1986. We became barkada. We attended many public meetings and social gatherings together. On many occasions, we exchanged ideas about women and the revolutionary movement. She was then engaged in women's studies as an activist, scholar and teacher at St. Scholastica. We had become very close comrades and friends by the time Julie and I left for abroad for our global university lecture tour at the end of August in 1986.

From abroad, I learned that she had serious differences with Popoy Lagman with regard to her candidacy in the 1987 elections. She drew away from his organizational sway. But she stayed committed to the principles of the revolutionary movement. I sent word to her to stay firm in order to encourage her. At first, she did not recognize the necessity and importance of the Second Great Rectification Movement but ultimately she embraced it as soon as she came to understand the issues. She became more active in the national democratic movement. Others can narrate how she spoke and fought in the service of the people from the 1990s to the time of her death.

I met Maita for the last time in May 2009 in Amsterdam. She was winding up her work as economist in IBON Foundation. And she was happy that in the previous month she was elected co-chairperson of the Makabayan Coalition and that Gabriela which she had co-founded celebrated its 25th anniversary and all its glorious achievements.

Our conversation was wide ranging, covering so many topics, serious as well as funny. It lasted from about 8 pm to 4 am. She expressed her strong commitment to the cause of development through national industrialization and land reform and her outrage over the plunder of natural resources and destruction of the environment by the imperialist and big comprador mining firms. She was optimistic about how the patriotic and progressive forces would advance further in the legal democratic movement and in the anticipated elections of 2010.

We are all proud of our beloved Comrade Maita Gomez as an outstanding freedom fighter. She has bequeathed to us and future generations a rich legacy of writings and activism in the service of women and the entire people. We shall always love and remember her for her hard work, intelligence, sacrifices and for all her positive contributions to the national democratic movement.

# **Celebrate 28 Years of Activism and Service**

## **Message of Solidarity to GABRIELA on its 11th Congress**

**October 26, 2012**

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We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, express our warmest greetings of solidarity to GABRIELA as you hold your 11th National Congress and celebrate your 28th year of activism and service to the Filipino women and the Filipino people in the struggle for national freedom and democracy.

We congratulate you for successfully gathering the women activists from the ranks of workers, peasants, urban poor, migrants, youth and professionals in order to take up the goal-oriented theme: "Advance and Strengthen the Women's Struggle towards the Upsurge of People's Resistance Against the Worsening Attacks on Livelihood and Human Rights!"

Your call to action is timely and important. The world and our country today are in the throes of a severe crisis. This is the result of the anti-worker and antipeople laws of motion of monopoly capitalism, particularly the super-exploitativeness and bankruptcy of the neoliberal policy of "free market" globalization. The economic and social crisis is generating state terrorism and wars of aggression. Under these conditions, women suffer and must fight for justice and peace.

Before you can define your tasks, you must know the situation, sum up your experience and evaluate your current strength and prospects. We welcome your highlighting of GABRIELA's triumphs in the last three years, particularly in campaigns, public education, services and organizing work on the issues of violence against women, women's economic and political rights, and women's

right to health care and basic social services.

You must continue to respond to the challenges posed by national oppression, exploitation and poverty, lack of access to jobs and livelihood, increasing incidences and emerging forms of violence against women, human rights violations and foreign military presence, and the effects of climate change and environmental destruction on the lives of Filipino women. You must criticize the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system and the current Aquino regime of big compradors and landlords who are servile to US imperialism.

It is timely for your Congress to discuss and prepare for the forthcoming national elections in 2013. You must agree on the ways to promote and expand grassroots women's political participation and push the women's agenda for needed reforms through policy advocacy at all levels of governance. You must also strive to strengthen solidarity with the women of the world against imperialist attacks and intervention.

We commend your decision to honor the women who have dedicated their lives to the defense and advancement of women's rights and to the struggle for the liberation of the oppressed women and for the improvement of their social conditions. It is fitting to render homage to the women who work tirelessly and selflessly for a future with genuine democracy, justice and peace, where women can fully and truly participate in the development of society.

We wish your Congress the utmost success as a form and method of consolidation, laying the basis for further advances. We are confident that GABRIELA will become stronger and will win greater victories as a result of your Congress. We are certain that you shall celebrate ever greater victories at your next Congress.

Uphold, defend and advance women's rights!

Long live GABRIELA and Filipino women!

Win greater victories in the struggle for national freedom and democracy!

# **Women of the World, Unite against Imperialist Globalization**

**March 8, 2014**

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Imperialism is destroying the lives of women. It is aggravating the exploitation of women and intensifying attacks on women's rights. Through the quintuple neoliberal policies of pressing down wages, liberalization, privatization, deregulation and denationalization, imperialism has reversed whatever gains the working women's movement has gained in more than a century of struggles. This is the context of our International Women's Day Commemoration this year.

Strewn along the path of neoliberalism are the tortured bodies of hundreds of millions of working women squeezed dry by monopoly capitalist extraction of superprofits. Outsourcing by big multinational corporations have depressed already low wages of workers, with developing countries trying to outdo each other in offering the lowest possible wages to outbid their rivals for contracts. Contractualization of labor, increased production quotas, shorter breaks, and extended working hours have now become the norm.

In the drive to bring down production costs, safety measures are ignored. Workers are often locked up in workplaces to prevent escapes, thus turning factories into death traps. In 2013 alone, thousands of women workers perished in fires in factories in the Philippines and Bangladesh. But most devastating was the collapse of a building in Bangladesh, which killed a thousand of women garments workers. These factories manufacture brand-name clothes sold at high prices in the US and EU.

Land and resource grabbing accelerated by neoliberal policies are rendering hundreds of millions of peasant and indigenous women and their families landless and without any income source while imperiling food security. An estimated 80 million hectares of land in many countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia have been subjected to land grab deals, often involving their very own governments. Largescale mining has destroyed the environment, thus rendering natural disasters more fatal especially to women and children who make up 70 percent of the victims.

At the base of imperialist globalization are the millions upon millions of women living under slave-like conditions while the imperialists rake up superprofits. They fill up the void created by the privatization of social services, such as child and health care. In a world of increasing food prices and food insecurity, they take on multiple work to feed their children. Their vulnerability to violence is heightened by the increasing poverty of their families.

Imperialist economic plunder and competition are the reasons behind the US military pivot to Asia and the Pacific. Its aim is to ensure the continued resource domination of US imperialism in the region. This in turn will result in the further deterioration of the economic situation of Asia's peoples. The new basing arrangements and increased rotational presence of US forces will put more impoverished young Asian women and children into the clutches of sex exploiters.

Women all over the world are driven by their dire situation to unite and fight for their rights. From year to year, as the global crisis worsens, the women's movement has raised its level of resolve and militancy and widened its various arenas of action. Women are fighting not only for their very existence but also for the lives of their children and grandchildren. Outraged, they vigorously expose, condemn and oppose the doublespeak of their own governments, which try to equate neoliberal policies to development.

Women are at the forefront of mass protests and demands for democratization or anti-militarization, or against neoliberal policies and for genuine land reform and national industrialization. In increasing numbers, they join national liberation movements as armed fighters. They build women's organizations that are part of the people's struggle and take up such issues specific to women as violence against women (VAW) and women discrimination. In the midst of repressive governments, women have shown courage and have fought for their rights even

at the risk of losing their life, limb and liberty.

Women are reaching out to each other across nations in a show of unprecedented solidarity against imperialism. They are providing support for each other's struggle. The latest example of solidarity has been shown by women's organizations from every part of the globe, including the US, Europe and Canada, to the striking women garments workers of Cambodia.

Ultimately, it is the billions of toiling women, fighting in concert with their toiling brothers and united across the globe, who will strike the deathblow to imperialism.

Women of the world unite!

Resist imperialist plunder and military aggression!

Struggle and fight for women's liberation!

# **Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of GABRIELA Youth**

**March 28, 2014**

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I am happy to extend the militant greetings of the International League of Peoples; Struggle to GABRIELA Youth on its 20th founding anniversary. Our International Coordinating Committee, national chapters and all member-organizations extend their solidarity with your national leadership, chapters and members.

As with GABRIELA from which you came, you have a rich history. We are one with you in celebrating your victories in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the women youth to fight for their rights and those of the Filipino people along the general line of national democratic struggle against imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

To our knowledge, you have chapters in universities and communities and are active in the movement for a nationalist, scientific and mass education and culture and in campaigns to protest and fight all forms of commercialization of education; as well as in campaigns against sexual molestation and harassment of women inside and outside the campus.

It is commendable that you are involved in many issues and actions of the Filipino people, especially of the toiling masses and other oppressed sectors in the struggle for national freedom and democracy. We take pride in your steadfastness in principle, and for your courageous, militant, effective and fruitful actions.

We hold GABRIELA Youth in high esteem as an organization of women youth and as an ILPS member organization. We are one with you in your theme:

GY@20: No stopping until victory! Celebrate the 29th anniversary of GABRIELA Youth! Advance the mass struggle to victory! Dare to expand our membership and chapters!

We are confident that you will grow stronger in determination, organization and action and reap more successes. Be good in the struggle against the US-Aquino regime because it would be a step in strengthening the movement to overthrow the rotten semicolonial and semifeudal system of big compradors and landlords and replace it with a patriotic and democratic system of the Filipino people.

Long live the GABRIELA Youth!

Long live the women youth!

Long live the national democratic movement!



# **Honoring Judy Taguiwalo upon Retirement from the University**

**April 17, 2015**

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Red salute to Comrade Judy Taguiwalo! I am honored and delighted to be invited by CONTEND to participate in this gathering to honor Ka Judy on her retirement from the university. We celebrate not only her service as a university professor but more importantly also her service to the Filipino people in the new democratic revolution. It was in this university where she began her revolutionary work.

I was able to follow Ka Judy's work since she was a student activist at the University of the Philippines, especially when the Samahang Demokratikong Kabataan and Kabataang Makabayan united in the last quarter of 1969 and cooperated to create the First Quarter Storm of 1970, the Diliman Commune of 1971, and other mass actions until the fascist dictatorship completely suppressed the legal democratic movement in 1972.

Ka Judy is an example proving how the national democratic movement and the revolutionary party are able to draw the best activists from among the ranks of the urban petty bourgeoisie. She was among the SDK members who were evaluated and interviewed to become revolutionary cadres for the provinces and the countryside. She was also outstanding in her work as a leader of Makibaka.

Ka Judy is a fine example of a student who could be an activist of the SDK, the Nationalist Corps and Makibaka on campus, in the streets and in the Southern Tagalog countryside; read and study revolutionary books; attend meetings; write

for the Collegian; and together with all these, still had high grades until graduating cum laude with a degree in Social Science and Social Work.

Ka Judy's capabilities and work are truly comprehensive. One time, it was even her "pretty legs" that were photographed and published in the newspapers protruding from the back of a jeepney when activists crammed themselves there to evade the police's violent dispersal of a rally.

Ka Judy finished her course in 1970 and returned to Negros in 1971. She participated in laying the work and building the committee and organization in Western Visayas. When the regional cadres were meeting in a barrio in Panay in July 1973, the police came to arrest them and the comrades resisted. A firefight ensued and there were casualties. Ka Judy was captured, tortured, detained at Camp Lapulapu in Cebu and later transferred to the Ipil Detention Center in Fort Bonifacio.

We in the Central Committee were saddened by these incidents. But we were overjoyed when we heard that Ka Judy was able to escape from prison on November 1, 1974 along with two other women and three male political detainees. The escape was well-timed because it was All Saints' Day. The story even reached us that it was raining and a detained woman comrade danced in the rain, and she became the focus of the guards' attention.

The first time Ka Judy and I met was in 1975 in Bulacan. She was in the underground movement and helping revolutionary work in Panay. We, together with her comrades from Panay, talked about conducting social investigation and mass work. It was not long before she was assigned to Pangasinan, which was then part of the Ilocos-Montañosa-Pangasinan region. In the latter part of 1975, she entered a guerrilla zone in the Cordillera and joined what came to be known as the Big Camp that conducted a long summing-up.

Comrades in the Cordillera say that Ka Judy is good in theory and analysis, thinks logically, speaks and writes clearly, is disciplined, and hardworking. She is capable of performing both high-level and low-level tasks. She could relate theory and practice in any level of work. She was unforgettable as the head of the kitchen collective. She was an expert in cooking flavorful and delicious meals for big groups. You know that this kind of cooking is both a science and an art.

She left the Cordillera to care for her infant child and to transfer to the Party's Education Department. She wrote many pieces in Pilipino for the intermediate and advanced Party courses.

Eventually, she was assigned to Central Luzon. She worked here until she was arrested in Angeles City on January 28, 1984. Then pregnant, she gave birth to Inday June in prison, just like Julie did with Jasm. Ka Judy and Inday June were in prison until the Marcos fascist dictatorship was overthrown in 1986.

I cannot give details about Ka Judy from the years 1977 to 1986 because I was also incarcerated then. I was so happy to see her again, when I was just released from detention in 1986. I visited Bernabe Buscayno at his wife's BLISS apartment. It happened that Ka Judy lived in a nearby apartment. We had a talk.

I got to know Ka Judy's work and successes since then. She went back to study in the university. She obtained her PhD in Philippine Studies from UP and MA in Public Administration from Carleton University in Ottawa. She became a university professor. She was founding president of the All UP Academic Employees Association and the All UP Workers Alliance. She was a professor at the Department of Women and Development Studies of the College of Social Work and Community Development. And she was elected to the UP Board of Regents.

Ka Judy's prompt and diligent activism in the national democratic movement continues. She gives patriotic and progressive lessons to students and joins them in mass actions on the various burning issues of the day. She is active in the union of UP academic and non-academic employees, in the Congress of Teachers and Education for Nationalism and Democracy (CONTEND) and in the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT). I believe that even as she is retired, she will continue her relationship with the students, teachers and employees of UP.

Wherever Judy is, she will continue to be active in the women's movement.

One important teaching of hers is that the women's place is in the struggle. Because of her advocacy of gender equality and women's rights, she was given the Distinguished Alumni Award in Gender Equality/Women's Empowerment by the UP Alumni Association.

On the 25th anniversary of GABRIELA, she was honored as one of the "Women

of Courage.” Said the GABRIELA leadership on Ka Judy: Wherever she goes, whatever her task, she always advances the rights and welfare of women. Because of her standpoint, activism and helpfulness, she is loved by her comrades in AMIHAN (the national federation of peasant women).

We take note that just as she did in her younger days, Ka Judy can perform various important tasks simultaneously. She could do so because of her comprehensive abilities, intelligence, firmness, daring, diligence in work, courage in struggle and readiness to make sacrifices. But despite being a serious revolutionary, Ka Judy’s sense of humor is well known. For whatever situation and issue, she has a humorous story or quick joke. Laughter is important. It imparts happiness and lightens tasks. It is an effective antidote to fatigue or surfeit of work, boredom in prison or fear of the enemy or of death.

Ka Judy is a great woman revolutionary because she honors earlier martyrs like Andres Bonifacio and Lorena Barros. And because she knows that her efforts are significant and fruitful contributions to the struggle of the Filipino people, especially the toiling masses, in completing the new democratic revolution against US imperialism and the local ruling classes of big comprador bourgeoisie and landlords.

Ka Judy has come a long way. She has gone through many hardships and trials through a path fraught with twists and turns and ups and downs. But she has reaped many victories in serving the people. The road is long before the summit and Ka Judy will be reaping many more victories. In my view, Ka Judy will not really retire and fade away. She will take on many more tasks in the overall national democratic movement and the women’s movement. She will be moved to action by her revolutionary spirit and the crying needs of the people.

Thank you.

# **On Strengthening the Urban-based Women's Movement against Imperialism and its Neoliberal Policies**

**Views for GABRIELA Forum, Liberating Forum, September 13,  
2015**

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Note by Julie de Lima: Joma and I collaborated on this presentation. We agreed that I would read it and that we would both accept questions during the open forum. One or both of us would be answering, depending on the need.

*1. Short and simple discussion of neoliberalism and its effects. How women are exploited and used more, and in this regard, discuss how women are resisting this on a global scale and what lessons we have learned from this.*

The unbridled extraction by monopoly capitalists of superprofits from the toiling masses worldwide, especially in underdeveloped countries, is the essence of imperialist neoliberal policy. To enlarge the profits extracted by monopoly capitalists, wages are purposely depressed and higher technology used to reduce employment.

This leads to the crisis of overproduction because with the people's falling incomes, their ability to buy goods is likewise reduced. Due to reduced sales and lower rates of profit, banks and states increase the money supply and loanable funds supposedly to stimulate consumption and production. But the finances do not go into production and reemployment, they end up in the financial markets of shares, bonds and derivatives only to continue the flow of profits to the monopoly capitalists.

*The particular policies under the general policy of neoliberalism are investment and trade liberalization, the privatization of state properties, the elimination of socially and environmentally protective regulations and denationalization. What do these terms mean in the concrete Philippine situation?*

Investment liberalization means that foreign investments of monopoly capitalists can freely or unbridledly enter and leave, and so with the superprofits they earn. And not only foreign capital and profits, but also the incomes of big compradors and the ill-gotten wealth of corrupt government officials could freely be taken out of the country. On the other hand, trade liberalization means the free entry of foreign manufactured and agricultural products. Its effect is that our country could not develop the capability to build industries or to industrialize; and agricultural production for our daily food needs is ruined. On top of this, our fellow Filipinos lose control over the land and agriculture to foreign agro-corporations whose production is mainly geared for export.

Due to the lack of industrialization, our country cannot generate enough employment. Unemployment is growing, poverty is worsening and our economy is stunted. The favored enterprises—like foreign and big comprador-owned mining, logging, plantations for export crops, private construction for the wealthy, semimanufacturing for export, call centers, shopping malls and banks, among others—do not develop, and actually damage the economy.

Due to the lack of jobs in the countryside, the unemployed troop to the urban areas, thus continuously enlarging the number of the unemployed and underemployed in the cities. While high-rise buildings for the wealthy are being constructed, slums areas are sprawling with the shanties of the poor. Growing numbers of people are also seeking to leave the country to find work overseas, even if it means being separated from their families and young children. Most of those who leave are women.

The government is an out and out puppet of imperialist powers and is a blind adherent of neoliberal policy. Government properties have been privatized, including vast tracts of land, public utilities (water, electricity and trains, among others), social service institutions like hospitals, schools and others. Private monopolies are deemed to be more efficient, charging lower rates for their services. But we know that this is all a lie.

Deregulation means that regulations meant for the social protection of workers,

women and children are removed. The sinister goal is to increase the profits of monopoly capitalists by intensifying exploitation. Environmental protection is also done away with to accelerate the monopoly capitalists' extraction of our natural resources through mining, logging and export crop plantations. The destruction of the land is untrammelled, as is the disposal of waste and toxins into rivers, lakes and seas, the use of fossil fuels (oil and coal) with strong carbon emissions as well as other pollutants that raise climatic temperatures in our country and globally and cause more frequent storms. The policy of denationalization means that all natural resources as well as various types of enterprises and businesses are opened to foreign monopoly capitalists and their big comprador cohorts. Foreign capitalists are already allowed to have 100 percent ownership of mines, banks, trading and other enterprises.

At present, officials of the puppet government want to remove or revoke whatever few provisions are left in the reactionary constitution that promote economic sovereignty and national patrimony and call for restrictions on foreign ownership of natural resources and businesses. As half of Philippine society, women also suffer from the depredations of neoliberal policies. In fact, women bear a bigger burden than men. They are expected to care for the home, the children, younger siblings and elderly parents and relatives who can no longer work. But it is women who are first made to work in low-paying service jobs within and outside the country. They serve as domestic helpers for wealthy families, cleaners, caregivers of other families, restaurant service workers and salespersons, among others.

In tandem with US imperialism's neoliberalization policy is full spectrum dominance, the US' strategic military doctrine to maintain its worldwide domination and counter all forces—states, countries and people—that oppose or resist the depredations of neoliberal globalization. This is where the US' so-called war on terror or global war on terror comes in, which is in fact a series of wars of aggression in Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa; as well as the various acts of intervention and subversion in all parts of the world, including the Philippines. All this has led to crimes instigated by the US and perpetrated by NATO and all other puppet governments: genocide and the destruction of the people's most fundamental needs and rights.

A striking application of full spectrum dominance is Obama's pivot to Asia, where an important component is the entrenchment of US military forces in the Philippines through the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA), on

top of the earlier Visiting Forces Agreement of 1998. Also related to this is the Aquino II regime's current Oplan Bayanihan, a far more grievous extension of the former Oplans imposed by the US on our country and implemented by the puppet government through widespread violations of all the rights of the Filipino people.

*How are women struggling against neoliberalism on a global scale?*

The most effective way of resisting their discrimination, exploitation and oppression, which are rooted in the concrete conditions of each era, is to fully join the revolutionary movement. This has been proven by the long tradition of women joining revolutions not only in their own countries but also in solidarity with other struggling peoples and women on a global scale.

You must unite with all democratic forces fighting the depredations of forces implementing neoliberal policy—the monopoly capitalists and their states and military forces. You can do this through the ILPS and the International Women's Alliance (IWA), both of which have Gabriela as a member-organization. In addition, you can establish links with other organizations or alliances like yours in different countries and strengthen your solidarity with them in democratic and anti-imperialist actions.

Many of you have relatives who go to other countries to work and live there. Most of them are women. Encourage them to link up with and join IWA and GABRIELA chapters, if any, or Migrante International and its chapters in different countries. One other thing. Through chapters of GABRIELA, International League of People's Struggle, International Women's Alliance and others, you can link up with or build solidarity relations with women's organizations in different countries to advance the international democratic and anti-imperialist movement.

For us to win the solidarity and support of the world's peoples, first of all, we must do well in resisting the evil force and effect of neoliberalization. Our victories here will also be their victories. Our all-out resistance in our own country will attract the solidarity and support of other peoples. We must not relent in fighting all the ramifications and depredations of Oplan Bayanihan in advancing the interests of foreign monopoly capitalists and local bureaucrat capitalists which have resulted in despicable crimes that the Filipino people have had to suffer. You will know about all types of such crimes by studying the



verdict of the newly concluded International People's Tribunal (<http://international-peoples-tribunal.org/verdict/>) held in Washington, DC last July.

*2. As the foremost leaders of the mass movement during the First Quarter Storm and now, internationally, what experiences and lessons can you share to further advance the women's movement in Metro Manila?*

Beforehand, we will share the lessons we learned from our experiences and later recount our experiences. Most important from the start, is the correct view that women comprise half of the people and half of humanity. Thus, half of the capacity to take action in order to change the social system relies on the strength and intelligence of the women. Because society is dominated by the big comprador and big landlord classes which in turn are dominated by US imperialism, women from the working class and the peasantry must join the movement to put an end to the semicolonial and semifeudal society and replace it with a patriotic and democratic society. In this context, it is very important to advance the women's movement in Metro Manila based on the women workers and assisted by progressive activists from the urban petty bourgeoisie.

We should include the entire decade of the 1960s in the question in order to understand the progress in the women's participation in the national-democratic movement. By the time of the First Quarter Storm of 1970, women and men in practically the same numbers took to the streets of Metro Manila. In the early 1960s, women comprised more than 30 percent of the Student Cultural Association of UP and later, Kabataang Makabayan. But in public meetings and protest actions, it remained difficult for us to have women's participation go beyond 10 percent.

The most likely reason for the women's low rate of participation was the traditional patriarchal, feudal and semifeudal culture that still heavily influenced women as well as men. Most of the leaders of progressive organizations were men, up to 90 percent or even more. Women youth were obliged by their parents to come home at the so-called proper time not only to protect their virtue but to have them help in household chores. Those who lived in dormitories had more freedom to join progressive organizations.

From our studies of Marxism-Leninism, especially the writings of Comrade Mao on the relations between women and men, we learned the principle that the

revolutionary movement will develop and win once women fully join it since they comprise half of the people and half of humanity. We remembered, took to heart and also propagated the truth that women suffer more than men. Not only do they suffer like men from exploitation, oppression and repression in the hands of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism but on top of all this, they suffer from chauvinism or men's exaggerated regard for themselves.

Thus, women must participate all-out in the movement, in greater numbers, and their abilities developed in all spheres. They must not be confined to so-called women's work, such as finance, cooking and doing the laundry. Women and men are equal in terms of their basic rights and duties, and in leadership based on ability. Women will be liberated through struggle and they must not be hindered from, but encouraged and assisted to fight male chauvinism; and all forces that are exploitative and oppressive of both women and men. Women must also encourage and assist men in eradicating the remnants of male chauvinism that still manage to emerge among men in the progressive and revolutionary movement.

The Kabataang Makabayan created a Women's Bureau in 1965 to ensure that there would be more women members and that there would be outlets for their intelligence and abilities. We purposely struggled against the petty bourgeois illusion or belief that women and men are already completely equal just because women and men have equal access to university education and the professions. Even in the small world of the petty bourgeoisie, the sexes are not completely equal. If we look at the conditions of the women among the toiling masses, we will see tens of millions of women suffering from the absence of equality in society.

In drawing inspiration for women's liberation, we also studied the history of the Philippine revolution. We learned about the role of women in preparing for and waging revolution. We all know about the wise and courageous leadership of Gabriela Silang and Teresa Magbanua (who defied her husband's wishes in joining the Katipunan) in the struggle against Spanish colonialism; of Melchora Aquino, Gregoria de Jesus and others from the Katipunan and many other women revolutionary leaders in the fight against US imperialism and the Philippine reactionary puppets.

It was not enough to correctly study and think about women. There was a need to correctly put into practice the principles and policies on women. The men

from SCAUP and KM who joined the labor movement through the Lapiang Manggagawa and particular federations like the National Association of Trade Unions (NATU) and the National Federation of Labor Unions (NAFLU) had opportunities to join in struggle women unionists, especially from banks, private universities and food, beverage, cigarette and textile factories, where women formed the majority. We witnessed how the women excelled in leadership and activism. In the conduct of mass work in the country, we also witnessed the performance of women leaders in the community and the peasant organizations.

When the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism was founded, the KM Women's Bureau made sure that it would also have a Women's Bureau to increase and enhance the participation of women.

Since 1965, there has been a notable rise in the number of women joining protest actions. The equal number and equal level of militancy of women and men students were brought to the fore when student uprisings exploded and spread in universities and colleges across the country in the second half of the 1960s. Eventually, the KM Women's Bureau established Makibaka based on the growing number of women activists. By the time of the First Quarter Storm of 1970, women and men in equal numbers were joining the youth uprisings that drew up to 100,000 people per mass action.

You can draw many lessons from our accounts of successful experiences in arousing, organizing and mobilizing women. You can apply these lessons creatively to the current situation in your communities and areas of responsibility.

*3. What advice or major points can you impart in organizing women workers and women youth and students? How important are these to the women's movement?*

With proper guidance from GABRIELA, women workers can easily join in efforts to organize and develop unions in factories and lines of work. They can also easily initiate or assist in building general organizations in their communities and organize other GABRIELA chapters and projects, such as day care centers, clinics and group discussions.

Youth and student activists, especially the women among them, must understand that it is difficult for women workers who have wage-paying jobs, union work

and household chores to add community organizing to their tasks. Here, we see a big gap that the youth and students could fill by helping organize communities and run community projects. Reading and studying are burdens in themselves but students and youth still have more flexibility, especially if they choose the community they live in or one near their residence.

It is a good opportunity for students and youth to do organizing work to learn about the conditions of the impoverished masses, hold discussions with them and help in building different types of community organizations. They can help build a general community organization like Kadamay and particular organizations, like GABRIELA or Anakbayan chapters or any other appropriate organization.

We must remember that it is the task of Gabriela or any other sectoral organization to help organize other national-democratic organizations, wherever the opportunity arises and endorse the newly organized forces to the proper organs or organizations for continuity. Cooperation is very much needed in mass organizing, so we must not confine our organizing efforts to a single sector. On the issues we handle, we must always relate women's issues to the overall objectives of the national-democratic revolution.

In our work and in building any kind of mass organization, we must first of all learn from the masses about their conditions, needs and demands. There must be social investigation. We must gather five to ten people who can provide information and choose who among them has leadership abilities. Based on our social investigation, we can learn how to apply the general line of the national-democratic revolution in the area and in the type of organization to be built.

In building an organization, someone must explain beforehand about the organization and there should be an initial number of members. It would be fine to have 20. On the day the organization is founded, someone must explain its objectives and the basic points in the organization's constitution. There must also be discussions to clarify things. Before the meeting ends, the organization's officers can be elected.

#### *4. Topics you can add*

We have had a long presentation and have covered a lot. We had better devote the time remaining to an exchange of views and discussions. Ask us about what you think should be elaborated on or other things related to your basic issues but

were not covered by our presentation. Thank you!

# **Message of Solidarity to GABRIELA**

## **on its Twelfth National Congress**

**October 3, 2015**

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On behalf of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I wish to convey warmest greetings of solidarity to GABRIELA on the occasion of its 12th National Congress. We are highly appreciative of your more than three decades of serving and empowering Filipino women and for being the most outstanding women's organization that takes the anti-imperialist and democratic line in the Philippines. We are proud of your being a member-organization of the ILPS.

We congratulate you for your achievements in campaigns, public education, services and organizing work on issues of violence against women, women's economic and political rights, and the general welfare of women and their families, especially in the last three years.

It is fitting that your National Congress highlight and celebrate your achievements.

We anticipate that your Congress will respond to the challenges posed by poverty, lack of access to jobs and livelihood, worsening situation of violence against women and girls, human rights violations and foreign military presence and the effects of climate change and environmental destruction

on the lives of Filipino women. Women and children become most vulnerable under worsening conditions of exploitation and oppression.

We presume that your congress will pay attention to the coming national

elections in 2016 and will consider how to promote and expand grass roots women's electoral participation and how to continue to push the women's agenda for needed reforms and carry out policy advocacy at all levels of

governance. We hope that you will continue to cause the election of legislative and executive officials who stand for the rights and interests of women.

While we consider the electoral struggle important, we are confident that you will continue to develop all forms of struggle that can further strengthen and empower GABRIELA and the women during and beyond the electoral campaign period. The mass protests on the streets and the deliberative indoor meetings are complementary and supportive of each other.

In view of the ever worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system of big compradors and landlords under the twin US policy of neocolonialism and neoliberalism, we urge GABRIELA to intensify the struggle for the rights and interests of women against the evils of monopoly capitalism, feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism and male chauvinism and to fight alongside the Filipino men in the overall struggle for national and social liberation.

All of us must struggle more resolutely and more militantly than ever before to realize the Filipino people's demands for full national independence, democracy, social justice, development through land reform and national industrialization, the efflorescence of patriotic and progressive culture and an independent foreign policy dedicated peace and development.

# **Celebrate International Women's Day**

## **Resist Imperialist Plunder and War**

**March 8, 2016**

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We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), celebrate International Women's Day and congratulate the women's organizations and all women for their struggles, sacrifices and victories in upholding, defending and promoting women's rights, in asserting and exercising the progressive role of women, in resisting imperialist plunder and war and striving to bring about a brighter and fundamentally better world for all humanity.

Let us recall the glorious history of the International Women's Day. It came about as the result of the struggles of working class women against capitalist exploitation and oppression, of socialist and communist women like Clara Zetkin and Alexandra Kollontai, of the women's movement for equal rights and universal suffrage, of the women who perpetuated the memory of the Paris Commune and who spearheaded on March 8, 1917 the overthrow of Czarist rule in Russia and of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries that institutionalized the celebration of the International Women's Day (IWD).

The first known observance of Women's Day was on February 28, 1909 in New York. It was held by the Socialist Party of America to commemorate the 1908 strike of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union as well as the mass action of garment workers for a 10-hour work day and other better wage conditions on March 8, 1857. In the International Women's Conference in August 1910, the German socialist women proposed the annual celebration of the International Working Women's Day on March 8. In the following year, on



March 19, 1911, the IWD was celebrated for the first time on an international scale, by over a million people in Austria, Denmark, Germany and Switzerland. From 1914 onwards, it became the practice to hold IWD on March 8 in all countries.

After the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution in 1917, the communist Alexandra Kollontai and Vladimir Lenin made IWD an official holiday. Women obtained social and gender liberation, including the right of suffrage and other rights equal to those of men, far ahead of the women in the West. All further socialist revolutions and national liberation movements followed the example of the Soviet Union. In the West, IWD was first officially recognized and observed only in 1977 when the UN General Assembly proclaimed March 8 as the UN Day for Women's Rights and World Peace.

It is important to recall the history of the IWD and the working class and anticapitalist roots of the women's movement in order to combat the attempts of the bourgeoisie and the reactionaries to obfuscate such roots, coopt the women's movement and redirect it towards bourgeois feminism, liberalism, neoliberalism and all sorts of bourgeois subjectivist currents against the working people, people's democracy, socialism and communism in favor of the monopoly bourgeoisie, imperialism and all sorts of reaction.

Today, the women, their children and menfolk suffer in common the most intolerable forms of exploitation and oppression in both developed capitalist countries and underdeveloped countries under the auspices of the US-propagated neoliberal economic and social policy and under conditions of US-instigated imperialist wars and counterrevolution in an increasing number of countries.

We honor today all women, their organizations and movements that fight against imperialist plunder and war. They play a distinctive role even as they integrate themselves with the rest of the people in comprehensive struggles. Even as they excel in the struggle against imperialism and all reaction, they struggle against patriarchy and all manifestations of gender inequality, discrimination and violence against women and girls.

In the ever worsening crisis of the world capitalist system, conditions of low wages, mass layoffs, high rate of unemployment, gross inequality and widespread poverty even in the developed capitalist countries. The conditions are far worse in the underdeveloped countries. Working women are still locked

up in sweat shops and burned to death just like the women factory workers in the early years of the 20th century in New York City. At least 112 workers were killed in the Tazreen factory fire in Bangladesh in 2013; and 72 workers perished in the Kentex factory fire in the Philippines in 2015, to cite some horrific examples.

In the urban areas, women suffer miserable wages and living conditions and deprivation of social benefits and services whether they work in the sweatshops or stay at home doing subcontractual work. In the rural areas, they suffer land and resource grabbing which render entire communities of peasants and indigenous people landless, homeless and hungry.

The mid-2000 food and financial crisis has ignited a global wave of speculative investments where tens of millions of hectares of agricultural land worldwide changed hands, offered by client states to transnational corporations and other foreign interests in mining and logging concessions and corporate agriculture. Without their land, and with no regular jobs, they are mired in deep mud of mass poverty.

The manipulation of world food prices aggravate the food crisis and threaten food production and food security. This will worsen as a consequence of the signing of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the negotiations for the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and other free trade agreements. Meanwhile, governments have resorted to private public partnerships and the liberalization of agriculture to offset the fall in public spending. This will lead to widespread displacement of working women.

Women's emancipation is never possible under imperialism. Women must continue to expose and oppose the ruling bourgeoisie and the state for feeding them lies about the goodness and permanence of capitalism and imperialism. The goriest and most despicable manifestation of moribund imperialism is the ceaseless outbreaks of aggressive wars, the destruction of lives and property and displacement of millions of people as a result of the economic and financial crisis.

Four out of every five persons killed in the wars unleashed by the US and its imperialist partners and puppets in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Yemen and Kurdistan and the continued occupation of Palestine in West Asia are women or children. They also comprise 80 percent of the tens of millions of refugees

forced to flee their homes and homelands because of conflict, oppression or impoverishment.

Even as it is still wallowing in bloody quagmires of its own making in West Asia and Africa, the US is pushing the expansion of the NATO and making provocation on the borders of Russia. The US strategic pivot to the Asia-Pacific region is meant to contain China and guarantee US hegemony. It is fraught with war provocations. But China is making its own provocations against the peoples of Southeast Asia by making an outlandish claim of ownership over the entire South China Sea. In their conflicts among themselves, the imperialist powers make other countries suffer the escalation of plunder and the danger of war.

The increased presence of US troops in the Philippines and elsewhere in the Asia-Pacific region will put more women at risk of sexual abuse and exploitation. War oppressors inflict violence against women to silence and subjugate the population. Women must intensify the fight to end violence against women, to expose and denounce sexual abuses and demand justice.

The fascist invaders of World War II perpetrated sex slavery in occupied countries. This is well evidenced by the aggrieved women. The US-instigated Daesh jihadists (ISIS or ISIL) are doing the same in the Middle East. Violence against women occurs systematically not only under war conditions but also under non-war conditions. Prostitution and sex trafficking are rampant where mass unemployment and poverty make women vulnerable. Sexual violence occurs at home, in the office, factory, farms and schools.

Women must organize among themselves to strengthen the working women's movement against the multiple kinds of oppression that they suffer. The women's movement must raise higher their revolutionary consciousness and militancy and fight for women's liberation against imperialism and its policies of neoliberalism and aggression. Women must stand together and fight for national and social liberation against imperialism and all reaction.

Women must stand with all progressive organizations and join national liberation movements in fighting against repression, militarization, imperialist plunder and war. Women must not forget those before them who risked their freedom, their dignity and their lives for the women of today. Now that these gains are under attack women must defend them with utmost dedication and vigor.

Ultimately, the working women united with the rest of the people will prevail to change the ruling system, to end exploitation, oppression, patriarchy and wars of aggression. They must take part in rebuilding a society where women and the rest of the people are not exploited and oppressed by imperialism and its reactionary agents.

Arouse, organize and mobilize the masses of women!

Resist and fight capitalist exploitation and patriarchy!

Working women of the world unite to expose and oppose imperialism and its policies of neoliberal plunder and war!

Fight for women's liberation!

Defeat imperialism and all reaction!

# **Women Rise and Strike against Imperialism and Militarism; Fight for Women's Emancipation**

**March 8, 2017**

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We, from the International League of Peoples' Struggle, rise in solidarity with women all over the world and join them in commemoration of March 8, International Women's Day.

In 1911, women of the Socialist International declared the First International Toiling Women's Day to champion women's democratic rights and fight for reforms against the dire conditions, especially of working women and children. More than a hundred years later, their calls still ring true for the majority of the world's working class women who must further confront the fiercest imperialist attacks yet on the lives, rights and welfare of the majority of the world's people.

This year, we commemorate March 8 amidst an important nodal point in the history of the international women's movement – the dynamic reinvigoration of women's movements in the West, particularly in the US, as evidenced by the recent Women's March and in the strong participation of women of color in various protest movements, ranging from issues of women's rights, gender-based violence, racism, civil rights, defense of ancestral or native lands, anti-fracking and other forms of environmental destruction, austerity, privatization, precarity, militarism and war.

Such reinvigoration no doubt has been driven by the crisis of capitalism that has reached new heights since the financial crisis of 2008, and has had profound adverse consequences, even for the working classes of the imperialist countries.

The crisis is now turning for the worse with the rise of neofascism, the unprecedented repression of migrant and other democratic rights, the spreading of xenophobic, hate propaganda and white supremacy under the Trump presidency.

Equally important, we celebrate the continued vibrancy of the movements of oppressed women in neocolonial countries who have unyieldingly struggled and opposed imperialism, militarism and political repression. Their long histories of militant struggle have now become beacons in the global struggle of women for emancipation against all forms of exploitation and oppression. By refusing to accept the token reforms that imperialist countries and their client states have peddled with the intention of luring women away from the path of militant struggle, the women's movements have gained wisdom and strength from upholding the rights and interests of majority of the world's women – the working class women who have been the most affected by the anti-democratic, anti-national and anti-women policies of the imperialists and their client states.

Imperialism has caused the immeasurable suffering of women. The ever-increasing concentration of wealth in the hands of a few present no possibilities for women's emancipation under this system. Gains made by the women's liberation movements of the 70's and 80's have been so easily eroded by the reign of neoliberal policies. Instead of improving their social and economic conditions, women, like their male counterparts, are more than ever confronted with joblessness, homelessness, cutbacks in social welfare measures and other such manifestations of the global social and economic crisis.

The situation is much worse for millions of women in neocolonies as excruciating poverty and deprivations mark their lives as consequences of economic policies oriented to benefit big foreign and local exploiters.

While they suffer along with their male counterparts, working class women have had to bear the brunt of economic dislocation due to their traditional role in caring for their families and community resources. Big mining companies, agribusiness corporations and land conversions for foreign industrial and commercial use have caused the massive displacement of rural communities and have disrupted or destroyed local agro-ecological systems that ensure food security. Driven away from their traditional communities and resources, women peasants have to find work, entailing both money and time for travel and unregulated work hours to earn for their family's basic needs. Worse, many more

women are driven to work in cities or in foreign countries, subjected to low-paying, unregulated work that leaves them vulnerable to abuse, discrimination, violence, prostitution and/ or human trafficking.

At the core of the neoliberal attack on the working class is the ruthless drive to push down wages. With the introduction of so-called flexible pay schemes in many countries, neoliberalism has, in fact, stripped workers, especially new entrants to the labor force, a significant percent of whom are women, of their fundamental right to a living wage. Neoliberalism, instead of spreading prosperity with the so-called mobility of capital, has in fact degraded workers' conditions, reducing them to modern-day slaves.

Militarism is on the rise as inter-imperialist conflicts intensify — fueled by the global capitalist crisis and as the imperialists jockey for resources and nations to exploit and plunder. US imperialism today stands as the principal purveyor of war and militarism, spending ever increasing amounts to feed its military-industrial complex, in a futile effort to wriggle out of interminable crisis. It has unleashed wars of aggression and military and political intervention under the slogan of the global war on terror. It has trained and armed surrogate armies and paramilitary groups to foment destabilization in countries where it has vast economic interests or resist US domination. Elites both in capitalist homegrounds and in client states resort to violence, coercion, suppression and deception in order to crush political dissent and resistance.

Along with the rise of militarism is increased violence against women and children as they become victims of human rights violations, including sexual abuse by military and paramilitary groups. States do not only sanction profiteers to exploit women as objects for the entertainment and sexual pleasure of military troops but also use rape as a means of subjugation and conquest. Militarism foments misogyny, male chauvinism and the subjugation and gross sexual objectification of women.

The magnitude of the people's sufferings had generated a spate of protests and resistance, both armed and unarmed, to imperialist policies in many parts of the globe. Women play an important role in this resistance, with many taking to the forefront of local and national struggles against antidemocratic and pro-imperialist policies and programs. They expose and oppose the deceptive schemes that depict women as being passive, and token reforms meant to veer women's movements away from militant and committed resistance to imperialist

rule. Women are organizing everywhere, and the clarion call for women's emancipation has never been stronger.

Struggle for women's emancipation from patriarchy and all forms of oppression and exploitation!

Down with imperialism, militarism and fascism!

Uphold people's rights and women's rights!

Long live international solidarity!



# **Message of Solidarity to Migrante and GABRIELA-KSA**

**June 25, 2017**

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In the name of the entire International League of Peoples' Struggle, I convey warm greetings of solidarity to the June 25-27 the general assembly of Migrante and GABRIELA in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA).

It is proper that the two organizations join in one general assembly as their membership confront the crisis and problems involving their rights and interests as Filipino overseas workers.

The assembly theme is fitting and timely: Boldly arouse, organize and mobilize the biggest number of migrant workers and their families in order to fight for their rights and welfare and for social change in our country.

We see and feel that while the political and economic crisis in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East is intensifying, the Filipino migrant workers and their families have become more vulnerable to exploitation, oppression and abuse. The attack on their rights and livelihood here as well as on their families in our motherland have multiplied.

The whole world's attention was called to the thousands of stranded Filipino workers in the KSA when President Duterte visited and brought home a few of them. But this was not repeated and neither is there a plan on how to repatriate the multitude who can no longer stay in the KSA.

The number of those who cannot go home and in dire need of assistance that the

reactionary Philippine government should give is big and if at all they can go home face the uncertainty of having no regular job and livelihood in the Philippines. These problems confronting our compatriots mired in bitter conditions and future.

The growing challenges facing KSA migrant workers and their families urge them to advance their struggle for basic rights and welfare. Despite Duterte's promises and progressive posturings, no meaningful change are being implemented to respond to the people's basic interests and demands for land, wages, employment and rights.

Joblessness, low income, poverty and backward Philippine economy cause the forced migration or departure of people for abroad. Until now, there is nary a sign that the Duterte government would stop the cheap labor export policy. After one year as Philippine president, the promise to bring home overseas Filipino workers remain hollow. It is no different from the promises of a political trickster.

He and his cabinet cannot be expected to draw up policies for fundamental or meaningful change because most of them are blind followers of US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords, advocates of US economic neoliberal policy and hegemony through military power.

In the past year, many in our country hoped that peace talks would be fruitful. But it turned out that the Duterte regime has diminished or no interest in necessary social, economic, political and constitutional reforms as basis for a just and lasting peace. He insists on putting prolonged ceasefire ahead to put reforms aside and get the surrender and pacification of the revolutionary forces and the people.

We must fight for national political and economic sovereignty, people's democracy, economic development through genuine land reform and national industrialization, social justice, patriotic, scientific and mass culture and education and independent foreign relations.

It is especially important today for migrant workers and their families to stand and support the demands of various social classes and sectors that are oppressed and exploited. They must unite, organize and mobilize. Uphold genuine social change so that in subsequent periods it would no longer be necessary to go

abroad to be able to live.

Long live MIGRANTE and GABRIELA-KSA!

Long live migrant workers!

Long live the Filipino people!

# **Organize More Members Among the Ranks of Migrant Women**

**Solidarity with the Filipino Domestic Workers Association in the  
UK**

**October 8, 2017**

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I extend my heartfelt greetings and solidarity on the occasion of the fourth founding anniversary of your organization. I am with you in spirit as you celebrate your victories in promoting, defending and advancing the rights and welfare of domestic workers.

Your theme is correct: “Reaffirm our victories. Strengthen the ranks of women migrants in the United Kingdom!” You have achieved your victories because of your unity of thought and sentiment, organization and action.

Because of your victories, you will have stronger unity and be better able to achieve even more victories. Through your brilliant example, you have proven that your unity is effective and successful. You must excel further in drawing in, organizing and mobilizing domestic workers.

It is but right for you to organize more members among the ranks of migrant women. Highlight the intelligence and fighting spirit of women heroes like Gabriela Silang, Teresa Magbanua, Lorena Barros and Maita Gomez whose names have been etched in the history of our Motherland.

As the chronic Philippine crisis worsens, more Filipino women look for work

abroad. It is an important duty to fight for their rights and welfare because the crisis of the world capitalist system is likewise chronic and worsening and exploitation and oppression are intensifying, especially under neoliberal policy.

At all times, we must always focus our attention on our country, know what its basic problems are and do whatever we can for our compatriots who are exerting effort and struggling to change the oppressive and exploitative ruling system. We cannot hope for significant change to come from groups of politicians who serve as agents of foreign monopolies and the exploiting classes.

The US-Duterte regime has bared its evil character as a puppet of the imperialists and instrument of the big compradors and landlords. This regime likes to use brutal and bloody means to terrorize the people, especially the poor and those deprived of livelihood, liberty and justice.

Currently, there is a surging movement of the toiling masses and a broad united front against the US-Duterte regime. We must directly support the toiling masses and the patriotic and progressive forces. We rely on them foremost to attain the national and social liberation of our country.

Long live the Filipino Domestic Workers Association!

Fight for their rights and welfare!

Long live the patriotic and progressive forces!

Advance the movement for national freedom and democracy!

Long live the Filipino people!

# **Women Under Attack, Fight Back**

## **Statement on International Women's Day**

**March 8, 2018**

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The first observances of International Working Women's Day (IWWD) by socialist movements in 1911 underscored the fundamental demands of women: the end to imperialist war and establishment of genuine people's governments that realized the basic demands for bread, jobs, peace, and freedom. Popular women's organizations sought the abolition of capitalism and wage slavery of workers in tandem with emancipation of women through socialized education, child care and universal health programs.

The International League of Peoples' Struggles joins and calls on all the ILPS member organizations and groups and all social movements working for national and social liberation in observing the 2108 International Working Women's Day to reclaim the proud tradition of IWWD in realizing the still unfinished aspiration of truly liberating women and peoples from the clutches of imperialist and capitalist exploitation.

The basic contradictions obtaining during the inter-imperialist wars a century ago – where waning and new colonial powers squabbled over occupied and newly conquered territories to relieve the crisis of overproduction of goods and stunted consumer growth – are raging even fiercer today. While US imperialists are desperately trying to maintain global hegemony, new rivals, China and Russia, are poised to snatch regions away from US influence and establish their own free trade blocs and partnerships.

The neoliberal economic policy that these imperialist rivals use to consign weak

and poor countries to remain as raw material exporters and buyers of finished goods exacts a great toll on the welfare of women and children. Free trade agreements destroy food security in food producing countries, oblige client puppet governments to remove labor and other social protection for women, and raise prices of food, housing, health care and education, rendering billions of poor women and men enslaved to precarious everyday existence. Even in the advanced capitalist countries, the poor are not spared from structural adjustment austerity programs that slashed pensions, health and other social welfare services.

Moreover, the neoliberal doctrine underpins the drive of the US and other imperialists to foment rivalries and pocket wars that inflict environmental disasters, breed prostitution among, and foist war crimes on women and children. In the past decade, the US has staged aggressive regime-change interventions that lead to massive refugee and immigration crises in the Middle East, South Asia and Latin America.

Openly fascist, chauvinist and nativist movements are resurgent in all countries. They espouse the eradication of both nominal and real reforms for women. Trump's ascendance has brought about the roll-back of women's health gains. The struggle for women's rights is also criminalized in parts of South Asia and Africa. Client regimes in Turkey and the Philippines are espousing misogynist moves while working to reestablish martial law or national security state governments that are strongly imbued with militaristic violence against women. All over the world, women are under direct attack, specifically targeted by antidemocratic forces.

Since the observance of the first women's international day, neo-liberalism has sought to water down women's social movement calls with neoliberal feminism in attempts to convince women that basic problems can be addressed with such token mechanisms as microfinance, pseudo-cooperatives, and dole out support programs. In many countries of the world, these programs have created conflict within the family and ripped unity within communities.

In the face of all these challenges, national liberation and social movements should persevere in organizing women locally and in global solidarity against the ever increasing violence inflicted by the crisis of imperialism. The first advocates and organizers and movers of women's liberation movements have proven that women and men fighting together can defeat military superpowers

and their local pup- pets and establish just economic systems that lead to the genuine liberation of women.

We must take heart in the real victories that Peshmerga and Kurdish women fighters made in reclaiming dignity against proxy mercenaries of regional hegemons, support the struggles of indigenous women in the Amazon rainforests against mining corporations, and forge solidarity relations with the Rohingya and the Lumad women now being exterminated respectively by the despots Aung Saan Su Kyi and Rodrigo Duterte. As we mark International Women's Day, we rededicate our commitments to defeating the resurrected Transpacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the expanding Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) free trade zone, even as we seek to strengthen the women garment workers of Cambodia and women farmers of India as they battle the local effects of multinational corporations.

The people are under attack, women are targeted for attack. What do we do? We fight back. The League foresees even worse manifestations of this global crisis erupting into open war. Just as our forebears Rosa, Clara, Krupskaya, Angela and Leila saw the power of women and people united in the face of murderous warmongers, tyrants and dictators, so we now choose to forge greater unity, employ the sharp- est analytical and organizing calls, and advance with local victories until global emancipation is achieved.

Long live international solidarity!

Let the International Working Women's Day every year focus our struggles to achieve genuine equality and emancipation free from the clutches of imperialism!



# **Resist Together, Wage Revolution Together**

## **Message to Metro Manila Pride March 2019**

**June 28, 2019**

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I wish to express my solidarity to the Filipino LGBT community and in spirit join the Metro Manila Pride March set for today in Marikina City. I congratulate the organizers for bringing together LGBTs and allies in this march for equality, and against injustice and oppression.

I congratulate you for choosing “Resist Together” as the theme for Pride March 2019. It highlights the importance of collective action in the history and achievements of the LGBT struggle. It honors the LGBT resistance started by the 1969 Stonewall Uprising, and the first Pride March in the Philippines and in Asia in 1994 spearheaded by the Metropolitan Community Church Manila (MCC Manila) and the Progressive Organization of Gays (ProGay).

This theme is also timely and appropriate inasmuch as we are confronted by a regime that is tyrannical, treasonous, patriarchal, misogynist, mass murdering, corrupt and mendacious. The foul-mouthedness of the tyrant is often spiced with misogynist and anti-gay expletives.

The history of the now-global Pride March is a history of LGBTs collectively fighting for their rights against police brutality, against discrimination, and against a rotten system that excludes, dehumanizes and demonizes LGBTQIs. I join you in honoring and carrying forward this fighting record of LGBTs.

The LGBT community is a major part of the Filipino people. LGBTs have joined and even led movements and campaigns for the advancement of greater freedom,

democracy, social justice, all-round development and international solidarity for peace against imperialism and all reaction.

LGBTs have thus played a major role in the struggle for national and social liberation against the four evils of foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism, bureaucrat capitalism and patriarchy.

The Communist Party of the Philippines has accorded full civil, political, economic, cultural, and social rights to LGBTs in guerilla zones and territories of the provisional revolutionary government.

The CPP has long been affirming and welcoming all LGBTs who seek to overthrow the corrupt system that perpetuates hate, discrimination and oppression. Many LGBTs have taken up the cause of revolution and have become Red fighters and Red commanders of the New People's Army. We admire their brilliance and bravery.

For 25 years now, the CPP rules on the relation of sexes have included a non-discrimination clause that guarantees LGBTs enjoy the right to love and be loved while in pursuit of revolutionary goals. Yes, marriage equality has long been a part of life in the revolution.

The 12-point program of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines has also included a provision for the cause of LGBTs. When the revolution wins, equal rights and non-discrimination would be part of the law of the land.

I call on national democratic organizations to keep their doors wide open to LGBTs seeking to becoming activists. I also call on national democratic organizations to come out in full support of LGBTs in promoting and defending their rights against discrimination.

The International League of Peoples Struggle, the world's biggest anti-imperialist and pro-democracy alliance, also includes a Commission on LGBT Concerns. As chairperson emeritus of the ILPS, I cordially invite all anti-imperialist and pro-democracy LGBT organizations to join ILPS.

The worsening crisis of the ruling system under the homophobic and misogynist Duterte challenges LGBTs to political action. This is a president who claims to have been "cured" of his gayness, and uses the word "gay" as an insult. LGBTs are way more decent, more courageous, and more patriotic than Duterte.

LGBTs thus cannot rely on Duterte for the passage of the Anti- Discrimination Bill. We must depend mainly on the collective action of LGBT community and the support of the Filipino people who had been dubbed as among the “most gay-friendly” in Asia.

The LGBT community deserves the highest appreciation for having persevered in the struggle against discrimination. It is truly admirable that the number of participants in the Metro Manila Pride March have grown for the past years, especially in 2018. More towns and cities have also held their own Pride marches and parades.

I hope that Metro Manila Pride 2019 will achieve the utmost success in upholding, defending and promoting the rights of the LGBT community. Your commitment and your activism would surely earn the respect, admiration and support from allies and from the entire Filipino people.

Beyond Duterte, there’s a country to save and a world to win. The revolution is open to all and fights for all. Let us resist together today, and build a new country and a new world without exploitation tomorrow.

# **Tribute to Ka Judy Taguiwalo**

## **on her 70th birthday**

**February 18, 2020**

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Julie and I admire Judy Taguiwalo for all her outstanding attributes and achievements. But I admire most her high sense of service to the Filipino people and her firm commitment and significant contributions to their struggle for national and social liberation.

Born of parents who were educators, Judy has always recognized the high value of formal education. At the same time, she has always sought to learn from the social realities outside of the classroom and to act in concert with the people to change conditions that exploit and oppress them.

Thus, she joined the national democratic movement and subsequently co-founded in 1970 the Malayang Kilusan ng Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA) in order to uphold gender equality and the role of women in revolutionary change. She combined well her academic studies with her activism as she finished the degree of Bachelor of Science in Social Work with honors at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

She was inspired by the revolutionary youth movement and participated in campaigns to learn from the masses. She seriously took the calls of the First Quarter Storm of 1970: Makibaka, Huwag Matakot! Isulong ang rebolusyong Pilipino! Digmang bayan ang sagot sa batas militar! She understood that the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system can be done away with only by the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. She was not

afraid of the threats of martial rule.

She was not afraid of sacrifice or death. And thus, she joined the armed revolutionary movement to fight the Marcos fascist dictatorship. She participated in organizing the regional organization of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army in Western Visayas. She excelled at leading the Organization Department of the CPP.

She was captured in 1973, subjected to physical and mental torture and detained until she escaped from prison in 1974. She remained resolute and militant. She was integrated in the Ilocos-Montañosa-Pangasinan regional organization of the CPP and then went up to the Cordillera and stayed there from 1975 onward.

I had the good fortune of personally meeting Ka Judy in 1975 in San Miguel, Bulacan. I vividly remembered how she expressed enthusiasm over the new guide to social investigation and class analysis at the level of rural communities, which I had just drafted and which was circulating in the various regions.

When I was arrested in November 1977, I was confident that cadres like Ka Judy would persevere and advance the revolutionary struggle. Many other comrades who worked with her can testify on how well she carried out her tasks. While I was in prison, she was captured for the second time and was detained until Marcos was overthrown in 1986.

It was while I was visiting the apartment of the family of Bernabe Buscayno soon after my release from prison that I would meet Ka Judy again in a nearby apartment. We had a happy reunion. We were jubilant over the downfall of the Marcos fascist dictatorship. From then on, Julie and I could monitor how she excelled as a leader of the women's movement, educator, writer, organizer and administrator.

Judy went back to UP Diliman in order to teach as a professor in the College of Social Work and Community Development's Department of Women and Development Studies. She became well-known for training her students well in social investigation and mass work. She developed further professionally. She took her Master of Arts in Public Administration in 1992 from Carleton University in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada and then finished her doctorate degree in Philippine Studies from UP Diliman.

Ka Judy chaired the IBON Research Foundation. She led the University for

Women's and Gender Studies. She was Founding National President of the All UP Academic Employee Union and a founder of All UP Workers' Alliance. She served as Director of UP Center for Women's Studies. She became a member of the UP Board of Regents from 2009-2010 representing the faculty.

She has won the highest awards that her UP colleagues and co-alumni can give. She is a recipient of the 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award in Gender Equality/Women Empowerment, the 2010 CSWCD Outstanding Alumna Award, as well as the 2009 "Gawad Pagpupugay". Take note of her recognition as an outstanding leader of women and academic and non-academic employees.

Recognized as a social worker, social activist and educator, she was appointed Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development upon the recommendation of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in 2016.

But the following year, her appointment was not confirmed by the Commission on Appointments because she refused to let her department be used as a vehicle for pork barrel by the corrupt members of Congress. After a year in office, the Duterte regime was exposing its brutal and corrupt character.

Ka Judy has lived a fruitful life of high initiative, creativity and struggle in seven decades. It is a colorful revolutionary epic that is inspiring to the current and future generations. I suggest that she write her memoirs during reflective moments between the public events that she engages. I am confident she will find comfort and further fulfilment in sharing her experiences and wisdom.

Knowing how small and weak was the national democratic movement in the 1960s, we are gratified that it has become so much bigger and stronger. The last fifty years of struggle have laid the ground for the revolutionary forces and the people to overcome the current challenges in the effort to change the current ruling system of foreign and feudal domination for a new and better system of full national independence, genuine democracy, social justice, all-round development, international solidarity and peace.

Mabuhay ka Ka Judy!

Mabuhay ang rebolusyong Pilipino!

Mabuhay ang sambayanang Pilipino!

# **Foreword to Eunice Barbara C. Novio's Woven Lives: Sisterhood and Feminism**

**January 10, 2022**

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In this book, *Woven Lives: Sisterhood and Feminism*, the author Eunice Barbara C. Novio studies the phenomenon of organic feminism and explores how it is manifested and developed in the lives of the seven Cabrera sisters namely: Lorena, Abcede, Penelope, Minerva, Nelfa, Nemesia and Lualhati through the stages of their lives from childhood, adolescence, adulthood through to their old age.

The siblings were born between the 1920s and 1940s, lived through the Second World War and saw major changes in the municipality of Sablayan, Occidental Mindoro. They experienced the struggles and changes of conditions affecting women. They confronted oppressions and discriminations, from the simplest to the worst forms in various institutions: family, Church and educational institutions.

Novio avails of the literatures and studies of the foremost feminists in Asia to comprehend the innate or organic feminism among the Asian women and the meaning of sisterhood among the Cabrera siblings and the women's movement. Their definitions of feminism affirm that feminism among the Filipino women is a natural characteristic that has developed in response to the suppression of women's rights.

Her authorities include K. Bhasin and N. Khan (1986), F. C. Tengco-Labayen (1998), Lilia Quindoza-Santiago (2010), Mary Jane Mananzan (1991), Sylvia H. Guerrero (1997) and E. Capuno (1991) and even men like Jose Rizal and Zeus

Salazar. Feminism of the Filipino women is a natural awakening due to the environment of suppressions and oppressions biased against women. At the same time Filipino women are moved by the equality and rights that they had enjoyed before the arrival of the Spanish colonialism.

Novio has done rigorous research and read background literature on organic feminism in the Philippines and Asia. But the more challenging investigation she has undertaken is conducting dialogic interviews with the Cabrera sisters. These interviews are spontaneous and dynamic, like normal conversations, allowing each interviewee the time to express freely her knowledge and perspectives based on her experiences. She is also given the leeway to express her views on her relationships with others.

The data collected have been interpreted and analyzed in accordance with the important phases of their lives: childhood, adolescence, marriage and adulthood and with such institutional frames and factors as family, education, and religion/church. The data collected were also categorized into two: shared/similar experiences; and factors of feminism according to the literature.

Novio poses the questions to the Cabrera sisters in order to elicit the answers from their experiences, what are the indications that show feminist consciousness, what are the elements in their relationships from different life stages which can be characterized as feminist and what are the perspectives of each of the women on their relationships as sisters, and what are the factors that have influenced the strengthening of their relationships as sisters.

Novio realizes her general objective of laying bare the factors that strengthened their relationships as sisters which which may be described as feminist characteristics and consciousness prove organic feminism as being inherent among the Filipino women. She verifies that organic feminism is having the courage and determination to change the society's mold to her personality; to show her true identity; with strong commitment and determination to improve herself according to her wish. Organic feminism is not selfish. It is meant to liberate both women and men from oppression.

She is thereby enabled to explain the correlation between sisterhood and organic feminism; determine the factors, which influence the strengthening of their relationships as siblings and as feminists; reveal the status of the seven sisters during the different phases in their lives and to know whether these



strengthened their relationships as well as their feminist characteristics; and determine the strategies and actions taken by each other to address and solve problems that they faced and that affected their relationship as siblings.

This book is important not only because it is a contribution to a very limited number of studies among the women of Mindoro but also because in a larger sense it examines sisterhood as a consciousness and shows its relation to feminism on a wider scale by being the first study of its kind, on sibling sisterhood and feminism, in Southeast Asia.

The Cabrera sisters had perspectives on their relationships with each other. For Lorena the eldest, she was the second mother of her younger siblings, except for the second born Abcede who was her close assistant and friend. In turn, Abcede and her other younger sisters mutually regarded each other as equals. She would help them, even if her husband did not always agree.

The third born Minerva said that having sisters is a gift from God. She affirmed that they were pillars to lean on, in times of depression and that they helped each other in times of need, especially during child-birth which a brother could not have done. The fourth sister Nelfa's considered her sisters as guide in her decision making. At times, she disobeyed them, but she still needed their opinions in whatever major decisions she made.

The fifth sister Penelope was considered the "hard-headed" among the sisters, according to Abcede and Lorena. She was impulsive, maybe due to typhoid fever that affected her brain, the two sisters added. But for her, she had given her elder sisters high respects. At times, she disobeyed them when she was younger and she considered this as a normal process of growing up and gaining independence. She looked at her sisters as her equals, except Lorena whom she regarded as a surrogate mother.

The sixth sister Nemesia knew the importance of sisters as allies. Their solidarity as sisters is important as she struggled in her married life and later on, on her problems with her alcoholic son. Nemesia and the seventh sister Lualhati were always against each other when it comes to opinions, but their disagreements never amounted to a war. Although Lualhati was the youngest, she was the most vocal and opinionated. For her, it is better for a sister to correct a sibling or another sister if she commits a mistake, rather than other people to correct the latter.

There were factors influencing the relationships of the sisters, such as the mother, being orphaned by their father and losing their sole brother, difficulties of life during the war, the farm binding them and tragedy in the family. Having a philanderer for a husband, the mother had to look after herself and rely on the assistance of her brothers. She could ask help from them for her children.

Minerva criticized her mother for letting their father to become philanderer. Abcede said that being independent did not mean they were no longer looking after each other's welfare. They made their own decisions and would just ask the elder sisters for their opinions. It is up to them to follow or not, but they need to correct each other's mistakes for their own good.

The loss of their father and their elder brother was another major factor that bound the sisters. Their elder brother, a USAFFE soldier died during World War 2, while their father died in an epidemic after the war. Thus, the sisters learned to do "male chores" like chopping wood, fixing things, and others. Penelope, as a child was sickly, so most of the time she just stayed home. Her father taught her "male chores" like fixing the roof, and basic carpentry. She also learned how to gather palm leaves for their roof and even fishing. The loss of father and sole brother made them rely on their own strength as women and transcend traditional roles.

The difficulties during the war tested the bond between the sisters. It was all about survival, but in the end, the ties of sisterhood prevailed. Lorena recalled that during the war, one could sell even herself just to survive. She was already married at that time and had two children, yet she shared everything to her younger sisters, even if it meant depriving herself of food.

Their farm was important to the sisters. This was the place where they were born and raised. This was the only material thing that they did not give up inspite of being married to migrants from distant places. Even to their children who migrated and asked them to come, they never left. For the sisters, the land was where they were firmly rooted. The remains of their husbands and some of their children are buried there. Lualhati however, had different opinion, "if we left our land, maybe there is nothing left to us, because our mother was so gullible and dependent. Her uncles could have taken everything from us, especially when our father died."

Tragedy strengthened the relationship among sisters. This happened to Nemesia

and Lualhati, who had sibling rivalry when they were growing up. But the accident that happened to Nemesia's son, Jessie, brought them closer. Some children died ahead of their parents. These were experienced by Abcede, Minerva, Nemesia and Penelope. Their children's death is not only theirs, but also loss among the sisters, since they also considered them as their own. In their twilight years, their widowhood also contributed to strengthening their bonds as sisters and friends. Widowhood brought them closer to each other because they gained more time to attend to each other.

The sisters were models to each other. They were also friends and allies. They had more common interests than individual interest. They respected their differences as individuals and as women. They had a hierarchy according to age but they felt equal in common concerns. Lualhati considered her eldest sister, Lorena, as a model for having a husband who was kind and unselfish and Abcede as a negative example for having a husband who was always against his wife helping her sisters. Lorena was also the model of Penelope, Minerva and Nelfa when they got married.

The feminist model of reciprocity and friendship can be seen through sisterhood relationship, but not just an obligation but wilful solidarity as a sister against male aggression. When brother Lutgardo hurt one of his sisters, they instantly united to maul him., where they mauled him, upon seeing he was trying to hurt one of the sisters. When Nemesia's alcoholic husband, Isidro, abuse her, she called her other sisters and they mauled him, until he ran away. Lorena supported Minerva and Nelfa when the latter escaped from her husband to study dressmaking and cosmetology.

But the special relationship between Lorena and Abcede happened since they were young and continued until they reached old age. The two were bound not only by blood but also by friendship. The experiences of Lualhati and Nemesia since childhood was that of intense sibling rivalry but the most remarkable show of self-sacrifice by Lualhati was during a quarrel between their husbands, Plaridel and Isidro. She drove away her husband Plaridel and allowed Nemesia's husband to stay because they had three children to take care of. She later averred that no man would destroy their sisterhood.

Even as they were siblings, the Cabrera sisters had different personalities. And yet they were bound by the same ideals, experiences and abuses as women. Their solidarity concretizes the term sisterhood as used among feminists to

express the connection of women who are not biologically related but are bonded in solidarity. The sisterhood of women in general refers to their feminism, their participation in the women's movement, their support of other women or their recognition of female qualities that are unique to women's nature.

Novio asserts that the use of the word sisterhood implies that women relate to one another in ways that are distinct from how they relate to men (although not necessarily exclusive of relation to men). As the saying goes from the Cabrera mother to her children, siblings are like fingers. These are of the same hand but not equal. But they cannot work singly. They must cooperate in order to accomplish something.

Giving and sharing in times of needs is a feminist category of spontaneous reciprocation rather than a contractual obligation. It shows in the life stories of the sisters where they showed giving and sharing in times of dire need; during the War, during the most difficult times of their married lives and the tragic loss of some of their children. Even when they could not articulate their feelings, the fact that they were together in one land moved them to support each other.

According to Novio, feminism aims for equality towards unity. Within the family, there is hierarchy. The elder ones are called "ate" by the younger ones. But as the time passed, the element of being dominant dissolved. Lorena's advices were no longer considered orders but expressions of concern and the younger sisters could now argue, give opinions and decide for themselves. The Cabrera sisters had their internal cohesiveness and internal dynamics. But society impacted on them and stimulated their feminist consciousness.

The Cabrera sisters were born into a highly patriarchal family. In the absence of the father, the elder brother held authority over the sisters. After the death of her husband, their mother Perfecta Urieta-Zamora depended too much on her uncle, who was now the head of the clan. The Church had a strong influence on the family both in a positive or in an adverse way. In the school, the bullying behavior of the male students towards the female students awakened the consciousness of Lualhati and Minerva on equality. They did not just cry or report the bullying to the teachers but they fought the bullies.

The Cabrera sisters experienced violence, abuses and discrimination in their life cycle. Most of them were bullied when they were selling rice cakes and

carabao's milk to augment their parents' income. Minerva was bullied as a child because she was new in her school.

During their adolescent years, Abcede, Penelope and Nemesia suffered sexual harassment. On the other hand, Lorena gained a reputation in the family for being a flirt by having too many suitors until she decided to marry the man she liked most.

Lorena and Abcede were told by their husbands to concentrate on taking care of their children. But they still managed to do some work like accepting laundry and study dressmaking and hair science. Eventually, Lorena's husband, Rodrigo, agreed to let her engage in dressmaking and even bought her a sewing machine so that she could work at home. Minerva and Lualhati did not experience strictness from their husbands but from their husbands' relatives who prohibited them from earning additional income from alternative means of livelihood.

Nemesia suffered physical and verbal abuse from her alcoholic husband during the whole time they were together. Nelfa's family was against her relationship with Gaudiso who had been previously married. Experiences like deaths of sons, sickness of husbands and later on deaths, depressed the sisters like Abcede, Minerva and Nelfa. But they were able to overcome these phases because the other sisters were there to help or cheer them up. During old age, only Nemesia and Minerva experienced violence,. The former suffered verbal abuse from her alcoholic son while the latter from her crazy son-in-law.

During War II, Lorena did her best to save her sisters and the rest of the family from the Japanese fascists, especially from the practice of "zoning". She went to the extent of claiming that Nelfa, who was fair skinned and chinky eyed, was the granddaughter of a Japanese. She and her sisters were not at all intimidated by the Japanese fascists. Their common courage strengthened their sisterhood.

The life stories of the Cabrera sisters generally showed strong feminist indications in their different life cycles, from childhood, adolescent, married life and until their old age. We may call such indications feminist fortitude and we may list them as the follows: 1. The consciousness to end discrimination and abuses; 2. not be dependent on and subservient to men; 3. Faith in their strength as women; 4. Choosing husband; 5. Endeavor to improve self and family; and 6. Strength to face struggle and difficulties.

In her book, *Woven Lives: Sisterhood and Feminism*, Eunice Barbara C. Novio confirms and validates the assumption that feminism is all about equality to achieve unity, as mirrored in the lives of the Cabrera sisters. Biological sisterhood and sisterhood can be an effective anchor within the Women's Movement, as seen in the life stories of these women. The feminist sisterhood awakens the consciousness of the women. And through such consciousness, from shared experiences, struggles and hardships as women and as individuals, the women endeavor to change these to their advantage and advancement.

Novio cites that the inequalities can be traced in the family, where the division of labor and unequal treatment between girls and boys exist. She acknowledges that the Women's Movement started to tackle and resolve women's issues like prostitution, discrimination and unequal pay at the workplaces, sexist advertisements and news, schools or universities' curricula which strengthened gender-stereotyping; the Church dogmas and even the control of the state on women's sexuality.

Novio further observes that as a result of the rising awareness on inequality and discrimination, the women have launched massive protests and joined the political struggle to achieve equality and to raise consciousness among fellow women and men. The sisterhood is developing in women's organizations with different political ideologies, like the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) and National Organization for Women (NOW). They take up the issues faced by women like

equal pay, reproductive rights, sexual harassments and the freedom of both sexes and genders.

Consistently, Novio asserts that dependency on men was never a character of the early Filipino women. She cites that before Spanish colonialization, the women enjoyed more rights and privileges than the men. They had their own properties, sources of income and made decisions and contracts independently of the men. Novio invokes the confidence of the women in their strength and skills to learn by studying, as in the examples of the Women of Malolos in their effort to learn the Spanish language reserved only for the elite; and in their own ability to help each other to achieve freedom and equal treatment in the Revolutionary Movement as in the examples of Gabriela Silang, Teresa Magbanua and others.

Novio welcomes and celebrates the independence of the Women's Movements in

fighting for their rights. She commends women's groups and individuals for initiating laws favorable for women, including the Anti-Rape Law and other laws for their protection as women. She asserts that being a feminist means struggling against class oppression and inequality, ending male dominance and violence at home, and within the society. It also means self-confidence, accepting mistakes and trying to rectify those; and the strength to face hardships for themselves and their families. She declares further that feminism is a natural consciousness of every woman mainly due to the kind of environment where she grew up and live. Feminism is the desire to change their lives for the better.

Jose Maria Sison

Chairperson Emeritus

International League of Peoples' Struggle

Utrecht, Netherlands

January 10, 2022

# Message of Solidarity to Lakapati Laguna

January 14, 2022

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Thru: Mx. Lau Reyes, Chairperson, Lakapati Laguna

Dear fellow activists in Lakapati Laguna, may I convey my warmest greetings of solidarity to all of you on the occasion of the first founding anniversary of your organization Lakapati Laguna (Tagapagtaguyod ng pambansa demokratikong pakikibaka ng mga Lagunenseng LGBTQ- Advocate of national democratic struggle of Laguna LGBTQ).

I salute and congratulate you for your achievements in activities and campaigns to consolidate the national democratic mass organization of militant and anti-imperialist lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders and queers (LGBTQ) in the province of Laguna in the Philippines.

It is your noble duty and task to uphold, defend and promote your sectoral rights and interests within the context of the militant struggle for advancing the national democratic movement. You and the entire Filipino people are confronted by a regime that carries the worst characteristics of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

The Duterte regime is a traitorous, tyrannical, mass murdering, plundering and swindling regime. It is male chauvinist and macho-fascist. As the chieftain of the regime, Duterte poses as a strong man with an iron fist who can bend the will of the entire nation with the use of state terrorism on the pretext of anti-terrorism.

Characteristically, he projects himself as a male chauvinist and a macho-fascist to impress the people that he is capable of any amount of violence to suppress



his critics and opponents, be they organized or not as the legal forces of the national democratic movement or the people's democratic revolution waging protracted people's war.

In fact, Duterte is already a physically, mentally and morally doddering person. He divides his time between long rest periods and more than adequate time to count his loot and give orders to his political and military running dogs. He runs his government like a gangster by relying on the reactionary armed forces, police and death squads.

But he has only less than six months to rule the Philippines. He is scheming to use his control of the military and Comelec in order to rig the 2022 elections in order to place in power the Marcos-Duterte tandem and to prevent his trial for crimes against humanity before the International Criminal Court and for plunder and mass murders before Philippine courts.

Your organization must join the entire Filipino people and all the patriotic and progressive forces to prevent Duterte and his coalition of the most corrupt and most brutal political dynasties from perpetuating their reign of greed and terror in put country. These monsters have already bankrupted the economy and government and worsened the socio-economic and political crisis to the point that they cannot stay long in power by whatever means.

The Filipino people can ultimately achieve national and social liberation only by persevering in revolutionary struggle with ever increasing determination and militancy.

Long live the Lakapati Laguna!

Advance the revolutionary struggle for national and social liberation!

Long live the Filipino people!

# **Fight for National Liberation, Democracy and Socialism**

## **Solidarity Message to GABRIELA National Alliance**

**August 16, 2022**

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Dear colleagues, as Chairperson Emeritus of International League of Peoples' Struggle, I have the honor and pleasure of conveying warmest greetings of solidarity to the GABRIELA National Alliance of 200-strong women's organizations on the occasion of its 14th National Congress on today and tomorrow.

I salute you for all your achievements since your previous congress. I am confident that in your current congress you will sum up your experience, build further on your accumulated strength, overcome difficulties and shortcomings and set forth new tasks to raise your strength to a new and higher level in an all-round way.

With your resolute leadership and militancy, you must strengthen the collective will and fighting spirit of the Filipino women and people in the face of the escalating conditions of oppression and exploitation by the US-directed Marcos-Sara tandem which represents the worst political dynasties that have arisen in the semicolonial and semifeudal society of the Philippines.

The return to power of the Marcos political dynasty through the fraudulent automated elections manipulated by the tyrant Duterte manifests the grave deterioration of the ruling system. This involves the continuance of state terrorism and plunder under conditions of multiple crises in the Philippines and the world capitalist system. These crises include the economic and political crisis, the pandemic, the threat of World War III and nuclear war and global

heating.

The Filipino people are now suffering unprecedented depression of the economy, a huge accumulation of unemployment, falling value of wages and middle-strata incomes, inflationary prices of basic commodities and services, mass poverty and hunger. The economic crisis is compounded with and aggravated by the prolonged Covid-19 pandemic. The burden falls heavily on the toiling masses of workers and peasants, especially the women.

The Marcos II regime offers no way out of the crisis. It is hell-bent on carrying on the neoliberal policy which presumes that the Philippines has comparative advantage in the export of cheap raw materials, live labor (mostly women) and some semi-manufactures, that it can remain agrarian, pre-industrial and semifeudal, that it can engage in military overspending and reduce appropriations for social services, that it can freely incur budgetary and trade deficits and that it can indefinitely increase the public debt burden.

Although the tyrant Duterte has made Marcos Junior president through massive electoral fraud, he has left a quagmire for the latter to sink in. Within the last six years, especially the last two, Duterte has more than doubled from the public debt of Php 5.9 trillion as of May 2016 (a debt accumulated in 120 years) to Php 12.79 trillion as of June 2022. Both the US and Duterte have also bound Marcos Jr. to continue the state terrorism against the legal patriotic and democratic formations and the barbaric anti-communist campaign of military suppression against the people's democratic revolution.

We are certain that the economic and political crisis of the ruling system will further worsen under the Marcos II regime. We are confident that the broad masses of the people will fight more fiercely than ever before for their national and social liberation through legal democratic mass struggles and the protracted people's war against the three monsters, which are foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. We are happy that the national democratic mass movement is fast gaining strength and that the Gabriela National Alliance is making highly significant contributions to this movement.

We urge your alliance to continue doing its best and make greater achievements to arouse, organize and mobilize the Filipino women and entire people in the Philippines and abroad to contribute the most they can to the people's democratic revolution and engage the solidarity and support of their fellow

women in all types of countries in the world. All women have a common cause in fighting for national liberation, democracy and socialism against imperialism and all reaction.

***National Minorities  
and the Right  
to Self-Determination***

# From Philippine Society and Revolution

1970

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2. Special recognition must be given to the need for autonomous government among the national minorities numbering about five million or about 14 per cent of the population. The so-called Muslim tribes (it is more accurate to speak of them as Maguindanaos, Maranaos, Tausogs, etc.) compose the largest minority, numbering 3.5 million. They are followed by the Igorot tribes numbering half a million.

The vast majority of the national minorities live in the hinterlands and in areas most neglected and abused by the reactionary government. The national minorities have long been subjected to Christian chauvinism and oppression by the reactionaries. It will never do to impose or give the impression of imposing something beyond their autonomous needs. The Party recognizes their right to self-determination. They can be united with the rest of the Filipino people only on the basis of equality and respect for their culture or race.

The national minorities in the Philippines carry a heavier burden than the rest of the Filipino people. Until now, most of the Negritos live a primitive communal life and are the victims of racial discrimination. The Christian and Malay chauvinists have grabbed their lands in the plains and valleys and even the mountains to which they have been pushed. These aborigines are abused and killed at will. Even the national minorities in Mindanao who have attained a stage of social development which is not at all inferior to that attained by the rest of the Filipino people have been subjected to the most criminal abuses by the Christian chauvinists and the reactionary government. Ancestral minority lands have been taken away by the imperialists, compradors, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists by sheer manipulation of land titles and with utter disregard for

indigenous customs and laws. Landgrabbing is the evil that has been viciously inflicted on all indigenous cultural minorities in the Philippines by big land speculators, loggers, ranchers, mining companies and landlords. Invariably, they have been forced out of their lands with armed power. Many of them have been pushed to the remotest areas and these can be turned into powerful bases for revolutionary warfare.

The Chinese minority is also subject to Malay chauvinism in the Philippines. Compared to the Chinese minority in other Southeast Asian countries, that in the Philippines is the smallest with barely 120 thousand. The reactionary government deliberately makes it difficult for Chinese nationals to be naturalized so that the Chiang bandit gang and Filipino bureaucrat capitalists can extort heavily from them and use them as a ready target for chauvinist attacks to divert attention from US imperialism and Japanese militarism. This is underscored by the fact that the reactionary government suppresses the people's clamor for the nationalization of all foreign enterprises, American and otherwise. The US imperialists, the Filipino reactionaries, the big bourgeois agents of the Chiang bandit gang and the modern revisionists are in cahoots with each other in the fascist plot to serve up the majority of Chinese nationals who belong to the middle and petty bourgeoisie, semiproletariat and proletariat to the chauvinist hatred of hooligans who will take up the war cry of "nationalism" to cover up their puppetry to US imperialism.

The correct policy toward all the national minorities is always to take a proletarian standpoint and make the necessary class analysis. This is the only way by which the Party can most profoundly integrate with them. By developing Party cadres and Red fighters among the national minorities, the Party can overthrow not only the entire puppet state but also the local tyrants in the territories of the national minorities.

3. Settlers on the hilly regions and forest zones of the country are a major phenomenon due to the semicolonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society. They are important because they are oppressed, are of large number and occupy terrain favorable for armed struggle. It is safe to estimate that those who have resided in their new settlements for not more than twenty years are no less than ten per cent of the peasant population in the entire country. In several provinces, settlers in general compose the majority of the local population. The settlers on hilly regions and forest zones are dispossessed peasants who find neither agricultural nor industrial employment in places from which they have

migrated. Though they at first hold small pieces of land which they till and call their own, they ordinarily live as poor peasants or as lower-middle peasants and are prevented from gaining formal title over their land by the reactionary government and various local exploiters. They are often victims of landgrabbing, government neglect, usury, merchant manipulation, special levies by local bureaucrats and bullies, and banditry. For their own benefit, landlords and officials of the reactionary government often foment communal conflicts between the settlers and the original inhabitants.



# **Comments on “The Integration of the Party’s Political Line Among the Igorot National Minority”**

**(Special Report) dated December 17, 1974**

**March 1, 1975**

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There is a series of errors in this special report. 1) While it states that the land question is the principal problem of the Igorot national minority, it also states that such a problem is “not due to landlordism” and “affects only a negligible portion of the mountain provinces.” 2) While it recognizes that there is class struggle in Igorot society, it states that such a class struggle is “mainly non-antagonistic” and further states that the Igorot upper middle and rich peasants comprise both the ruling class of such a class society and at the same time take “a prominent place in the leadership of the revolutionary Igorot forces.” 3) It advocates a “national minority war” as the be-all and end-all of the Igorot struggle and “puts the highest value on tribalism and localism;” it opposes “the building of the organs of democratic political power (BOC and BRC)” on the ground that doing so “tends to weaken tribal unity instead of strengthening it” and it proposes that apart from the New People’s Army, an “Igorot Liberation Army” be organized by the Party and the People’s Army.

There are many statements in the special report, which are strikingly erroneous, but these can be referred to as we take up the three points above. 1) Indeed, the land problem is the main problem of the Igorot national minority and landlordism or feudalism does exist in the mountain provinces. The land laws applied by the reactionary state on the mountain provinces since the twilight of Spanish colonialism in the Philippines have a feudal basis and have defined what lands privately belong to certain landlords of old stature as well as the new breed

of landgrabbing feudal masters (who first get pasture leases and then alienate these to themselves), apart from defining what are the areas given in concession to imperialist and big comprador enterprises engaged in mining and logging as well as what are forest reserves, national parks, dam sites, etc.

The reactionary government, with its cream of landgrabbing bureaucrats, acts as a big landlord and becomes conspicuously so as it refuses to issue titles or patents to the real cultivators of the land and then disposes of the cultivated land arbitrarily in favor of some landgrabbers on the ground that it is public land. While it is true that because of a relative scarcity of agricultural lands there are not too many landlords with fifty hectares and above in the mountain provinces (excepting Kalinga-Apayao), there are at any rate plenty of landlords owning less than fifty hectares. We define a landlord as one who relies in the main for his livelihood on the imposition of land rent. It might be interesting to investigate in what way landlordism

XXX may exist even in the operation of communal lands in the mountain provinces. In European and Asian countries, in the Muslim areas of our country for one, feudalism developed through the operation of communal lands and land rent took the form of royal tribute, religious tribute and tribute to some nobility. One outstanding manifestation of feudalism in the mountain provinces is also usury; this requires some investigation. The concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few is far, far less in the mountain provinces as those of Central Luzon and Cagayan Valley. However, such comparative thinking should not erase from our minds the reality of landlordism in the mountain provinces. Also, in our wish to put stress on the struggle for national self-determination, we should not tend to forget the reality of landlordism in the mountain provinces. The correct thing to do is to link the struggle for national self-determination with the struggle for land.

The two struggles are most easily joined in the struggle against the chauvinist reactionary state that keeps on oppressing and discriminating against the Igorot people as a national minority and keeps on depriving them of their lands without the least regard for their rights and without the least thought of compensation.

The reactionary state enforces the plunder of the mountain provinces by the imperialists and big comprador bourgeoisie and constructs dams geared to favor the lowland landlords and big bourgeoisie, while the great masses of Igorot peasants are dispossessed of the land that they tenant or own. We must

determinedly fight the biggest landlord of them all, the reactionary state, and also fight their diehard local minions who are not seldom local landlords and bureaucrats. But we should not go around hitting every local bureaucrat upon sight, because a considerable number of them are our temporary allies, especially in the much broader anti-fascist revolutionary struggle. In dealing with friendly landlords, we should remain vigilant and we become so because we recognize their class character.

2. The prevailing social relations in the mountain provinces are oppressive and exploitative. There are classes and there is class struggle. The existence of the big bourgeoisie is most stressed by the operation of the mining companies under the foreign monopoly capitalists and local comprador big bourgeoisie. There are big landlords as well as medium and small landlords. There is the proletariat outstandingly present in mining, logging and transportation companies. There are the peasants of various strata (rich, middle and poor) and there is the urban petty bourgeoisie to which the intelligentsia belongs. Under the present social conditions in the mountain provinces, it cannot be that there are no direct members (members by being running dogs) of the big bourgeoisie and the big landlord class among the Igorots. It cannot be that the ruling class of Igorot society are the “upper middle and rich peasants” and yet such a ruling class takes “a prominent place in the leadership of the revolutionary Igorot forces.” These are completely contradictory ideas.

It is erroneous to state that “the class struggle in Igorot society is mainly non-antagonistic.” One should not mistake a temporary absence of open class conflict for non-antagonism, Class struggle in an exploitative society is surely antagonistic. This is an absolute fact. There may be times in a certain country that the class struggle appears to take a back seat to a national struggle. But this is a relative and temporary fact. Even when the struggle takes the principal form of a national war against a foreign aggressor, with combatants in a previous civil war allied against a common enemy, class struggle continues and never stops. In the national united front against a foreign aggressor, there is both unity against the common enemy and class struggle within such unity. The revolutionary party of the proletariat maintains its independence and initiative and carries out struggles on just grounds, with restraint and to its clear advantage. But at any rate, class struggle is never completely laid aside.

The special report strains to present the Igorot national minority as self-contained and quite isolated from Philippine history and society. Thus it is stated

erroneously that “the ruling class of the Igorot national minority has not been integrated in the ruling system, that is to say, in the distribution of the spoils of the ruling semi-colonial and semi-feudal (Philippine) society.” We state that the Igorot people are tightly bound with the rest of Philippine society by US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. There are Igorots who are not only direct members and running dogs of the Philippine big bourgeoisie and landlord class in a general way but who are also vicious agents and beneficiaries of specifically the present fascist regime. In the course of the struggle, you will discover that just as you gain the support of the Igorot masses and they engage in fierce struggles, you increasingly come into conflict with a handful of Igorot demons. There was a time when the MNLF asked us in Luzon not to shoot AFP troops who are Muslim but now, with the polarization of the Muslims, anti-fascist Muslims themselves are shooting down profascist Muslims whose anti-popular interests lie with the worst of the Philippine ruling system.

3. We cannot deny and we should recognize that the struggle for national self-determination is one aspect of the struggle of the Igorot people. They are definitely victims of national oppression and thus they should struggle for national self-determination. But we must have a full view of the other concrete circumstances of this struggle for national self-determination. It is difficult to imagine, to say the least, that the Igorot people can go the whole length of fighting for secession or a separate state with its own army. As a matter of fact, the special report appears to concede that regional autonomy is the most appropriate form of giving way to Igorot self-determination. The whole trouble is that the special report also advocates that a “national minority war” be the be-all and end-all of the Igorot struggle and puts the highest value on tribalism and localism.

The special report keeps on repeating that we must strengthen “tribal and clan unity” to the point of obscuring the fact that we (Igorot and non-Igorot cadres and Red fighters) are already among several tribes and classes in the mountain provinces. Of course, revolutionaries must start to develop the situation on the basis of given facts, such as that there are tribes and clans with their traditional unities. We do not need to strengthen these. The Party and the New People’s Army are not needed to strengthen tribal unity. In integrating themselves with the Igorot people, our cadres should develop not only intertribal unity but should also link such intertribal unity with our program for a people’s democratic revolution which applies to the entire country.

We do not agree with the limits placed on the struggle of the Igorot people as expressed in the following terms: “To sum up, the integration of the Party’s general line to the practice of revolution in Montañosa comprises two main policies: “a) We must strengthen tribal unity, raise this revolutionary tribal unity to the revolutionary unity of the Igorot national minority. “b) We must continually consolidate tribal unity by stressing on the mobilization of the Igorot proletariat, poor peasantry, farm workers, handicraft workers, lower-middle peasants and intelligentsia for armed struggle and in the Igorot Liberation Army. “These two policies define and interrelate united front work and the mobilization of the basic masses in the task of advancing armed struggle in Montañosa.”

These “policies” do not expressly link the people’s democratic revolution (applicable to the entire country and people) to the people of the mountain provinces and appears to exclude the latter from the former. There is no forward development but a retrogression into tribalism and localism. What follow are deprecatory statements like “the building of BOCs and BRCs tend to weaken tribal unity instead of strengthening it.” It is good tactic not to put the organs of democratic political power into unnecessary conflicts with the traditional forms of social organization, especially in the rural areas where the great masses are. As a matter of fact, we can make use of the traditional forms and step by step infuse them with revolutionary content. But it is completely another matter to regard “tribal unity” as the be-all and end-all of revolutionary activity in the mountain provinces. Also, in speaking of an “Igorot cultural revolution,” we must be determined in carrying out revolutionary propaganda for the people’s democratic revolution, basing itself on the protests and demands of the Igorot people yet linked to the Philippine revolutionary struggle.

Because the special report comes from the Party branch of the New People’s Army in the mountain provinces, we are very much concerned about its erroneous propositions that might result in the liquidation of revolutionary organizations that we have already established there. The organs of democratic political power are liable to be regarded as superfluous and unnecessary in the face of the tribes. The proposal to build an Igorot Liberation Army and the reasons placed behind such a proposal tend to render the New People’s Army superfluous and unnecessary. With regard to the proposed “Federation of Igorot Tribes for Liberation,” we can give way to it as a mass organization but we oppose it if it is envisioned and created as a replacement and substitute for the Communist Party of the Philippines.

It is a regressive step and a waste of time for us in the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army to take the initiative in creating an "Igorot Liberation Army." If it were the case that some Igorots outside of our ranks organize such an army, then we would have a real problem of adopting the correct ways of relating to it. We should not create the problem for ourselves. We have enough problems in building the New People's Army: why create the problems of organizing two armies?

The situation that we have come upon in the mountain provinces is that there is no Igorot Liberation Army and there is no serious movement among the Igorot masses themselves to create such an army. The danger arising from the proposal within our ranks that we create such an army is that pretty soon the proposal would follow that the New People's Army is no longer needed in the mountain provinces. It is already clear that the current proposal carries the proposition that an Igorot Liberation Army applies on the Igorots more than any army.

We recognize the reality of clans and tribes and we also recognize the basis for unity as well as disunity among them. Upon the given situation, we integrate ourselves with everything positive and helpful to the development of the armed revolution of the entire Filipino people. Definitely, we must avail ourselves of the brave tribal warriors, their indigenous weapons and their mastery of the terrain. We can develop these further under the New People's Army. It is not necessary to build an Igorot Liberation Army. We advance step by step, linking at every turn tribal and intertribal unity with the Philippine revolution and struggling in the smoothest possible way against localism and tribalism, both of which refuse to recognize and uphold popular interests beyond the locality and their tribe.

Struggling against a common enemy teaches what otherwise would be strangers to each other to unite and become comrades and allies. To fight for a long-term revolutionary program stresses the need for unity to a higher level. In carrying out the program for a people's democratic revolution in the mountain provinces, there are always many positive things to fight for and enemies to fight against. All these require unity.

The Igorot people in various tribes are not averse to uniting with the Party and the New People's Army and with the rest of the Filipino people. We have been with them for several years there already. History shows that the Igorot people have increasingly united with the rest of the Filipino people. If we consider the

history of the Filipino people, the national unity of the Ilocanos, Igorots, Tagalogs, Pampangos, etc. has been forged by fighting common enemies and holding common aspirations.

In the three centuries that they warded off Spanish colonial domination, the Igorot people readily cooperated with their lowland neighbors whenever the latter defied colonial rule. They provided sanctuary to lowland rebels who sought it. The Philippine revolution of 1896 (especially its second phase) and the Filipino-American War in which they actively participated on the revolutionary side created a profound basis for their unity not only with their direct lowland neighbors but also with the people of the entire country.

In the armed resistance against Japanese fascist occupation, their sense of unity with the entire Filipino people became deepened more than ever before. Of course, they fought under the USAFFE. But then they did so, as it was the case in other parts of the country, only because there was no other resistance organization like the Hukbalahap in the immediate locality.

At this stage of Philippine and world history, the Igorot people in their few hundreds of thousands and in a relatively small mountainous territory would prefer to integrate themselves in a multinational people's democratic state. Their economic life and political aspirations are necessarily and inextricably linked with the rest of those of the entire Filipino people that they cannot form a viable independent state. Their historical experience has proven that it is correct for them to unite with the rest of the Filipino people in fighting for a completely independent and democratic Philippines.

It is an advantage that there is no initiative outside of the Party and the NPA that seeks to create something like the "Igorot Liberation Army." The creation of such a second army, especially as it is supposed to carry the idea that the Igorot struggle suffices as an "Igorot national minority war," would be divisive of the revolutionary movement in the mountain provinces and would harm both the interests of the entire Filipino people and the Igorot people in particular.

The situation in Mindanao is completely different. The Moro National Liberation Front and the Bangsa Moro Army were formed on the initiative of people outside of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army. We support them on the principal aspect that they are fighting for national self-determination and for democracy and we are grateful that they are fighting with

us a common enemy. But we do not agree with the sectarian and chauvinist view that the CPP and the NPA should keep out of Mindanao and that the representatives of some 2.8 million Muslims be the authority over all the 7.5 million people of Mindanao.

The Party branch of the New People's Army in Montañosa should study carefully our comments. This is done in the spirit of ideological struggle. If we are not guided by correct ideas, we are liable to go astray in our work. There should be no regrets about the special report being written since it has become an occasion for us to clarify policies. It is always good for us to dare express our views and arrive at the correct line. For the CC – A.G.



# **Our Policy on the Moro People's Struggle**

*Ang Bayan, Vol. IX, No. 1, March 15, 1977*

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We remain steadfast in our support for the Moro people's struggle for national self-determination. In recognizing their right to national self-determination, we necessarily recognize their right to secede from the present reactionary state that has for so long oppressed them as a nation. In this regard, we are firmly guided by Leninist teachings on national self-determination against national oppression.

We recognize the right of the Moro people to secede with as much conviction as the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army are striving to create political power independent of and opposed to the Marcos fascist dictatorship and the ruling system. Are we not also breaking off from the present reactionary state and fighting it to be able to replace it with a people's democratic state?

The Moro people (Maguindanaos, Maranaos, Tausogs, Samals, Yakans, Badjaos, etc.) can properly opt for regional autonomy only within the framework of a Philippine state that guarantees equality among all its nationalities and takes special care that the national minorities are no longer subjected to chauvinism, oppression and discrimination. The present reactionary state by its very nature cannot provide the conditions for the equality of nations in the country.

The Marcos fascist dictatorship which has been the worst form of administration so far to represent the present reactionary state is all the more in no position to provide satisfactory conditions for the acceptance of regional autonomy by the Moro people. This administration is entirely the one to blame for provoking civil war in Mindanao and in the entire country. It is absolutely just for the Moro people to persevere in revolutionary armed struggle against this evil regime.

Even before the declaration of fascist martial rule, the Marcos regime was already engaged in the most wanton antinational and antidemocratic crimes against the Moro people. All these were done in the service of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. Intensified national oppression has been the concomitant of the intensified exploitation of the Moro people and the plunder of natural resources in Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan.

In the very proclamation imposing fascist martial rule on the Filipino people of various nationalities, the suppression of the Moro people's struggle for national self-determination is a declared objective. Since the proclamation, the Marcos fascist dictatorship has intensified the perpetration of mass murders and torture, the destruction of communities, the desecration of places of worship and the abuses to the honor and dignity of women among the Moro people.

It is necessary for us to recognize the truth that at the back of the brutality and viciousness of the Marcos fascist dictatorship is the scheme of US imperialism, the domestic big bourgeoisie and the big landlord class to remove every obstacle to the accelerated exploitation of the Moro people, seizure of vast tracts of land and plunder of natural resources in the Minsupala area. Silence on this point amounts to obscuring the roots of the problem.

What is needed to solve the problem is nothing less than the overthrow of the Marcos fascist dictatorship and the ruling system and the carrying out of a democratic revolution of a new type by the entire Filipino people, including the Moro people. Only in this way can the Moro people give full democratic substance to their struggle for national self-determination and put aright the gross injustices inflicted on them. Only in this way can conditions arise for the realization of the equality of nations within the framework of a Philippine state, a people's democratic state.

Even when there shall be a people's democratic state in which the Moro people as a nation are in a position to enjoy regional autonomy, they shall still retain the right to secede as a safeguard against national oppression. At the same time, they shall be responsible as they are today for opposing imperialism and reaction and guarding against sheer localism and sectarianism.

It is malicious for the Marcos fascist dictatorship to regard the Moro people's struggle for national self-determination as merely a struggle for "cultural autonomy" (or even more narrowly "religious autonomy") and then try to isolate

them from the rest of the people in the Philippines. The Moro people's struggle is clearly an all-round revolutionary struggle for national democracy and is connected to the revolutionary struggle of the entire Filipino people. Moreover, it is a struggle that can be well connected not only with the Islamic states but also with the proletariat and people of the world.

We support every organization that fights for the revolutionary cause of the Moro people. Thus, we have always expressed support to the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Bangsa Moro Army (BMA) and wanted the development of the closest of relations with them as they fight for the Moro people's right to national self-determination. We are always ready to discuss and arrive at common goals, exchange experiences and lessons and lend strength to each other against the common enemy,

As matter stand, our forces and the MNLF's have so far helped each other by fighting the same enemy in their respective territories. In this regard, there are those who take the view that the party should let alone the MNLF, the Moro people and the areas where they predominate. But now, according to the Tripoli Agreement, the MNLF leadership no less is willing to concede to the principle and possibility of regional autonomy even within the framework of the incumbent Philippine state.

It is our duty to do everything we can to promote unity and cooperation with all elements and forces genuinely fighting for the national and democratic interests of the Moro People. especially with the breakdown of the Tripoli negotiations, we continue to hope for the most militant and fruitful relations between the MNLF and other antifascist forces not only in Mindanao but also elsewhere in the country. The Communist Party of the Philippines and the MNLF can certainly work hand in hand to hasten the downfall of the Marcos fascist dictatorship and achieve their respective purposes.

# **Regime's Action on Sabah Claim Means to Undermine the MNLF**

*Ang Bayan, Vol. IX, No. 11, August 15, 1977*

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The fascist dictator Marcos took two more major steps in recent days to push his ruthless campaign to undermine the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro people's struggle for self-determination.

At the summit conference of the five-nation Associations of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Kuala Lumpur Aug. 4 and 5, he announced the Philippine government's abandonment of its claim to Sabah.

Before leaving for the Malaysian capital, the fascist dictator also expanded the coverage of his scheme whereby gunholders in the southern Philippines could obtain government loans of up to ₱5,000 provided they surrender with their firearms.

This is clearly meant to entice members of the Bangsa Moro Army, the MNLF's fighting arm, to lay down their arms and abandon the Moro people's struggle for self-determination.

On the Sabah question, Marcos said his regime was giving up the claim to this land, which had been filed and pursued by his predecessor, Diosdado Macapagal. He added there were no preconditions for his decision to drop the claim.

But it was public knowledge that in exchange for his actions, he wanted guarantees from the Malaysian government that steps would be taken to stop assistance to the MNLF. It was understood that a monetary settlement was also in the works. Marcos expects to pocket a big share of the money.

Sabah Chief Minister Datuk Harris Salleh partially let the cat out of the bag later on when he assured Marcos that he would prohibit the use of Sabah as a sanctuary, training ground and jump-off area for the MNLF fighters.

Sabah, on which there is a pending proprietary claim by the heirs of the sultan of Sulu, is a relatively short distance from the southwestern tip of Mindanao, across the Sulu sea. It was incorporated into Malaysia when US and British imperialists created this new state in 1962.

Based on the proprietary claim of the sultan's descendants, Macapagal filed a claim for Philippine sovereignty on this land. But his diplomatic maneuvers came to nothing.

Upon succeeding Macapagal in the presidency, Marcos hatched up a plan to seize Sabah by force. In a secret undertaking known as "Project Jabidah," the reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines trained a group of Moro youth on Corregidor in 1968. They were to form the nucleus of an armed force to infiltrate Sabah.

But the ill-conceived plan was aborted and exposed when Marcos' training officers malversed the funds intended for the trainees' pay. The trainees were murdered in cold blood when they protested. This has come to be known as the Jabidah massacre or Corregidor massacre.

For this and other bloody crimes, the fascist dictator aroused the wrath of the Moro people and fanned the flames of armed resistance against his government.

In Kuala Lumpur early this month, the hypocritical Marcos said he was dropping the claim to Sabah out of a desire for "peace" in the region, especially among the ASEAN states.

What Marcos could not conceal was his desire to establish close cooperation between his regime and the fascist Malaysian government in cracking down on the MNLF and the BMA, while making a large amount of money on the side.

In a larger sense, it is in line with a conspiracy of the five fascist regimes comprising ASEAN to launch joint military operations against burgeoning national democratic revolutions in their respective countries. Marcos' regime and the fascist US-Suharto dictatorship of Indonesia already have a joint border patrol agreement, also to the south of the Philippines.

But the forces of revolution continue to surge forward as the Filipino, Malaysian, Indonesian, Thai and Singaporean masses rise to overthrow the fascist dictatorships in their countries.

For the Moro people in particular, there is a wellspring of support from the people of Sabah that is beyond the Manila and Kuala Lumpur governments' power to suppress.

Almost one-sixth of the estimated 600,000 people on this land are Moros of Mindanao, many of them victims of persecution and oppression by the Marcos fascist regime. They are united with their brothers and sisters of Mindanao in struggle against the regime.

# **Mindanao Ceasefire Collapses; MNLF Kills AFP General, Others**

*Ang Bayan, Vol. IX, No. 15, October 15, 1977.*

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The shaky ceasefire in Mindanao has virtually collapsed with heavy fighting going on between Marcos fascist troops and the Bangsa Moro Army, fighting arm of the Moro National Liberation Front, in at least three provinces.

In one of the latest incidents last Monday, October 10, a group of Philippine Army officers and men by Brig. Gen. Teodulo Bautista was wiped out by the BMA in Danag, Patikul, Sulu. Bautista, commanding general of the First Infantry (Tabak) Division, was killed along with 34 of his men—a colonel, four lieutenant colonels, two majors, a captain, a second lieutenant and 25 enlisted men.

There was no known casualty on the BMA side. The

Marcos regime has since launched a big campaign against the BMA force that wiped out Bautista and his men, and heavy fighting was going on at press time.

The regime's "punitive drive" immediately ran into difficulties. Lt. Col. Benjamin Fe was killed in an ambush together with some of his men. Fe had just succeeded Lt. Col. Benjamin Sinay, who was killed with Bautista, as commanding officer of the 18th Infantry Battalion based in Sulu.

In its latest victories, the BMA made good use of the tactic of patiently luring the enemy into a trap it had set for him.

Earlier, on October 6, fighting also broke out in Basilan province, with 53 killed

on both sides, according to the reactionary government.

Hundreds of Moro fighters ambushed a PC patrol and rained fire on it. Rushing reinforcements, a PC armored car broke down on the road right under the BMA machineguns. Other reinforcements were similarly pinned down by the guerrilla fighters.

Heavy casualties were also being inflicted in the fighting still going on in Balut island, off the town of Jose Abad Santos in Davao del Sur.

The island was being bombed by the reactionary government's fighter planes, and pounded by cannon fired from the sea. Fascist troops are harassing the 7,000 inhabitants of Balut, most of them fishermen and peasants, accusing them of supporting the Moro National Liberation Front. As a result, the people's homes and crops have been destroyed and they are unable to work.

BMA forces in Balut swept down on a Coast Guard station of Marcos' navy and occupied it before withdrawing to the nearby mountains. The surprise attack sent the reactionary troops fleeing.

In another incident, nine PC soldiers were reported killed when the truck they were riding was blown up by a land mine in Kan-Asao, Luuk, Sulu, during military operations being conducted there.

In the light of the continuing clashes, the MNLF accused the Marcos government of violating the ceasefire agreement signed in Tripoli, Jamahiriyah (formerly Libya), last December.

According to the MNLF, the reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines had been provoking the BMA, prompting the Moro fighters to defend themselves. Meantime, the fascist dictatorship was frantically trying to block international discussion on the regime's oppression of the Moro people.

The fascist dictator's wife, Imelda Marcos, remained in New York City hoping to convince the delegates to the United Nations General Assembly that the Mindanao question is a "purely internal" affair.

Marcos has also told Kacem Shiri, emissary of the Islamic Conference, that he was rejecting the 42-nation organization's offer to mediate once more in the civil war.



Earlier, the Islamic Conference had demanded an immediate stop to the renewed hostilities and asked Marcos to respect the ceasefire agreement.

The fascist dictator realizes that world opinion is rapidly isolating his oppressive regime. No amount of expensive propaganda nor cheap dramatics by his wife can change this.

In southern Philippines, the MNLF and its fighting arm are proving in the battlefield that those who oppress the people must be prepared to answer with their lives. The Moro people are holding high the banner of armed revolution.

# **The Philippine Revolution and the Nationality Question**

**February 15, 1996**

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May I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to all the participants in the International Seminar on the Nationality Question. I am deeply pleased and honored to be invited as one of the lecturers. And I am thankful to the All India People's Resistance Forum for the invitation.

I regret that for an unavoidable reason I cannot attend the seminar. However, I am contributing a paper about the Philippine revolution and the nationality question.

The nationality question can be dealt with only in historical terms. It involves correctly relating the political, socioeconomic and cultural aspects of nationality as well as the whole national formation, its parts and the world. In its origination and development, Philippine or Filipino nationality is first of all a political concept that has arisen and developed from the necessity of uniting and activating the entire people of various social conditions and cultural traits in the anticolonial and then the anti-imperialist struggles for national independence and democracy.

To this day, the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the nationality question are our best guide. There is yet no experience more advanced than that of Lenin, Stalin and Mao in successfully dealing with the nationality question in the course of overthrowing the counterrevolutionary state and establishing and building socialism. It is to the credit of all the great Marxist-Leninist builders of socialism

that it took the modern revisionists a considerable period of time and effort both in the social-imperialist center and in its neocolonies to completely destroy the national formations under proletarian class dictatorship and to cast away the bonds of proletarian internationalism.

### ***1. The Philippine revolution of 1896 and Filipino nationality***

The Philippine revolution of 1896, whose centennial the Filipino people are celebrating this year, had the distinction of being the first bourgeois democratic revolution to overthrow a Western colonial power in Asia. It was guided by the bourgeois liberal ideology. It was for national liberation against Spanish colonial domination and racial oppression. It was for democracy not only in terms of civil and political liberties for individuals, associations and the people but also in terms of being opposed to the feudal oppression inflicted on the people, chiefly by the Spanish religious corporations, the biggest landlords in the country then.

As a concept and historical force, Filipino nationality was originally the product of the revolutionary movement of the people led by the revolutionary organization Katipunan. Previously, the Spanish colonialists referred to their colonial native subjects as indios or indigenes and to the Philippine-born Spaniards as Filipinos. It was in a manifesto that the revolutionaries categorically appropriated the term Filipino to refer to the entire colonized people of various ethnolinguistic communities in the struggle for national liberation. Previously, the Katipunan leaders and common people often referred to themselves as Tagalog, Malay, or lahing kayumanggi (brown race) and the reformists in the propaganda movement in Spain as indios bravos (noble indios).

Filipino nationality was first of all a political-revolutionary term and at the same time it all-roundly carried political, socioeconomic and cultural significance and content. It denoted the revolutionary will and movement of the people to establish the first nation-state encompassing the entire archipelago. It was essentially in the manifestos and decrees of the Katipunan and the Philippine revolutionary government, in the proclamation of Philippine independence on June 12, 1898 and in the Philippine Constitution of 1899.

The Philippine Revolution of 1896, which lofted the concept of Filipino nationality, was the product of a long series of armed uprisings of the people in various localities through more than 300 years of Spanish colonial rule. More than 200 uprisings had taken place, at first sporadically and then increasing in

scale, intensity and duration. The Spanish colonialists could continue their colonial rule for as long as there was yet no national consciousness and no nationwide revolutionary mass movement to wage the anticolonial resistance. It was in the 19th century, especially within its last three decades, that Filipino national consciousness spread throughout the archipelago.

National consciousness arose in response to the intensification of colonial, feudal and racial oppression. The people started to realize that they must rise up as a new nation in armed revolution in order to liberate themselves from the foreign oppressors. National sentiment and aspirations became defined in terms of achieving national independence from Spanish colonialism and establishing a modern nation-state. This was in repudiation of the reformist demand in the Propaganda Movement for the Philippines to become a regular province of Spain in order to enable the native people in the archipelago to acquire rights and duties under the 1812 liberal Cadiz Constitution of Spain.

In the course of the revolutionary struggle against Spanish colonialism from 1896 to 1898 and then against US imperialism from 1899 onward, the Filipinos of the Malay race, the mestizos (with Chinese and Spanish blood) and non-Malay ethnic communities united and participated in the struggle for national liberation and democracy. They were bound by socioeconomic relations, by a lingua franca and growing mutual respect for each other in every region and by a longrunning resentment over and resistance to colonial impositions.

Upon the coming of Spanish colonialism, the Malay people, who according to anthropologists, had been in the Philippines around 500 BC with an iron age culture, comprised more than 85 percent of the one million population and inhabited the seacoasts and banks of big rivers. Generally, they had small scale communities of the patriarchal slave form of society. They belonged to more than 100 ethnolinguistic communities but the overwhelming majority of them belonged to the biggest eight ethnolinguistic communities: Ilocano, Pangasinan, Kapampangan, Tagalog, Bisaya, Ilonggo, Waray and Maguindanao.

It was possible for the Spanish colonialists to conquer by armed force and convert some communities into Christianity and then conscript troops from one locality in order to further carry out the conquest and conversion of another locality from the late 16th century onward because the native people were characteristically divided into so many independent small societies and scores of ethnolinguistic communities.

The highest sociopolitical formation attained in the archipelago before the coming of the Spaniards were the Islamic sultanates in southwestern Mindanao whose population then comprised around 4 percent of the population of the entire Philippine archipelago. These sultanates had been established since at least the 15th century. They carried the elements of slave and feudal societies and were the most conscious and best organized to engage in prolonged armed resistance against the Spanish conquest. The Spaniards derisively called them Moros in recollection of the Catholic reconquista against the Moors in the Spanish peninsula and for a long time systematically roused the Christianized population against them.

The Spaniards also had great difficulties in extending their rule to the upland hill tribes which comprised some 10 percent of the population. They were in the main descendants of pre-Malay inhabitants (the so-called Austronesians with a neolithic culture) who had started to be in the archipelago since at least 5000 BC. Like the Moros of southwestern Mindanao, the Igorot tribes (currently presumed to have been in the archipelago since the first Christian millennium) continuously resisted attempts of the Spaniards to occupy the Cordilleras in Northern Luzon and to open gold mines there until the last quarter of the 19th century.

Also, the Spaniards simply did not have enough troops and priests to go into the areas of the Lumads in Mindanao and found no necessity to conquer and proselytize among the nomadic forest-based and food-gathering aborigines, the Negritos, who comprised less than one percent of the population. The Negritos or Aetas are the most probable earliest people in the Philippines. Archaeological evidence shows that the islands were inhabited by people since 22,500 BC. But human fossils and associated artifacts of the Tabon cave man do not indicate the racial stock.

Long before the coming of Spanish colonialism, the people in the Philippine archipelago had commercial and cultural connections with the rest of the Malay people, who were earlier and more heavily influenced by Hindu and Arab culture, and with the Arab, Indochinese and Chinese traders. Islamic proselytization had been extended from southwestern Mindanao to the Visayas and Luzon only a few decades before the coming of the Spanish colonialists. Trade with the Chinese became so brisk that a few of them stayed on as permanent residents, very often intermarrying with the native women.

The Spanish colonialists encouraged the residence of Chinese traders and artisans. They were most interested in the trade of goods between Mexico and China via the galleon trade via the Manila-Acapulco route long before the opening of the Suez Canal in 1815. But almost every 30 years on the average they roused the native population to engage in racial pogroms against the Chinese in the environs of the walled city of Manila.

To achieve their oppressive and exploitative purposes, the Spanish colonialists imposed a centralized system of administration on the colonized people and laid out a network of Spanish lay administrators and priests to control them. In more than 300 years of colonial rule, Spain developed a colonial and feudal society in the Philippines. The owners of the best and biggest estates were the religious corporations and the colonial bureaucrats, the religious corporations and the foreign merchant companies dominated commerce, especially foreign trade.

At the end of Spanish colonial rule, the social structure of the native population was as follows: the top class were the landlords who concentrated on the production of staple crops; the intermediate strata, which included the small entrepreneurs, master craftsmen, merchants and the few professionals; and the basic exploited classes, which included a huge peasant class comprising more than 90 percent and a working class comprising no more than 5 percent and consisting of workers in transport, printing, wood, tobacco, food processing and the like. 2.

### ***Filipino nationality under US imperialism***

The bourgeois-democratic revolution of the old type led by the liberal bourgeoisie in alliance with the native landlords against the Spanish colonialists and religious landlords was eventually frustrated by US imperialism. The US prevailed in the Filipino-American war from 1899 to 1902 by using its military superiority, directly and indirectly causing the death of 10 percent of the seven million Filipino people, and by issuing the proclamation of "benevolent assimilation" which promised autonomy and liberal reforms in order to coopt the dominant bourgeois liberal ideas in the revolutionary leadership and to split the revolutionary movement.

The main forces of the Philippine revolutionary army were broken in 1902. But armed resistance continued or reemerged in substantial parts of Luzon and the Visayas until 1910. When this dwindled, the US military forces increasingly paid

attention to the Moro provinces. The Moro people fought heroically but were completely defeated in 1916 and brought under US colonial administration.

The US imposed its own colonial rule on the Philippines, banned all expressions of Filipino patriotism and promoted a blatantly counterrevolutionary political party of native puppets that espoused assimilation into the US federal state. Due to the people's irrepressible resistance and demands for national independence, however, the US colonial regime would subsequently allow the formation of a political party among another set of puppet politicians who grabbed the slogan of "absolute, immediate and complete independence" but who in fact pushed the reformist line of begging for the grant of national independence by the colonial master in order to avert armed revolution.

The revolutionary concept of national independence along the bourgeois liberal line in 1896 was at first suppressed, then reinterpreted and divorced from the requisite of armed revolution and ultimately became subordinated to a pro-imperialist kind of bourgeois liberalism, masking the power of US monopoly capitalism. The prevailing framework was for the US to teach "democracy" to the Filipino people and train them in self-rule before nominal independence was to be granted to the US-trained puppet politicians, bureaucrats and professionals. The US cleverly used the public school system and the Catholic and Protestant missionaries to bring the people in the remotest areas under US colonial administration and counter the influence of the Philippine revolution.

A pro-imperialist bourgeois-liberal concept of Filipino nationality prevailed under US colonialism as the US developed a semifeudal type of society. The US promoted the more efficient production of certain agricultural crops for export, opened mines and introduced US companies in the manufacture of certain products for domestic consumption. It improved the system of transport and communications. It expanded and encouraged the public and private educational system in correspondence with the expanded requirements of the bureaucracy and business under modern imperialism. Unlike old-type colonialism, which engaged in sheer plunder to serve the primitive accumulation of capital in the West, foreign monopoly capitalism delivered surplus goods and capital from abroad in order to extract maximum profit from the colony.

The social structure among the people changed. The comprador big bourgeoisie among the natives and permanent residents, including the Spanish and Chinese descendants of the colonial ruling class, arose as the most wealthy and powerful

basic exploiting class and acted as the principal financial and commercial agent of the foreign monopoly capitalists. At the same time, the landlord class was retained and remained as the more widespread basic exploiting class. The intermediate social strata expanded and included the national bourgeoisie limited to light manufacturing of goods for domestic consumption and the urban petty bourgeoisie. Among the basic exploited classes, the working class expanded but the peasantry remained as the most numerous exploited class.

Inspired by the national consciousness as Filipinos, the people of various ethnolinguistic communities, religions and races, persevered in various forms of struggle for national independence. The struggle for national independence against imperialism favored and forged a revolutionary sense of national unity. From decade to decade under US colonial rule, the most progressive of the workers and peasant organizations carried the political demand for national independence in combination with their social and economic class demands. They launched strikes and other forms of mass actions. There were outbreaks of armed resistance in every decade.

When organized for the first time under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism in 1930, the Communist Party of the Philippines made the call for national independence but simplistically focused on the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It neither stressed sufficiently the need to gain genuine national independence nor succeeded in making a profound analysis of Philippine society and revolution. Nonetheless, in a few months' time, it was suppressed. When it was legalized in 1937 and it merged with the Socialist Party in 1938, it accepted the US-approved Philippine Constitution of 1935 and the Commonwealth government as the transition form of government towards the US grant of independence in 1946, as provided for by the US Tydings-McDuffie Law of 1935.

Among the Filipino communists, there was yet no complete clarity about all the basic requirements of the new-democratic revolution both in theory and in practice. However, in opposition to the Japanese invasion and occupation of the Philippines in World War II, the merger party of communists and socialists were able to take the political lead against imperialist Japan in the Central Luzon region, waged armed struggle and carried out land reform. As a result of the armed struggle against the Japanese invaders, the revolutionary forces became strong enough to be considered by US imperialism and the local reactionaries as the principal threat to them. And yet the merger party never withdrew its



reformist support for the US grant of independence and readily adopted the slogan of "peace and democracy" after World War II.

In the course of the patriotic armed resistance during World War II, the Filipinos of various ethnolinguistic communities, including the aboriginal Aeta clans and hill tribes of the Itnegs, Igorots, Mangyans, Lumads and the like, participated actively and fiercely in the guerrilla warfare against the Japanese collaborators. The Japanese grant of nominal independence to the Philippines ahead of the US version failed to deceive the people and only incited them to fiercer national resistance.

As soon as the US imperialists returned to the Philippines within the last year of World War II in the Pacific, they carried out a policy of using their troops and their puppets to suppress the armed revolutionary movement, reconcile the pro-US and pro-Japanese reactionaries, dismantle the provisional provincial and municipal governments proclaimed in Central Luzon by the revolutionary movement and undo the land reform carried out there by the revolutionaries during the war. As if blind to the determination of the US and local reactionaries to wipe out the revolutionary movement, the old merger party of communists and socialists decided to convert the People's Army against Japan (Hukbalahap) into a veterans' association and a legal peasant association to engage solely or mainly in parliamentary struggle.

In the aftermath of the 3-year Japanese occupation of the Philippines in World War II, the US granted nominal independence to the Philippines on July 4, 1946 and thereby shifted from direct colonial to indirect semicolonial rule over the Philippines. Responsibility for administration was turned over to the representatives of the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. At that time, the Philippine population had risen to 17 million, despite the loss of one million Filipino lives in World War II.

The US had no choice but to grant nominal independence in 1946 not only because it was bound by the Tydings-McDuffie Law and the long historical train of popular demand for national independence but also because it wanted to head off the armed revolutionary movement for national liberation. This became more assertive and militant after the imperialists and local reactionaries frustrated the reformist and revisionist line. They expelled from Congress the elected communist and progressive noncommunist representatives who had run for office under the banner of the Democratic Alliance in 1946. A patriotic war for

national liberation and democracy, led by the merger party of communists and socialists, ensued until the main revolutionary forces were defeated in the early '50s. In granting sham national independence, the US retained its allround economic, political, military and cultural power over the Philippines. It preserved and expanded the property rights of US corporations and citizens in the Philippines; it kept its military bases; it made the armed forces of the neocolonial state dependent on the Pentagon; it continued to manipulate the reactionary parties and advise and direct the bureaucracy; and in so many ways it superimposed cultural imperialism on the Philippines. The US kept the Philippines in neocolonial subordination not only in the framework of bilateral relations but also in the framework of regional and global relations under the hegemony of US imperialism. Among the colonies in Asia, the Philippines was the first to be granted nominal independence by a Western colonial power after World War II. For 25 years the US touted the Philippines as the show window of democracy until 1972 when martial rule was imposed on the Filipino people upon the instigation of the US. Nonetheless, the Philippines continued to be the model of neocolonial subservience to foreign monopoly capitalism.

### ***3. The new-democratic revolution and Filipino nationality***

Since the 1960s, the proletarian revolutionaries responsible for reestablishing the CPP on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought have clarified as never before the character of Philippine society as semicolonial and semifeudal, the character of the Philippine revolution as national-democratic of the new type, the motive forces of the revolution such as the proletariat, the peasantry and other patriotic and progressive strata of Philippine society, the targets of the revolution such as the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class, the national-democratic and socialist stages of the revolution, the current national-democratic tasks and the socialist perspective of the Philippine revolution.

The ongoing national-democratic revolution in the Philippines is a resumption of the old democratic revolution in the sense that it struggles for national liberation and democracy in the entire Philippines. But the struggle is at a new and higher level. The class leadership no longer belongs to the bourgeoisie or any of its stratum but to the working class whose advanced detachment, the Communist Party of the Philippines, follows the ideological line of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and pursues the general line of new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war. In the era of modern imperialism and proletarian

revolution, it is only under the class leadership of the proletariat that the struggle for national liberation can be completed and that the struggle for land reform can be realized as the main substance of democracy.

At this time, the class proportions in the structure in Philippine semicolonial and semifeudal society have become as follows: the basic exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords are a mere fraction of one percent, the intermediate stratum of the national bourgeoisie is some one percent and that the urban petty-bourgeoisie is 6 to 8 percent and the basic exploited classes of workers and peasants are 14 percent and 76 percent, respectively. This class structure has basically persisted from 1968 when the Philippine population was still 36 million to the present when the population is already 71 million, especially because of the deterioration of the socioeconomic conditions during the Marcos and post-Marcos regimes.

The CPP adheres to the line that the big comprador-landlord state must be overthrown through armed revolution and replaced by a people's democratic state. Accordingly, the character of Filipino nationality must change politically, socially and culturally. The CPP criticizes and repudiates the counterrevolutionary line of the imperialists and the local exploiting classes that the bourgeois concepts of nation-state and Filipino nationality are unchanging and irreplaceable, that these permanently transcend, gloss over or reconcile exploiting and exploited classes and that these are expressible only in abstract terms such as individuals, associations and the state, with constitutional rights and duties unrelated to imperialism and the exploiting classes.

The CPP and the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people are fighting for the overthrow of the existing counterrevolutionary state which is the joint class dictatorship of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and for the establishment of a people's democratic state under the leadership of the working class. The character and concrete content of Filipino nationality under the people's democratic state are radically different from those under the big comprador-landlord state.

It is of crucial importance to know the differences because there are reformists and revisionists who masquerade as Marxist-Leninists and who cannot think of nationality beyond the confines of the big comprador-landlord state because in the first place they do not wish to overthrow such a state and do not recognize at all the need to establish the people's democratic state. Every time there is

resistance to the existing counterrevolutionary state, they denounce this automatically as an attack on national unity which is in fact the social system ruled by the exploiting classes.

The CPP's Program for a People's Democratic Revolution clearly defines what constitutes the Filipino nation and the Filipino people, as including all the patriotic and progressive classes and strata and excluding the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class whose loyalty is to foreign monopoly capitalism and to themselves.

In waging the national-democratic revolution through a protracted people's war, the CPP is building the people's army as the main component of democratic state power and is building the local organs of democratic political power among the people. It is building a new state even while the big comprador-landlord state is still well-entrenched in the cities. Since 1972, the building of revolutionary state power has been guided by the Rules for Establishing the People's Democratic Government.

There are now thousands of local organs of political power, especially at the village and municipal levels. At levels higher than those at which organs of political power have not yet been organized, the CPP Central Committee is responsible for governmental leadership. The National Democratic Front has the task of assisting in the formation of the organs of political power and has also been authorized to engage in diplomatic and other international relations.

The CPP considers the political revolution as the most important prerequisite to the making of the people's democratic state and the new Filipino nationality. In connection with the political revolution, which involves the overthrow of the old counterrevolutionary state and the establishment of the new revolutionary state, the socioeconomic and cultural revolutions are carried out. The political, socioeconomic and cultural aspects of the people's democratic revolution result in the further revolutionary development of the character and content of Filipino nationality.

In the social revolution, the relations of production are so arranged that foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes are overthrown and cease to exploit the working people and that the forces of production are liberated. The land problem is solved and national industrialization is carried out. The nationalization of the industrial means of production, sources of raw materials

and major lines of distribution, land reform and cooperativization of agriculture and the temporary concessions to small and medium producers are done to facilitate and not to obstruct and delay the socialist transformation of the economy and society.

In the cultural revolution, a national, scientific and mass culture is promoted under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism. The national cultural heritage must be cherished to serve the present. The scientific outlook and education must be propagated to let the nation learn and benefit from the outside and advance materially and spiritually with the rest of the world and must combat imperialism, chauvinism, religious obscurantism, bourgeois decadence and racism. Culture must serve the people, especially the working people.

The national language, which is Manila-based Tagalog, and the literature in this language must be vigorously promoted to replace English as the principal domestic language in the Philippines and the local languages and literature must be respected, cherished and promoted and not to be the target of any chauvinist discrimination. However, English may still remain as the No.1 foreign language of the country for international intercourse.

So far, the reactionaries have used the English language, rather than the officially designated national language, as the principal medium in bureaucratic communications, legislation, judicial proceedings, education, public information and all other fields and as an instrument for the exploiting classes to browbeat and discriminate against the exploited classes.

The revolutionaries have promoted the use of the national language to facilitate nationwide revolutionary communication and understanding in opposition to the absurd primacy of English over the national language within the country. They have demonstrated that the national language is a beautiful language in literature and is a precise language in any kind of discourse.

At the same time, they use and promote whatever is the language of any locality because the point is to arouse, organize and mobilize the people immediately for the new-democratic revolution. So far, in recent times, the imperialists and the local exploiting classes have failed to generate any widescale communal conflicts from ethnolinguistic, racial, religious or other cultural differences by way of dividing and ruling the people. The people have a high sense of Filipino nationality as a consequence of the old-democratic revolution, the continuing

opposition to foreign domination be it old colonial or modern imperialist and, of course, the new-democratic revolution.

Discrimination due to ethnolinguistic differences is subdued by the development of social, political, economic and cultural relations and by the now widespread acceptance of the national language in addition to the much earlier acceptance of a lingua franca on a regional or provincial scale.

Malay chauvinism, usually against Negritos and the Chinese is subdued by a number of factors. The Negritos stand up for their rights and participate in the revolutionary movement against the oppressors and exploiters. Some Chinese have adopted Filipino nationality in an all-round sense, whether or not they retain their distinctive cultural traits. Other Chinese have legally opted for citizenship in the People's Republic of China since the latter half of the '70s. The Chinese have their own cultural and commercial associations and tend to cluster in residential and commercial areas in various cities. Christian chauvinism is usually directed against the Muslims and the animists who are derided as heathens. But it is counteracted by the forces of the national-democratic revolution movement and by the people of various religious beliefs who uphold the freedom of belief. They have so far frustrated every major attempt of the reactionaries to rouse Christian chauvinism against the Moros. But the imperialists and their local agents persist in trying to build political parties and movements based on religion and directed against the new-democratic revolution.

In principle, policy and concrete practice, the CPP has exerted the utmost effort to put into full play in the new-democratic revolution the unity and militant participation of the Filipino people with diverse customs, race, languages, religious affiliation and other cultural traits. In more than 27 years of revolutionary struggle since its reestablishment on December 26, 1968, the CPP has surpassed all previous revolutionary and patriotic movements in going to the remotest areas and going deep among the native inhabitants and the poor settlers there.

The reasons are obvious. The people there are the most oppressed, exploited and neglected by the counterrevolutionary state and are exceedingly interested in the new democratic revolution. Even as they are being rapidly dispossessed of land and other natural resources by the foreign monopoly capitalists and the local exploiting classes, they still inhabit an extensive and rough terrain suitable for

guerrilla warfare in the protracted people's war. They have valiantly fought against the enemy and withstood the most brutal campaigns of suppression and genocide, including bombardments, arson and forced mass evacuations.

The CPP and the revolutionary movement unite the native inhabitants and the poor settlers against the foreign and domestic agrocorporations, the bureaucratic and military landgrabbers and speculators, the logging firms, the big ranchers, the mining firms and other types of "development" aggressors who grab the land and despoil the environment. The right of the native inhabitants to their ancestral land is upheld and defended. At the same time, the poor settlers who have come to the hinterland and stayed for generations are accommodated.

#### ***4. The right to self-determination among the minorities***

The CPP and the revolutionary movement recognize the right to self-determination of the national minorities, including the right to secede from an oppressive state and the right to autonomy under a nonoppressive state. The principle of self-determination is an inalienable right. The right is always there to be invoked and exercised whenever there is the need to struggle against oppression, to promote the legitimate interest of a community and to demand and undertake affirmative action.

But the right cannot be justly invoked nor exercised in order to deliver a community to the imperialists and the counterrevolutionaries or to serve micro-chauvinism, ethnocentrism, racism, counterrevolutionary localism, cultural nationalism, religious and other cultural prejudice against the common interest of the Filipino nation. The forces of the national-democratic revolution criticize and repudiate those imperialist and reactionary forces that superimpose cultural nationalism on political and social questions in order to slander and attack the revolutionary movement and prevent the people with various cultural traits to participate in the national-democratic revolution.

In opposition to the revolutionary political concept of Filipino nationality as encompassing all the people in the Philippine archipelago of whatever ethnolinguistic, religious, racial or other cultural affiliation, some ideologues and propagandists of the imperialists and reactionaries try to drum up the notions that only those who have been Christianized, Hispanized or Westernized are Filipinos and that, according to their counterrevolutionary definition, Filipinos are intrinsically chauvinist or colonialist (relative to the upland people and the Moro

people) even when promoting the national revolutionary consciousness and unity of the entire Filipino people against the imperialists and their local lackeys.

The objective of the enemies of the national-democratic revolution, in whipping up Filipino chauvinism or some micro-chauvinism against the revolutionary concept and reality of Filipino nationality is to divide the entire people of the Philippines now and in the future and undermine the Philippine revolution. The enemies of the Philippine revolution seek to manipulate the differences in the cultural traits of the people and to disrupt the course of the political, socioeconomic and cultural revolution.

Historically and currently, the imperialists and the local reactionaries have directed and funded the ideologues, publicists and so-called NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) who push the line that ethnicity is beyond the range of communists and the anti-imperialist and class struggles. At the moment, the imperialist-dominated UN is pretending to be concerned about indigenous people. In fact, the imperialists and their agents have been responsible for the most dastardly forms of oppression and exploitation as well dispossession and destruction of the environment at the expense of the indigenous peoples.

The forces of the national-democratic revolution have consistently championed the right to self-determination of all the peoples in various ethnolinguistic communities against the chauvinism and national oppression and exploitation perpetrated by the counterrevolutionary state, the foreign monopolies, the local exploiters, the Catholic church and other dominant institutions. The principle of the revolutionary movement is to rely on the masses everywhere in the Philippines, to respect their cultural characteristics and to put into full play their all-round initiative.

While the necessary number of outside cadres are utilized in order to open any new area of revolutionary work, the unwavering purpose of the CPP and the revolutionary movement is always to let the local masses assume responsibilities in the revolutionary struggle for their own social benefit and to develop revolutionary cadres and organizations among them. In the building of organs of political power of whatever scale, there is always a special regard for the particular characteristics and interests of minorities and for local autonomy and proportionate representation whenever there is a mixture of people with different ethnic characteristics.



In doing revolutionary work among the hill tribes and other upland people, the cadres and forces of the national-democratic revolution do rigorous social investigation, integrate themselves with the local people and their way of life. They show respect for the local customs and beliefs and avoid bureaucratism and roughness in dealing with these. Even in combating superstition, they use the most persuasive means of education and the good results of appropriate scientific alternatives to put forward the new ideas and practices.

They have respected traditional but benign forms of local leadership, like the council of elders, and have acted as facilitators and guarantors of unity and peace in intertribal relations even as the new mass organizations and organs of political power are established. They have also recruited, trained and transformed the local warriors as people's militia auxiliary to the New People's Army.

There are scores of ethnolinguistic communities or national minorities in the upland. They comprise around 10 percent of the Philippine population (excluding the Moros). They include such communities as those under the generic names of Aetas, Itnegs, Igorots, Mangyans, Lumads and the like.

Revolutionary organizations have arisen among the national minorities, such as the Cordillera People's Democratic Front (CPDF), the Revolutionary Organization of the Lumads, Moro Revolutionary Organization (MORO) and are allied organizations within the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. At the same time, there are legal progressive organizations of national minorities, such as the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA), the Federation of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines (KAMP), the Central Luzon Aeta Association (CLAA), the Subanen Union of Lumad Organizations (SULO) and the Tribal Association of Mangyans in Mindoro.

The various ethnolinguistic communities are not known to easily invoke the right to secede for obvious reasons. Their respective population and social economies are small scale. They are interconnected with the existing social system in the country. They have repeatedly joined up with the lowlanders in patriotic armed struggles against foreign oppressors. Their way out of oppression and exploitation is bound up with the new-democratic revolution of the rest of the Filipino people.

So far, only one significant force has arisen from among the ethnolinguistic communities or national minorities to invoke the right to secede. This is the

Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). It had its historic distinction of adopting the political concept of Moro nation to encompass some 13 small ethnolinguistic communities in southwestern Mindanao, with the current population of some 3 million and with Islam as the common dominant cultural characteristic. Originally, the MNLF was a petty-bourgeois radical organization trying to combine Moro nationalism, Islam and Marxism. From 1972 to 1976, it waged an armed struggle strong enough at its peak to absorb 30 percent of the combat effectives of the reactionary armed forces and was objectively helpful to the new-democratic revolution when the NPA was still germinal in most parts of the Philippines.

The forces of the national-democratic revolution have always supported and encouraged the MNLF and other Moro organizations to act according to the Moro people's right to self-determination, including the right to secede, as a weapon against the counterrevolutionary state, national oppression and Christian chauvinism. It is in the common interest of the Filipino people, including the Moros, that the Moro organizations wage armed struggle, for self-determination.

The CPP and the revolutionary movement have therefore repeatedly offered revolutionary alliance, cooperation and coordination with the MNLF and other Moro organizations and have held in prospect regional autonomy under a nonoppressive unitary or federal state of the future. At the same time, they have taken definite steps to organize the Moro masses and develop cadres among them wherever the MNLF and other Moro organizations are not doing revolutionary work.

The Christians for National Liberation (CNL), which is a major allied organization in the NDF, have been active since the early '70s in counteracting and frustrating every scheme and attempt of the counterrevolutionary state to rouse Christian chauvinism among the Filipino people in general against the Moro nation in particular. Contrary to the view of Moro micro-chauvinists, the Filipino people in general and the Moro people in particular need each other in the common struggle against foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Moro chauvinism, which denounces even Filipino revolutionaries as colonialists, needs the puncturing of its arrogance. It circulates the myth that the Moros have never been conquered by any foreign power and are different from and superior to the rest of the Filipino people. While it is true that the Moros have retained

Islam as the dominant religion among them, it is not true that they have never been conquered.

The heroic prolonged resistance of Sultan Kudarat was subdued in the 17th century by the Spanish colonialists. Equipped with iron-side gunboats, the Spaniards forced the sultanate of Sulu to agree to the deployment of Spanish garrisons in the Sulu archipelago in the middle of the 19th century. The US imperialists subjugated all the Islamic sultanates by force of arms after the defeat of the forces of the old democratic revolution in Luzon and Visayas. Thus, the Moro people were put under US colonial rule and subsequently under the existing counterrevolutionary state.

From the viewpoint of the national-democratic revolution, the MNLF has contradictory characteristics. Even if led by petty-bourgeois radicals who use nationalism and Islam as their rallying points, it is progressive in fighting for self-determination against a counterrevolutionary state. But it is also reactionary because it has a negative attitude towards the new-democratic revolution of the entire Filipino people and does not have any clear democratic program for the benefit of the Moro people. It has nothing to say against the Moro big bureaucrats, big compradors and landlords conniving with the existing counterrevolutionary state.

The MNLF leadership has verbally attacked the forces of the national-democratic revolution as those of what it defines as Filipino colonialism. And yet it has repeatedly gone into accommodations with the counterrevolutionary Philippine state. In 1976, it signed with the Marcos regime the Tripoli Agreement, whose first provision requires the MNLF to submit itself to the principle that the Moro problem be solved within the framework of Philippine "sovereignty and territorial integrity". It chose to capitulate in principle to the Marcos fascist regime at a time that the Filipino people, including the Moro people were under extreme oppression by that regime.

The MNLF leadership has also gone into accommodations with the succeeding Aquino and Ramos regimes. It entered into a truce agreement with the Aquino regime and renewed this with the Ramos regime. It has solicited from both the privilege of ruling the whole of Mindanao in utter contempt of demographic facts. The 1990 population of the Moro nation is 2.6 million, only 4.3 percent of the total Philippine population of 71 million and only about 19 percent of the entire Mindanao population of 13.9 million.

Even as it has gone into peace negotiations and agreements with the counterrevolutionary state, the top leadership of the MNLF has repeatedly refused to negotiate and enter into alliance, cooperation and coordination with the forces of the national-democratic revolution. On several occasions, it has even issued hostile statements to the effect that the forces of the national-democratic revolution are even worse as an enemy than the counterrevolutionary state.

The forces of the national-democratic revolution have avoided making any hostile statement towards the MNLF. They have consistently supported the Moro people's struggle for self-determination, have repeatedly urged the MNLF and other Moro organizations to wage revolutionary armed struggle against the oppressive state and have exerted efforts to cooperate with the MNLF at any level. However, they are aware of the anticommunist influence exercised on the MNLF by its supporters among the oil-producing Islamic countries.

When the new-democratic revolution wins in the Philippines, it is highly probable that the imperialists and the reactionaries abroad will utilize the pro-imperialist and reactionary forces all over Mindanao and in particular in the Moro areas against the people's democratic state. It is therefore absolutely necessary for the forces of the national-democratic revolution to arouse, organize and mobilize the Moro people in concert with the rest of the Filipino people and develop truly revolutionary forces and cadres among the Moro people.

### ***5. Concluding remarks***

After the basic completion of the new-democratic revolution through the nationwide armed overthrow of the big comprador-landlord state, it becomes necessary and possible to proclaim the people's democratic state and begin the socialist revolution even as bourgeois-democratic reforms are still undertaken in the transition.

Under these conditions, the people of various nationalities, ethnolinguistic communities, religious affiliation and other cultural traits, will become united in a revolutionary modern nation-state of a higher type than the one envisioned and struggled for in the Revolution of 1896. Filipino nationality or citizenship in the people's democratic state means national liberation from imperialism, freedom from class exploitation and the enjoyment of individual and collective rights in the political, social, economic and cultural spheres. The socialist revolution will

strengthen the national cohesion and integration of the entire Filipino people. The unity of the international proletariat and the cooperation of socialist countries under the principle of proletarian internationalism will also strengthen the entire nation against chauvinism at any level in the country and against imperialism from without.

The defeat of the imperialists and the local exploiting classes will certainly drive these evil forces to multiply their resistance to the revolution, in ways more clever than before, when the opportunities for a violent return to power are not immediately available. They will use sugarcoated bullets. As already demonstrated by the experience in socialist countries, where capitalism has been restored through a gradual process of peaceful evolution, revisionism can arise and prevail if unchecked by proletarian revolutionary vigilance and militancy despite all socialist achievements.

The most clever counterrevolutionaries will attempt to undermine the proletarian ruling party, the state, economy and the whole of society by misrepresenting revisionist ideas as proletarian, spreading cynicism against socialism and the masses and ultimately claiming that the working class has accomplished its historic mission or that the class struggle is dying out and all that needs to be done is to develop the forces of production. The revision of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism is carried out and the policies are adopted to dissolve socialism.

When socialism and proletarian internationalism are lost in a country, the most reactionary centrifugal forces reemerge in society. The imperialists and their agents now misrepresent the preceding period of revisionism and capitalist restoration as a period of socialism and blame socialism for the reemergence of unbridled bourgeois nationalism, ethnocentrism, racism and religious obscurantism. But they cannot really conceal the culpability of the bureaucrat monopoly capitalists as well as their own culpability for the ever worsening national disorder and disintegration in the former revisionist-ruled countries.

The crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system is accelerated by the competitive use of high technology and the most abusive methods of finance capitalism. It is wreaking unprecedented havoc in the industrial capitalist countries and more so in the neocolonial client-states. It is generating social turmoil and armed warfare and is pushing the exploiting classes to use nationalism, ethnocentrism, religious fundamentalism and fascism as their tools

of political rivalry and mass deception. Nevertheless, economic crisis and war create the conditions favorable to the revolution.

A new round of revolutionary struggle is bound to develop under the initiative and leadership of the proletariat against imperialism and the local reactionaries. When the forces of national liberation and socialism resurge, they shall be led by the revolutionary parties of the proletariat that are guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism because these are at a vantage point to comprehend the previous experience of socialism, the betrayal of modern revisionism and the current world disorder and are in the best position to further develop in theory and practice, under the new global conditions, the requirements for national and social liberation at a new and higher level.

# **Pretense at Generosity with Full Malice by US Imperialism and Arroyo Regime**

**August 15, 2008**

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The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) has consistently supported the Moro people's right to self-determination. This ranges from the right to regional autonomy in a nonoppressive state to the right to secede from the oppressive state that exists in the Philippines. Even an individual who finds himself or herself oppressed by a state has the right to separate from it.

In a manner of speaking, the Filipino people and revolutionary forces within the framework of the NDFP and the growing revolutionary organs of political power have seceded or separated themselves from the oppressive semicolonial and semifeudal state system that is ruled by the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and are striving to build the new people's democratic state system that is based on the alliance of the toiling masses of workers and peasants and the middle social strata.

When I read the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that was supposed to be signed by representatives of the MILF and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) in Malaysia on August 5, 2008, I thought immediately that the contents which appeared to recognize and concretize the Bangsamoro's right to self-determination and ancestral domain were too good and too generous to be true. The MOA was so contrary to the greedy and brutal character of the GRP, whose presumptions and actuations I have long known in the course of revolutionary struggle and the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations.

It was almost predictable that the signing of the MOA would be aborted. The public release of the draft only a few days before the date of signing was clearly meant to stir up a controversy big enough to cause the abortion. Had the Arroyo regime really meant to push through the MOA, it should have worked it out with the MILF and other interested parties at the latest within the first half of the year or even late last year. But the MOA was never meant to be, either to be signed or to be realized, as GRP officials would reveal.

Top subalterns of the fake and mendacious president such as Ermita, Esperon and Dureza declared that the MOA was just a piece of paper, subject to existing GRP laws, further legislation and constitutional amendment. Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J., whom they had consulted all along, also confirmed that the MOA was nothing more than a piece of paper, despite the regime's rather expensive much ado about it.

The patriotic and progressive forces and the people are reasonably concerned that the MOA had been devised by the untrustworthy and sneaky Arroyo as a way for pushing a charter change to allow her to stay in power beyond 2010, without really having to give substantial concessions to the MILF. But they must look further into the obnoxious joint objectives of the US government (together with the Japanese and Australian governments) and the Arroyo regime in seeming to be for the MOA and making the MILF believe that the GRP was serious about signing this.

Under the direction of the US State Department, the US Institute of Peace has been busy in carrying out the Philippine Facilitation Project since 2003 in order to help produce something like the MOA. It is obvious that the US has been out to sidle up to and ingratiate itself with the MILF and the Bangsamoro in order to further strengthen its position in exploiting the human and natural resources of the Bangsamoro and deploying US military forces in Mindanao.

At this point, the question is: With the signing aborted, is the MOA still useful to the major parties directly involved in drafting or facilitating it? The MILF can continue to use the MOA as a standard or minimum basis for negotiating with the GRP. The GRP or the Arroyo regime can also use the same thing for putting off serious formal negotiations with the MILF and for hyping the need for charter change. Unilaterally or in cahoots with the GRP, the US can use the high expectations raised by the MOA among the MILF and Bangsamoro to justify US military presence and advance US hegemony in Mindanao.



Certainly, such expectations can never be realized through the kindness of the US and the GRP and without the persevering struggle of the Moro people. The GRP and its imperialist masters are merely using the MOA as a device of pretended generosity to MILF in order to seize the propaganda initiative, to prolong GRP-MILF informal talks and ceasefire and to deploy larger US and Philippine military forces against the MILF and the Bangsamoro.

The pretense at generosity is full of malice. It is calculated to outwit and outflank the MILF and the Bangsamoro and to facilitate frontal military attacks against them. They are being left no choice but to wage revolutionary struggle in order to advance their cause of national self-determination. There is a heightened need for the unity, cooperation of the MILF and the NDFP in their distinct and common concerns and causes against the same adversaries.

# **Strengthen the Alliance of the Peoples of the Cordillera**

**Message of Solidarity on Cordillera Day, April 23, 2009**

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On behalf of the International Coordinating Committee and all member-organizations of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) and to the broad masses of the people in the region on the occasion of the 25th Cordillera Day on April 23 and 24.

In the spirit of international anti-imperialist solidarity, we solemnly commemorate with you the martyrdom of Ama Macliing Dulag who was murdered on the night of April 24, 1980 by the forces of imperialism and state terrorism for opposing the World Bank-financed Chico River Basin Hydroelectric Dam Project of the Marcos fascist dictatorship which sought to displace the indigenous people from their land, devastate their lives and culture and deliver the land, mineral, forest, water and other resources to foreign corporations and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

On that night, Dulag's colleague Pedro Dungoc survived the attack and subsequently joined the New People's Army. He made significant contributions to the development of people's war among the indigenous people until he died heroically as a Red fighter. We render the highest tribute to all martyrs and heroes who have made and continue to make the supreme sacrifice in the struggle of the peoples of the Cordillera for self-determination and regional autonomy, for ancestral rights to land and resources and for all other rights.

We, the ILPS, resolutely and vigorously support the people of the Cordillera in the struggle for all their rights within the context of national freedom and democracy for the Filipino people as well as within the scope of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We salute and congratulate all of you in the CPA for your growing strength and cumulative achievements in upholding, defending and promoting the rights of the people of Cordillera against the exploitative and oppressive interests of the imperialists, the big comprador-landlords and the corrupt high bureaucrats currently headed by the Arroyo ruling clique. You continue to prevail over tremendous odds and vicious attacks against you by powerful adversaries because of your firm commitment, your courage, your hard work, your militant struggle and spirit of self-sacrifice in the service of the people.

We take pride in having the CPA as the lead organization for Commission 10 of the ILPS on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, National Minorities and Nationalities for Self-Determination and Decolonization Against Discrimination, Racism, and National Oppression by Imperialism and Local Reaction. You have brought into the ILPS your rich experience in successfully spearheading the struggle of the people of Cordillera and in promoting their relations of solidarity and mutual support with other peoples.

We appreciate that this year you are holding festive and meaningful celebrations of Cordillera Day through deliberative meetings and cultural activities in five different assembly points in Abra, Baguio and Benguet, Kalinga and Apayao, Ifugao and Mountain Province, instead of celebrating in only one assembly point for the entire region as in previous years. This new development manifests your growing capabilities. It allows more people in the entire region to participate in the celebrations and the various provinces to adopt their respective themes based on their specific conditions, problems and issues.

At the same time, all the specific themes are encompassed by the central theme: strengthen solidarity. Intensify the struggle for land, life and rights. This call for unity is at once a call for action. The people of Cordillera must stand up as one to confront the problems of exploitation and oppression that they suffer in the entire region and in every province. These problems arise from the semicolonial

and semifeudal character of Philippine society. The solutions are available along the line of the people's struggle for national liberation and democracy.

Among the most pressing issues that the CPA must tackle are the relentless plunder of the ancestral land resources by foreign and local mining corporations; the escalating violations of human rights; the assaults on the basic rights to livelihood and welfare; the scheme to amend the 1987 constitution for the benefit of the ruling clique and its imperialist masters; and the severe impact of the rapidly worsening crises of both the world capitalist system and the domestic ruling system.

We are confident that the meetings of the CPA in the various provinces will yield resolutions and action plans that tackle the issues in very concrete terms and within the context of the central theme. Thus, the entirety and every part of the CPA will be able to arouse, organize and mobilize the people in protesting the iniquities, in raising demands and bringing the movement for national and social liberation to a new and higher level.

We hope that the CPA will continue to carry out its tasks successfully, grow in strength and advance further in the service of the people of Cordillera. The CPA and the people of Cordillera will continue to win greater victories because your cause is just and because you persevere in struggle. Your adversaries are stricken by a deepening crisis and are resisted by the people in your region, in the entire Philippines and entire world. You enjoy abundant support from the Filipino people and the people of the world.

The International League of Peoples' Struggle is grateful to you for your hard work and contributions in promoting and strengthening international solidarity along the anti-imperialist and democratic line by focusing on the upholding, defense and advancement of the rights of indigenous peoples, national minorities and nationalities for self-determination and decolonization against discrimination, racism, and national oppression by imperialism and local reaction.

Long live the people of Cordillera!

Long live the Cordillera Peoples Alliance!

Long live the people of the Philippines and the world!

# **ILPS Supports the Naga People in their Struggle for Self-Determination, Human Rights and Peace**

**March 2, 2010**

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We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, are in solidarity with the Naga people in their struggle for national self-determination, human rights and a just peace. The Naga people have the right to self-determination, including the right to establish their own state in their Nagalim homeland, which borders on North East India and Myanmar.

The Nagas were ahead of the Union of India by one day in declaring independence from British imperialism in 1947. The United Nations was duly provided with the declaration of independence. After several years of seeking by talks to assimilate the Nagas, India invaded Nagalim in 1954 and proceeded to exact a heavy toll of nearly 200,000 war casualties on the Naga people.

After several years of political conflict, Indian leaders including army chiefs came to know the reality and declared: (i) the Naga problem is a political issue; (ii) treating the Naga issue as a law and order problem would be wrong; and (iii) military solution is not possible; it needs a political treatment apart from military treatment and it is time for India and the Nagas to talk across the table.

The principles of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim (NSCN) are freedom from all kinds of bondage and independence from any foreign domination and close relationship with other peoples and nations on the basis of mutual respect and recognition of rights.

In September 1964, the first Indo-Naga peace negotiation started. The

negotiation failed due to India's insincerity and in 1972 the Government of India unilaterally withdrew the ceasefire. Hence the bloodshed and human right violations.

The second ceasefire agreement was signed between the Government of India and the Nagas under the leadership of Isak Chishi Swu and Th. Muivah on August 1, 1997 to start negotiations on three terms : (i) talks without any conditions, (ii) talks at the Prime Ministerial level and (iii) in third countries.

So far the peace talks have been held in different places, including Amsterdam, Bangkok, Chiang-Mai, Dimapur (Nagalim), Geneva, the Hague, Kuala Lumpur, Milan, New Delhi, New York, Osaka, Paris, Vienna and Zurich.

With a view to having wide ranging consultations with the Naga people on the current Indo-Naga peace process, the NSCN has conducted consultative meetings six times, where all sections of the Naga people from different places attended. At the Fourth Consultative Meeting, held at Hebron, the designated camp, on January 20 and 21, 2005, the Collective Leadership of the NSCN was reaffirmed and mandated for working out an honorable solution to the Indo-Naga political issue. The peace process is still going on.

There is little or no progress at all in the talks. India refuses to recognize the government and territory of Nagalim, preventing determination of the coverage of the ceasefire. In the meantime, the Indian reactionary armed forces unleash various forms of repression by abducting, torturing and murdering the Nagas and looting and burning their homes and farms.

At this very moment, the Indian Government is poised to receive and talk with a delegation of the National Socialist Council of Nagalim headed by Th. Muivah, Secretary of the NSCN. But India is now trying to precondition the talks by keeping them within the bounds of the Indian Constitution and the administrative terms of the Indian Home Ministry. This preconditioning is not a sign of sincerity.

In going through the motions of negotiating peace, the Indian government is actually obsessed with playing up and manipulating the broad variety of tribes and resistance organizations in Nagalim and in forcing through Indian expansionism and the subjection of the Naga people to Indian and foreign monopoly interests.

We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, call on all our member-organizations and our allies to pay close attention to the revolutionary cause of the Naga people and extend every possible support to them in their struggle for national and social liberation, allround development and a just peace.

# **Empower Communities to Assert their Rights**

## **Message of Solidarity to KADUAMI,**

**March 17-18, 2010**

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On behalf of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to KADUAMI (Katinnulong Daguiti Umili iti Amianan Cooperation of the People of the North) and to the delegations participating in KADUAMI's Sixth General Assembly and Northern Luzon Development Conference.

We consider as greatly important and timely your theme, "Empowering Communities to Assert their Right to Food and Right to Development, and Promoting Good Governance in the Context of Climate Change."

We appreciate that the participants represent 120 people's organizations and nongovernmental organizations and come from the ranks of farmers, fisherfolk, workers, indigenous people, women, urban poor and youth. We are confident that they are in a position to map out the people's alternative development and actions for the next three years.

They can draw wisdom and strength from the rich accumulated experience and achievements of KADUAMI during the last 27 years. They can learn from their own social investigation, direct experience and successes in mass work in recent years. They know the dire conditions, needs and demands of the people.

We continue to commend KADUAMI for helping establish self-determining, self-reliant and interdependent communities in Northern Luzon through partnership, capability building, networking and socioeconomic work. We hope



that KADUAMI shall become ever stronger in serving the people as a result of its Sixth General Assembly.

# **Fight for Land, Life and Honor**

## **Message of Solidarity on Cordillera Day 2011**

**April 26, 2011**

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On the occasion of Cordillera Day 2011, we the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) express our warmest greetings of solidarity to all the delegates and distinguished guests and to all the people of Cordillera, the overall host Cordillera Peoples Alliance and the local hosts Kakailian Salakniban Tay Amin a Nagtaudan (People's Defense of Ancestral Domain, KASTAN), Timpuyog dagiti Umili iti Lacub [Association of Lacub Residents], Bantayan Ekolohiya ken Kinabaknang (Lacub People's Federation for Ecological and Resource Protection).

We have the highest appreciation for the Cordillera Peoples Alliance and the people of Cordillera in faithfully celebrating Cordillera Day since 1985 on the basis of the earlier Macliing Memorials (1980-1984), in order to affirm the Cordillera people's unity in defending their ancestral domain and in struggling for self-determination and national democracy.

Cordillera Day has been consecrated by the blood of martyrs, starting with Ama Macliing Dulag and Pedro Dungoc who led the struggle against the World Bank-funded Chico River Basin Hydroelectric Dam Project of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. The day is annually celebrated by the people in the Philippines and abroad to refresh our collective memory and renew our resolve to continue with the struggle for national liberation, democracy, social justice and development in the interest of the people.

We welcome your current theme, Live Out Our Glorious History of Struggle!

Fight for Land, Life and Honor! In this regard, it is of great importance that you focus on such burning issues as mining, militarization, and human rights violations. These involve the exploitation and oppression of the people of Cordillera and require their resolute and militant resistance and the active support of the entire Filipino people and the people of the world.

A million hectares or 51 percent of the Cordillera land area is covered by the licensed operations and pending applications of transnational corporations and their Filipino partners. This involves grabbing the land, the mineral resources, the forests and the rivers from the people for the purpose of plunder and in the process causing environmental destruction and pollution at the expense of the indigenous Cordillera communities as well as the people in the lowlands.

Militarization and human rights violations are concomitant to mining. To suppress the people's resistance and impose the large mining projects, the state has deployed four regular battalions and three special battalions of the Philippine Army to the mining areas in the Cordillera region. As a result, gross and systematic human rights violations occur.

It is appropriate to hold Cordillera Day 2011 in Lacub because this municipality is rich in gold ore deposits and several mining companies, like the Golden Lake Mineral Resources and the Titan Exploration and Development Corporation, are determined to exploit several sites. It is necessary for us to join the people of Lacub in their struggle against the mining companies and to manifest to them our sympathy and support for their struggle.

It is always inspiring to recall and highlight the historic resistance of the indigenous Tinggians of Abra to the logging of their forests by Cellophil Resources Corporation during the years of the US-Marcos dictatorship. Once more we must draw lessons from this successful struggle in addressing the urgent issues confronting the Cordillera peoples today.

Taking the cue from reactionary national officials, certain provincial and local officials claim that mining will bring progress and prosperity. They deliberately obscure the fact that areas in Cordillera like Tuba, Itogon, Tublay, Kibungan and Mankayan, which have been heavily mined for decades, have nothing to show but severe poverty of the people and devastation of the land. That is also true in other gold mining areas such as Marinduque, Toledo in Cebu and those in Mindanao.

The mining companies promise to repair the Lacub road and build a bridge across the Malanas River. But, of course, they will do so in order to facilitate their mining operations. After they deplete the nonrenewable gold resource, they will leave the area and its already overused road and bridge in a state of disrepair. They are no different from the corrupt politicians who steal year in and year out the public money that is appropriated for building the infrastructure.

Mining projects are accompanied by militarization. Lacub is now surrounded by large semipermanent detachments of the Philippine Army in the nearby municipalities of Lagangilang, Baay-Licuan, and Malibcong. At increasing frequency, the Philippine Army fields platoons to Lacub, to undertake so-called counterinsurgency operations. In 2008, a Special Operations Team (SOT) of the 41st IB controlled the village of Talampac for a full year in order to destroy the community organization.

In the province of Abra, both the Philippine Army and the private armies of corrupt politicians are flagrantly serving the interest of the mining companies. Two battalions of the Philippine Army's 5th Infantry Division are deployed here—the 41st IB in the north and the 50th IB in the south. In addition, there are the so-called counterinsurgency strike force, the 52nd DRC (Division Reconnaissance Company) and a company of the 77th IB, which serves as the cadre corps for the paramilitary Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Units (CAFGU).

Their announced mission is to destroy the New People's Army (NPA) and to enable so-called developers, such as the large mining companies, to plunder the natural resources and destroy the environment. But the indigenous people of Lacub are determined to assert their right of ancestral domain and to build their strength. They are proud of their long history of struggle to defend land, life and honor.

They continue to live up to their heroic record of having played the central role in the successful Tinggian resistance to the logging operations of the Marcos dictatorship's Cellophil. They have repeatedly played a crucial role in preventing various administrations from implementing the Marcos plan to dam the Binongan river. The community of Buneg, in particular, has been courageous in stopping a local warlord from seizing their small-scale mining sites.

We look forward to the success of Cordillera Day 2011 in assessing the

Cordillera situation in the context of the Philippine and world situation and in defining the tasks of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance on the ample basis of your appraisal of the situations in Abra, Apayao, Kalinga, Benguet, Ifugao, Mountain Province and Baguio City.

We expect your comprehensive and incisive understanding of the Cordillera situation and the challenges. The workshops on regional autonomy and self-determination; mining: small scale and large scale; human rights and Oplan Bayanihan; climate change and disaster management should be able to help you define and deal with the issues.

We wish you maximum success in formulating the Unity Pact by combining the wisdom of the elders and tribal leaders, the dynamism of the mass organizations and the available expertise from the relevant disciplines. It is of urgent importance that the elders and tribal leaders preside over the forging of a multilateral unity pact to resist mining plunder and human rights violations. In view of the government's attempt to make a third organic act for a Cordillera autonomous region, it is also necessary to take a clear and firm stand on the subject of genuine regional autonomy and self-determination.

We are confident that Cordillera Day 2011 would enable you to sum up the situation and the experience of struggle, learn both positive and negative lessons, consolidate achievements, overcome shortcomings and set forth the tasks for strengthening your fighting will and capabilities, achieving greater victories and raising to a new and higher level the struggle of the people of Cordillera for self-determination and national democracy.

# **Support the Kurdish People in their Just Struggle for National Self-Determination**

## **Message of greetings to YEK-KOM**

**(Federation of Kurdish Associations in Germany)**

**September 3, 2011**

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On behalf of the more than 200 member-organizations of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I wish to extend warmest and most militant greetings to YEK-KOM (Federation of Kurdish Associations in Germany) and to the Kurdish people on the occasion of this cultural festival to highlight the unity of the Kurdish people in their just struggle for national self-determination. We thank YEK-KOM for graciously inviting us to this great festival. We are delighted to send a delegation bearing this message.

We salute the Kurdish people for their long and glorious history of revolutionary struggle for national self-determination. We support their struggle for the recognition of their social, economic, political and cultural rights. The Kurdish people have the right to genuine autonomy in a non-oppressive multinational state but they have the right and duty to fight for secession and the establishment of their own state against an oppressive state.

We condemn the collusion between US imperialism and the Turkish government in their violent suppression of the Kurdish people and their attempt to crush the movement for national self-determination. We condemn the attempt to wipe out the national identity of the Kurdish people by suppressing their language and culture and forcing them to be completely assimilated and deprived of their

Kurdish identity.

We are confident that the Kurdish people will continue their heroic just struggle for national self-determination and win more victories in the future. We in the ILPS shall always be on the side of the Kurdish people in their courageous struggle as the ILPS has always been on the side of the peoples of Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan who are waging armed resistance against Zionist and US aggression and occupation, and the peoples of Colombia, India, the Philippines and others who are waging revolutionary armed struggle for national and social liberation.

Long live the struggle of the Kurdish people for national self-determination!

Down with imperialism, Zionism and all forms of reaction!

Long live international solidarity!

# **Fight for Land, Life and Rights!**

**Message of solidarity on the 28th Cordillera Day,**

**April 24, 2012**

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We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle, express our warmest greetings of solidarity to the Cordillera Peoples Alliance, all the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera, the thousands of delegates, solidarity friends and partners overseas in the celebration of the 28th Cordillera Day in the provinces of Abra, Benguet, Apayao, Kalinga, Mountain Province, and Ifugao and the city of Baguio on April 22-25.

We join you in honoring Ama Macliing Dulag and all the succeeding martyrs and heroes who have dedicated their lives to the revolutionary struggle of the Cordillera peoples in defense of ancestral domain and self-determination. We appreciate highly your determination to follow their example and carry forward their ever brilliant legacy of resolute and militant struggle for the advancement of the rights of the Cordillera peoples.

We support the central theme: Fight for Our Land, Life and Rights!. This is a timely call for united action in the face of such urgent issues as large-scale mining and energy projects, climate change and environmental destruction, genuine regional autonomy, militarization, human rights violations and pressing economic and social problems. We hope that Cordillera Day serves as an occasion for ventilating these issues and mobilizing the Cordillera peoples.

For many years, the Cordillera Peoples Alliance has grown in strength because it has served well the Cordillera peoples by upholding, defending and promoting their rights. We expect the alliance to sum up its experience, draw lessons from



its achievements and shortcomings and set forth the tasks for raising the struggles of the Cordillera peoples to a new and higher level.

You need to further firm up your resolve and intensify your militancy in view of the rapidly worsening crisis of the world capitalist system and that of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines. The imperialists headed by the US and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords are escalating the oppression and exploitation of the Cordillera peoples and the entire Filipino people and without let up shifting the burden of crisis to them.

Like the previous Arroyo regime, the incumbent Aquino regime is extremely subservient to the imperialists and the local exploiting classes. It is utterly corrupt for serving up the people and their natural resources (mining, forests, inland water and marine) to the foreign monopolies and big compradors for exploitation and plunder. For this purpose and under the pretext of development and peace, it is using Oplan Bayanihan to commit gross human rights violations on a wide scale and suppress the people with brutal military campaigns.

The Aquino regime knows no bounds for its puppetry. It has allowed the US to escalate military intervention in the Philippines and thus violate national sovereignty and territorial integrity. US military forces collaborate with Filipino troops in campaigns of military suppression against the Filipino people and they stir up tensions in East Asia in order to impose US hegemony over the region.

It is of great importance that the Cordillera Peoples Alliance and the Cordillera peoples intensify their struggle for land, life and rights and contribute to the growth and advance of the entire Filipino people's movement for national liberation and democracy. The current grave crisis of imperialism and the local reactionary system inflicts terrible suffering on the people but at the same time incites them to intensify their struggle for national independence, democracy, social justice and all-round development for the real benefit of the people.

# **Unite and Uphold Ancestral Domain**

## **Solidarity Message to the Central Luzon Ayta Association**

**August 11, 2013**

We, International League of Peoples' Struggle, express our wholehearted greetings and solidarity with the leadership and affiliation of the Central Luzon Ayta Association (CLAA) in the launch of Ayta Day 2013.

We are aware of the great importance of this occasion in which the Ayta people gather from in the provinces of Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales and Bataan, and renew their determination to fight for the rights of indigenous peoples, culture and self-determination. We share the theme of your activity: "Native Ayta, Unite! Defend native grassland, culture and self-protection! Fight for plunder mining, dam, eco-tourism and militarization! "ILPS offers you what we can do for you. You are pleased to cooperate with the Commission No. 10 of the ILPS that have a scope and prudent attention to the situation and problems of indigenous and national minorities. Programs and campaigns need to be protected by the peoples of Ayta, combat suppression and reminding them and improving their status and life.

We know that CLAA and Ayta citizens have become victims of Oplan Bantay Laya during the US-Arroyo regime. Ayta communities have undergone militarization and restrictions in their actions. They are often harassed by the military, surrounded by houses and, worst, driven from their homes and land.

In the current US-Aquino regime, exploitation and oppression of the Ayats continues and worsens. The expulsion of Ayats from their native lands has been increasing and expanding for various reasons. They are repressed by land, threatened and harassed, and deprived of their livelihood.

Among the causes of land grabbing and legacy of the Ayta are the access to mines such as Zambales and Pampanga, allegedly real estate development, eco-tourism or foreigners, expanding the hacienda, new plantations on behalf of

reforestation, construction of Balog-balog dam in San Jose town in Tarlak, and Balikatan exercises in Capas town.

We support all your efforts to overcome state terrorism and rejuvenate. Because your struggle is justified, the masses are not terrified especially if you are good at acting and you get the broad support of all patriotic and progressive forces inside and outside the region. You must determinedly uphold your rights against the Mining Act, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) and the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Extension with Reforms (CARPER). We welcome your active participation in the Filipino people and participate in regional action in relation to Aquino's previous State of Nation Address (SONA), and in your efforts to increase your awareness and ability to combat Oplan Bayanihan, Public-Private Partnership and Indigenous Peoples Master Plan which is part of the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan.

We hope you can successfully achieve the goal of Ayta Day to increase the level of unity of the citizen of the Middle East citizen and fulfill the duties you have set, such as the following:

1. Consolidate the greater number of native Ayta and other indigenous peoples in the region to uphold and assert their ancestral lands and cultural rights as well as the fight against widespread mining, destructive projects and militarization.
2. Define issues and problems of native Ayta from provincial, region to national level.
3. Get support from various sectors for continuous assertion of ancestral land rights.

We are deeply convinced that Ayta Day will become a platform for the more effective actions of the Ayta masses and their supporters; and reap bigger victories under the leadership of CLAA.

Long live the Ayta!

Fight for their rights!

Long live the Central Luzon Ayta Association!

# **On the GRP and MILF Peace Process**

**Interview by Roselle Valerio Liberation International,  
National Democratic Front of the Philippines**

**April 17, 2014**

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*1. From a previous position of exercising the right to national self-determination, to the extent of fighting to secede from the Philippine state, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has surrendered itself to the sovereignty, constitution and constitutional processes of said state and has opted for regional autonomy under the Philippine state. Is that true?*

JMS: The leaders of the MILF themselves have confirmed the fact by their own words and deeds. The Bangsamoro Basic Law and all the agreements and annexes covered by the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB) and Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) are subject to the 1987 Constitution and constitutional processes of the Philippine state. The Government of the Philippines (GRP) has publicly assured the MILF that the Philippine constitution can accommodate the Bangsamoro Basic Law and the Bangsamoro political entity without resorting to constitutional amendment.

The MILF has allowed said assurance of GRP) to pass or has not objected to it, from the signing of the FAB in 2012 to the further signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) in 2014. The MILF has also agreed that the Bangsamoro Transition Commission ceases to offer constitutional amendments when it ceases to exist upon the enactment of the Bangsamoro Basic Law. The GRP-MILF negotiations have also ended upon the signing of the

CAB.

*2. The Bangsamoro Transition Commission, which is tasked to draft the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), has already submitted the draft of the Bangsamoro Basic Law to the Aquino administration for processing and approval before submission to Congress for the process of legislation. Subsequently, it would still be possible for constitutional issues to be raised before the Supreme Court.*

*Is the Aquino administration determined to push the enactment of the BBL? Why? What makes the Aquino administration and its agents in Congress and the Supreme Court so confident that they can keep the BBL within the four corners of the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines state and override constitutional issues that have been raised by certain political leaders, legal experts and media pundits?*

JMS: The Aquino administration is determined to push the enactment of the BBL and the establishment of the Bangsamoro political entity because behind him are the US, the European Community, Japan, Australia, Malaysia and other countries which are interested in the exploitation of the natural resources of the Bangsamoro areas. The administration has enough time and numbers in both houses of Congress to ram through the BBL, not to mention the pork barrel for persuading possible oppositionists. It is a bit of balderdash that Aquino wants to have a legacy of making peace in the Bangsamoro areas.

The GRP executive and legislative branches are obviously using the provision in the 1987 constitution that created the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in order to give a constitutional grounding to the Bangsamoro political entity and present this new entity as a replacement of the existing ARMM political organ which shall be abolished upon the promulgation and ratification of the Bangsamoro Basic Law. In this connection, all other constitutional issues can be fixed by further language engineering by the GRP, with the MILF predisposed to consent.

It is reasonable to estimate that the Aquino regime is taking the MILF for a ride, if only to cause the dissolution of the MILF as a revolutionary organization. But most likely, the ride is not shorter than going all the way to the establishment of the Bangsamoro political entity. The US and GRP strategists are known to calculate that the MILF will go the way of MNLF.

*3. Is not the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) or its Sema and Misuari factions still in a position to complain and raise a constitutional issue about the continuing validity of the ARMM Organic Law and the 1996 peace agreement? And would not the Misuari faction go back to armed struggle for the purpose seceding from the Philippine state or demanding respect for the 1996 peace agreement?*

JMS: If the Bangsamoro Basic Law as envisioned would repeal and not merely amend Republic Act 9054 ( which amended RA 6734, the original ARMM Organic Law, and which incorporated the provisions of the 1996 MNLF-GRP Final Peace Agreement), there is a high probability for the MNLF or any other interested party to raise a constitutional issue before the Supreme Court on the ground that the 1996 Final Peace Agreement , which is supposed to be the full implementation of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement, has continuing validity and cannot be terminated or abrogated unilaterally by the GRP.

The Aquino administration is confident that it has enough numbers in the Sereno Supreme Court, including Marvic Leonen. Together with the MILF, the administration is also trying to appease the opposition of the MNLF and other groups with accommodation in the Bangsamoro political entity and threaten those who resist with fatwa under shariah law and condemnation as peace spoilers. But the resisting Moro organizations, like the Misuari faction of the MNLF and the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), can also issue a counter-fatwa and appeal for support from the Moro people and the Organization of Islamic Countries which gave its blessings to the 1996 Final Peace Agreement

*4. Aside from the contradictions in the application of the constitutional provision on the ARMM, what are the other constitutional issues that need to be fixed by the Aquino administration and Congress?*

JMS: Senator Miriam Defensor, the chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, has publicly complained that a Bangsamoro substate is being established and has raised a number of constitutional questions: a. why should executive agreements with the MILF determine and diminish the powers of the central government in violation of the supremacy of the Philippine constitution by dividing the so-called reserved powers of the central government and the so-called exclusive powers of the Bangsamoro political entity; b. How can the ARMM provision in the 1987 constitution be practically dissolved by mere agreement with MILF? c. Why should the powers exercised by the national

government over local government units be yielded to or become the exclusive powers of the Bangsamoro political entity, d. Natural resources belong to the Philippine state, but how come they shall be under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Bangsamoro political entity? e. what exclusive powers can belong to the Bangsamoro political entity in a unitary state like the Philippines? f. how will the ministerial form of Bangsamoro government jibe with the presidential form of government for most of the country? and g. how can the Bangsamoro Transition Commission be tasked to work on proposals to amend the constitution for the purpose of amending and entrenching in the Constitution the agreements whenever necessary, without derogating from any prior peace agreement.

Other contentious issues have been raised by those who adhere to the 1987 constitution. They include the following: a. why subject the people of the five provinces claimed by Bangsamoro to one more plebiscite when in fact they said yes to autonomy twice already in the past, b. why should the Philippine state cede or concede a part of its internal waters and territorial sea to become Bangsamoro waters under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Bangsamoro political entity, c. why the extraordinary high shares of Bangsamoro in the division of government revenues, which are discriminatory to other regions, and d. why should there be a Bangsamoro police without a clear frame or line of subordination to the Philippine National Police, which is mandated by the 1987 constitution as the sole police force.

*5. How are these constitutional issues possibly being addressed by the PGH and the MILF?*

JMS: I presume that both the GRP and MILF are aware of these issues and they must have discussed these within the Bangsamoro Transition Commission, especially upon the initiative of the GRP agents. It is possible that the draft of the Bangsamoro Basic Law has been watered down and toned down by the commission and brought down to a level much lower than the earlier high expectations of the MILF.

To update ourselves on the constitutional issues, we have to get a copy of the draft basic law recently submitted to the GRP executive branch. After submission of the draft, the GRP executive branch can amend the draft. And this can be further amended by Congress. As soon as the draft of BBL reaches Congress, it should be available to the public for scrutiny and opposition to objectionable provisions.

*6. Will the MILF be able to protest or withdraw from the entire deal if it gets far less than its expectations or if it considers itself swindled by the GRP?*

JMS: The MILF has declared and agreed that it will decommission its weapons and dismantle its army only after the implementation of all the agreements. The implication of this is that the MILF can withdraw from the deal if it is swindled. But in the first place, it has submitted itself to the constitution and constitutional processes of the GRP. The MILF leaders seem to be satisfied with prospective appointments to the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, with elections to the Bangsamoro political organs and with the absorption of most of the MILF fighters in the Bangsamoro police.

*7. Behind the scenes Aquino and his political agents are known to laugh at the MILF for believing that the Bangsamoro political entity will have exclusive powers, independent of the central or national government, and for supposedly expecting to have extraordinary shares of revenues and opportunities for bureaucratic corruption and personal enrichment, when more than US\$300 billion of US and other foreign investments are supposed to pour in to exploit the natural resources in Bangsamoro. Would imperial Manila actually allow the Bangsamoro bureaucrats to grab the lion's share from the opportunities of bureaucratic corruption?*

JMS: Despite all the promises that the Bangsamoro political entity will have far more powers and financial resources than the ARMM, I think that the GRP president and the central government in Manila will put in all the caveats and make sure that the Bangsamoro political entity will be something like the existing ARMM, a bureaucratic layer, between the presidential office and the local governments still operating according to the current code on local governments. The high bureaucrats and big compradors of Manila and the Moro political dynasties will still take the lions' share of whatever bureaucratic loot can arise from investments of the US and other multinational firms exploiting the natural resources in the Bangsamoro.

*8. Assuming that the Bangsamoro political entity will replace the ARMM, what will become of the MILF in the short term and long run? Will there really be a durable peace in the areas of the Bangsamoro?*

JMS: The MILF itself has indicated that it shall liquidate itself, become an Islamic movement and form a political party for electoral purposes. The highest



MILF official Brother Ebrahim Murad is expected to become the Chief Minister. I presume that the other MILF officials will also assume high offices in the Bangsamoro political organs.

If we go by the historical example of MNLF, the MILF has to be vigilant against ceaseless attempts of the Manila-based bureaucrats and the military officers of the reactionary government to subordinate, corrupt and split the MILF officials. The electoral process will also be a way to weaken the former cohesiveness of the MILF and will allow the traditional ruling families and favorites of any current president to take over the Bangsamoro political entity. Remember how the MNLF split and the ARRM eventually fell into the hands of the Ampatuan family.

The GRP-MILF peace agreement and establishment of the Bangsamoro political entity will not necessarily result in a just and lasting peace. There are armed clans and armed political forces like the MNLF of Misuari and the BIFF. It remains to be seen how they can be appeased or outraged.

The exploited masses of workers and peasants have a high potential for waging an armed revolution against their exploiters and oppressors in the Bangsamoro areas. The agreements made by the GRP and MILF are not concerned about national independence vis a vis the imperialist powers, democracy for the workers and peasants, social justice and development through land reform and national industrialization.

*9. What are the prospects of the Bangsamoro people and Moro Resistance and Liberation Organization in the Bangsamoro areas?*

JMS: The Moro people will continue to wage various forms of struggle in order to assert and realize their right to national self-determination and ancestral domain. The Moro Resistance and Liberation Organization (MRLO), the revolutionary masses and allies can take more initiative in carrying forward the people's democratic revolution through protracted people's war. The imperialists and the Manila puppet government will not satisfy the basic demands of the Moro people. The MRLO is in a position more than ever to arouse, organize and mobilize the Moro people to fight for national and social liberation.

*10. What is the consequence of the peace settlement between the MILF and the Manila government to the revolutionary movement led by the Communist Party*

*of the Philippines? Will such peace settlement strengthen the reactionary government in waging a campaign of military suppression against the revolutionary? If not, why and how?*

JMS: The MNLF and MILF have had long ceasefire agreements with the Manila government since a long time ago. Meanwhile, the New People's Army, the people's militia and the self-defense units of the mass organizations have grown in strength nationwide, together with the Communist Party, the National Democratic Front, the mass organizations and the people's democratic government.

According to reports, sixty per cent of the reactionary armed forces are now deployed in Mindanao. Most of them are tasked to attack the rapidly growing forces of the NPA. But some continue to be posted in the Bangsamoro areas in order to contain and attack the BIFF and the MNLF-Misuari, not to mention the infamous Abu Sayyaf. The concentration of the reactionary troops in NPA areas in Mindanao will give the NPA a chance to seize more weapons and encourage the NPA to attack and seize arms from the weaker enemy forces in Luzon and the Visayas.

The CPP, NPA and NDFP are resolutely and militantly carrying out the plan to advance from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate in the people's war nationwide. For more information on the progress of the people's revolutionary struggle, I refer everyone to the [www.philippinerevolution.com](http://www.philippinerevolution.com) to read the long message of the CPP to NPA on the latter's 45th founding anniversary and the latest battle reports of the NPA in various parts of the Philippines.

# **Be Ever Resolute, Vigilant and Militant**

## **Message of Solidarity to Tongtongan ti Umili,**

**May 24, 2014**

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As chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to the member-organizations and individual adherents of Tongtongan ti Umili [People's Forum]-Metro Baguio, the distinguished chapter of BAYAN and Cordillera People's Alliance.

We wish to express our admiration to all of you for your loyal service to the Filipino people and your militant efforts to advance their revolutionary cause and struggle for national liberation and democracy against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords.

We congratulate you for your achievements in arousing, organizing and mobilizing the workers, urban poor, mining affected communities, youth and students, women, teachers, government employees, church workers, cultural workers, political prisoners and other affected peoples.

The crisis of the world capitalist system and that of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system are ever worsening and bringing out the worst of US imperialism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism. The Aquino regime is the instrument of all these evil forces and knows no bounds for its puppetry, exploitativeness, corruption, brutality and mendacity.

The big lie is being spread that the Philippines is the new economic miracle, the new tiger in Asia. In fact, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been bloated from year to year mainly by a rising public debt and by so-called hot money or

portfolio investments, which cannot long sustain import-dependent consumption, the private construction boom in certain urban areas, the super-profit remittances of foreign corporations and the foreign bank deposits of the big compradors and corrupt bureaucrats. This year the GDP is expected to plunge because of so-called tapering in the US and credit tightening in China.

There is no real economic development because there is no genuine land reform and there is no national industrialization. Unemployment, falling incomes, poverty and misery are widespread. Millions of our compatriots are compelled to leave their families to seek jobs abroad. Foreign corporations and their local cohorts are grabbing the land and misdirecting resources in the course of expanding export-oriented plantations, mining, logging and building skyscrapers and tourist facilities. The widespread and rapid extraction of mineral ores for export is ruining agriculture and the environment and is preempting the industrial development of the country.

Exploitation and oppression are escalating in the Philippines. The workers still on their jobs are subjected to worsening wage and living conditions. The peasant masses and farm workers are suffering worse conditions of feudal and semifeudal exploitation. Oplan Bayanihan is engaged in gross and systematic violations of human rights, including extrajudicial killings, illegal arrests and detention, torture and forced eviction of the urban and rural poor from their shanties.

The Aquino regime is notorious for its corruption and hypocrisy. It pretends loudly that it follows the straight path. But the relatives, business cronies and political allies of the president are engaged in all kinds of corruption as a consequence of the political power that they share and enjoy. They use loans from financial institutions of the state and secure other privileges to build or expand their businesses. They cut into contracts of the corporations of other people. They privatize state corporations for the benefit of their foreign masters and their clique. They engage in tax evasion and smuggling operations. They steal public funds through the pork barrel system. Thus, the broad masses of the people want to oust the Aquino ruling clique.

The Aquino regime is completely treasonous and is running counter to provisions in the 1987 constitution that were won by the people as a result of the struggle against the Marcos fascist dictatorship. It is pushing the amendment of the economic provisions in order to allow US and other foreign corporations to

have unrestricted ownership of land and all kinds of businesses up to 100 percent. It is circumventing the constitutional ban on foreign military bases, troops, facilities and nuclear weapons by allowing these in so-called Agreed Areas and practically making the entire country an aircraft carrier of US imperialism under the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

This message cannot mention all that are grievously wrong in a rotten social system. But it tries to indicate that you are faced with so many challenges and issues. You have to be ever resolute, vigilant and militant. You must stand firmly and fight fiercely for the national and democratic rights of the people as you confront long standing basic problems and their latest manifestations at the national and local levels. You can only be as successful in your principled stand and struggle only as you can arouse, organize and mobilize the people to fight for their rights.

To fight effectively the powerful, cruel and greedy adversaries, we must rely on the conscious and organized strength of the broad masses of the people.

# **Intensify the Indigenous Peoples' Struggle for Ancestral Domain and Self-Determination**

**Message of Solidarity to KAMP on its 4th National Congress,**

**March 3-5, 2015**

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We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), wish to convey our warmest greetings of solidarity to the Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (KAMP) on the occasion of its 4th National Congress. We salute the delegations of the various organizations of indigenous people and congratulate the officers of KAMP for convening them.

It is of great importance and acute urgency that your congress has adopted the theme: “Maigting na ipaglaban ang lupang ninuno at sariling pagpapasya sa balangkas ng pakikibaka para sa pambansang kalayaan at demokrasya.” (Intensify the struggle for ancestral domain and self-determination within the frame of national liberation and democracy).

## ***Strengthen your organization and intensify the struggle***

It is imperative that you strengthen your organization in order to fight for the rights of the indigenous peoples as well as to advance the over-all revolutionary struggle of the Filipino people for national and social liberation against US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords and their corrupt political agents in the reactionary government.

It is just for the indigenous peoples to intensify their struggle against their

massive dislocation and the environmental destruction of their ancestral lands which the reactionary government has escalated in the name of “development”. These extensive land areas are sold off to foreign investors in mining and logging, oil palm plantations, energy projects, special economic zones, real estate and tourism projects.

The indigenous peoples are undergoing intolerable suffering as a result of the US-Aquino regime's aggravation of its predecessor's policies of puppetry to foreign interests, plunder and state terrorism. At an accelerated rate, the indigenous peoples continue to lose their land, homes, livelihood, resources and their very lives.

Their dispossession and poverty and the wanton violation of their human rights are being carried out by a regime of bureaucrat capitalists whose corruption lies in taking bribes from foreign monopoly interests, big compradors and land grabbers; and in stealing public funds in the US-style pork barrel system.

### ***Plunder and environmental destruction by mining companies***

The Aquino regime has aggravated the anti-national, anti-democratic, anti-people and anti-environment terms and consequences of the widely-detested Philippine Mining Act of 1995 by issuing Executive Order No. 79 in July 2012, with the deceptive title “Institutionalizing and Implementing Reforms in the Mining Sector, Providing Policies and Guidelines to Ensure Environmental Protection and Responsible Mining in the Utilization of Mineral Resources.”

EO 79 maintains the 771 kinds of large-scale permits that were previously approved and filed for approval and it allows Aquino to approve additional mining operations. The overwhelming majority of mining operations are in the areas of the indigenous peoples. The order seeks to streamline the procedures for granting mining permits and to override decisions of local governments and communities that have opposed large scale mining.

The central government now has the total authority to expropriate mineral lands for exploitation and undermines the rights of the indigenous peoples to ancestral territories as well as the authority of local government units. It has negated environmental protection by claiming to be able to raise more revenues from mining concessions. It discourages small-scale and traditional mining, which provides a livelihood to the poor people, while in fact the big mining companies

helicopter out of the country precious metals and understate the value of other mineral ores.

According to your report, five of the six Financial Technical Assistance Agreements (FTAA) are located within the ancestral lands of indigenous peoples. Also in IP territories are: 148 of the 339 approved Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA), 23 of the 61 Exploration Permit (EP), 30 of the 84 Mineral Processing Permits (MPP), and 45 of 222 industrial sand and gravel operations. A great number of indigenous peoples from 39 tribal groups are subject to dislocation and loss of livelihood as a result of the all-out mining liberalization under BS Aquino.

Irreversible and irreparable damage is being done to the ancestral lands and the ecosystem. Open pit mining and logging operations continue to destroy the forest cover. Soil erosion is worsening. Floods and droughts are becoming more serious from year to year. Mine tailings and the use of toxic chemicals are poisoning the land, the waters and organisms that provide food to the people.

### ***Plunder by energy, logging and plantation companies***

To the detriment of the indigenous peoples, whose settlements are subject to inundation, the Aquino regime is also aggressively undertaking energy projects – the building of dams for hydro-electricity, and plants that run on geothermal and coal-fired power. Under the Public Private Partnership scheme, water and electricity are concentrated in the hands of big comprador companies in close alliance with foreign banks and firms. The rape of the environment is being bannered as the “green economy” and misrepresented as the protection of the environment.

The monopolies of Aboitiz, Lopez, Ayala, Cojuangco, Pangilinan and their foreign investors are ever expanding their control of the water resources of the country. According to your report, there are at more than 149 hydropower projects and 16 geothermal projects that have been built, are under construction, or are in the pipeline. Those are designed to inundate and submerge indigenous communities.

Logging for export and for the local private construction boom has continued unabated despite logging bans. It has been ruining the habitat and source of livelihood of the indigenous peoples. It has caused outright deforestation and



severe soil erosion, floods and droughts. It has also encouraged the establishment of rubber and palm oil plantations.

Palm oil plantations are being expanded in the Philippines in conjunction with worldwide demand for bio-fuel, medicine, food, and cosmetics. They are causing the destruction of rainforest areas, habitat loss and further dwindling of endangered animal species. They are causing a significant number of indigenous peoples to suffer loss of land and livelihood, hunger and human right violations. The use of US-banned pesticides has afflicted people with skin and gastrointestinal diseases. This has also caused their coconut, banana and other kinds of crops to wither and die.

### ***Other forms of plunder by corrupt bureaucrats***

The setting up of special economic zones, like the Aurora Pacific Economic Zone and Freeport Authority or APECO and the Clark Green City, has resulted in depriving the indigenous people of land and livelihood. These projects are designed to allow bureaucrats like the Aquinos and Angaras to steal public funds by the billions and to grab the land from the indigenous peoples and override previous pretenses to distribute land to the landless and to protect the environment.

The corruption of the Aquino ruling clique has become totally exposed. Hundreds of billions of pesos have been misappropriated under the Disbursement Acceleration Program, Priority Development Assistance Fund and other categories of lump sums of public money without congressional approval and subject to the personal discretion of Aquino. Even the Supreme Court has declared the arbitrary disposition of public funds by the principal authors as unconstitutional and illegal.

The greed, corruption and indifference of the Aquino regime to public interest has been repeatedly underscored by its failure to mobilize government personnel and resources for rescue, relief and rehabilitation during natural disasters, such as the annual typhoons and the super typhoon Haiyan or Yolanda. Those who suffer most from these calamities are the indigenous peoples and poor peasants whose homes are flimsy and who lack food stocks and other means for immediate recovery.

The Philippines has made a very modest contribution to global warming through

carbon dioxide emissions which have made the Pacific Ocean a highway for typhoons. But the mining, logging, plantation and other resource-based companies in the Philippines have definitely degraded the environment to the point of making the Philippines greatly vulnerable to typhoons and other natural disasters.

The man-made disasters made by the rulers and their foreign masters continue unabated, with the ceaseless exploitation of the toiling masses, the plunder of natural resources and the repressive policy and actions taken. Under the US-designed Oplan Bayanihan, the Aquino regime has used the military, police, paramilitary and private security agencies to commit widespread human rights violations and serve the interests of the companies involved in mining, plantations, tourism, infrastructure and energy generation.

The regime has brutally inflicted massive dislocation and environmental destruction on the indigenous communities. And when people resist, they are subjected to mass intimidation and forced evacuations, the extrajudicial killings of suspected leaders and activists of the resistance, harassment and illegal detention on the basis of trumped up charges, blind air strikes and random fire by machine gun and artillery and the dismantling or occupation of schools by enemy troops.

The most malicious of enemy tactics is the use of intimidation and bribery to organize paramilitary groups in the indigenous communities for the purpose of coercing the people, becoming part of the investment defense forces of the enemy and participating in counterrevolutionary activities under Oplan Bayanihan.

The regime knows no bounds for its puppetry to US imperialism. It has submitted the Philippines to the aggressive US strategic shift to East Asia and has forged with the US the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement. This executive agreement practically allows the return of US bases in violation of the 1987 Constitution under the guise of accommodating US military forces in Allowed Areas. The deceptive use of euphemism cannot conceal the brazen violation of national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

To make way for the return of US military forces, 18,000 hectares are being fenced off in Tarlac and Pampanga. The Aytas whose ancestral domain spans the Zambales Mountain Range and the upland of Pampanga, Zambales and Tarlac

are threatened with displacement from their land and livelihood. The Allowed Areas pledged to the US military forces under EDCA are in various parts of the country. More indigenous peoples are threatened with displacement.

### ***Misuse of the IPRA and NCIP***

We condemn the Aquino regime for having refused to heed the indigenous peoples' cry and concrete proposals for respect for their rights and their collective welfare and for reforms in the corrupt National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and for the review of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), particularly in the guidelines defining the Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC). The IPRA remains ineffective in stopping landgrabbing and the plunder of resources by foreign and local capitalists.

The regime has used the IPRA and NCIP to violate the rights of the indigenous peoples and to instigate disunity for the purpose of divide and rule. The IPRA has created indigenous landlords by awarding them titles or CADT/CALT over extensive lands. These title-holders have served as agents facilitating the entry of investment projects. They also become recruiters of paramilitary groups that guard the projects and suppress resistance.

The NCIP has organized “consultations” only to persuade the indigenous communities to allow the entry of a mining or energy company by presenting only the supposed benefits from the projects and obscuring the destructive effects on the people and environment. Participants to a consultation are handpicked and always limited to those inclined to vote for the project. Intimidation and bribery have often been applied by the reactionary government and companies on tribal leaders.

### ***ILPS Support for the Indigenous Peoples***

We in the ILPS fully understand that the indigenous peoples in the Philippines are justified in upholding, defending and advancing their rights to ancestral domain and to self-determination by participating in the Filipino people's struggle for national liberation and democracy through people's war against US imperialism and the local reactionaries.

We the ILPS support KAMP and all the indigenous peoples' organizations and communities in having issued the following calls to action:

Recognize and uphold the rights of indigenous peoples to ancestral land and self-determination!

Stop large-scale and destructive mining in IP territories! Repeal the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 and enact a patriotic, pro-IP, pro-environment, and responsible mining policy. Revoke Executive Order No. 79.

Stop the killings of indigenous peoples now! Carry-out prompt and effective investigation of the human rights violations committed against indigenous peoples. Ensure that all responsible for these violations be prosecuted.

Stop militarization in the countryside! Pull-out state forces in indigenous communities and immediately dismantle paramilitary groups.

Revoke Executive Order No. 546! Stop the recruitment of IPs to paramilitary groups.

Stop the attacks on IP schools!

Scrap the counter-insurgency program Oplan Bayanihan! Address the root causes of the armed conflict in the country and resume peace talks with the National Democratic Front.

Stop the construction of mega dams, destructive energy projects, Special Economic Zones and other so-called development projects detrimental to the IPs and environment. Stop the expansion of palm, rubber and other corporate plantations into ancestral lands.

Revoke the mining permits of SMI-Xstrata (now Glencore), Royalco (in Bakun and Nueva Vizcaya), and others that violate indigenous peoples' rights! End mining plunder!

Stop the construction of the Kaliwa (Laiban) Dam!

Stop the Jalaur River Multipurpose Dam!

Stop the Pulangi V construction!

Scrap RA 10083! Stop the APECO project!

Stop the construction of Clark Green City!

Thank you.

# On the Lumads and Related Issues

Interview by Inday Espina Varona, October 4, 2015

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*IEV: I'd like to get your reactions, insights of several issues related to the ongoing Lumad crisis in Mindanao. What is the "Lumpong" or "Magdealay Agreement"?*

*Datus friendly to the government armed forces are claiming this was an agreement forged in 1994 at Lianga Bay, between the CPP/NPA and tribal leaders, on guidelines regarding negotiation with investors and contractors in Lumad territory. (Mining, forestry, plantations, etc. One of the datos allegedly present in these talks, Datu Sibugan, or Marcial Belandres, is very bitter towards the underground left.)*

JMS: In the first place, who is Marcial Belandres? Surigao del Sur Governor Johnny Pimentel has exposed and denounced Belandres and his likes as belonging to the Magahat-Bagani paramilitary, a monster created and commanded by the military and serving the interests of the mining, logging and plantation corporations. The Karapatan describes Belandres in a documentation, which runs as follows:

“Marcial Belandres was identified by witnesses as one of the killers of Lumad leader Henry Alameda on October 24, 2014. Alameda was dragged from his house towards the forest in Sitio Cabalawan, San Isidro, Lianga, Surigao del Sur. He was shot in the chest when held on to a post and resisted the attempt to bring him out of the community. The killing happened when units under the 24th Infantry Division were conducting combat operations in Lianga, Surigao del Sur and in San Lorenzo, Agusan del Sur. Specific units involved in the combat operations were the 2nd Scout Ranger Battalion based in St. Christine, Lianga

under Col. Jesus Durante, 36th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army, and the 3rd Special Forces under the 401st Brigade PA, members of the Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU) and members of Calpit Egua paramilitary group were also seen with the AFP units.”

Karapatan also describes the aforesaid Belandres as one of the fake datus being used by the military to misrepresent the Lumads and the Communist Party of the Philippines and New People’s Army as competing beggars for crumbs from mining, logging and plantation enterprises, while in fact he represents the paramilitary group Magahat-Bagani which is in the pay of the aforesaid enterprises and is an adjunct of the anti-Lumad military. These obscure references to “Lumpong” or Magdealay Agreement” and the psywar use of Belandres and the like by the military are all calculated to draw attention away from the real current issue, which is the militarization of Lumad areas and the human rights violations being perpetrated by the military and paramilitary forces. The torture and murder of Emerito Samarca, executive director Alternative Learning Center for Agriculture and Development (ALCADEV) and the two tribal leaders Dionel Campos and Aurelio Sinzo have called national and international attention to the brutal oppression of Lumads by the US-Aquino regime and its military and paramilitary forces.

*IEV: What is the “Malanday Agreement”? (The same datus claim that 10 years after the first agreement was forged, the CPP-NPA retracted rights given to tribal leaders. Their claim: “The CPP/NPA leaders realized that if the Lumads will continue to enjoy being negotiating panel to the investors, they would not be able to stay in the CPP/ NPA group. The Lumads gradually learned to make a living. This was the reason why CPP/NPA broke the first made “Magdealay” agreement and changed it into a new “Malanday Agreement,” which was unfavorable to the Lumads. In Malanday Agreement, Lumads could no longer participate in business transactions.”)*

JMS: The so-called Malanday Agreement claimed by the paramilitary datu-datuans is another obscure term, which is not supported by factual basis and which is calculated to attack the Lumads and the CPP-NPA as being competitors in selling away the natural wealth of the Lumad areas to foreign and big comprador enterprises in mining, logging and plantations. The phoney datus and their government and military superiors are in fact the paid agents of such enterprises and are desperately trying to deflect attention from the militarization and human rights violations in the Lumad areas.

*IEV: What were the provisions in the first and second agreements? What prompted the changes?*

JMS: Why dignify the patently false claims of the military and phoney datos who are paramilitary agents by asking the NDFP negotiating panel chairperson and the chief political consultant to supply the provisions of presumed agreements obviously concocted by AFP psywar operatives? Neither we in Utrecht nor the CPP and NPA in Eastern Mindanao can supply provisions to imaginary agreements conjured by the military and the fake datos.

*IEV: Those two so-called agreements are imaginary? There is no agreement even under a different name?*

JMS: Those two-called agreements are imaginary, made up by the military. According to the NDFP office, there is no agreement even under a different name. On the face of the claims, it is obvious that there is no such agreement. The people's government or the NPA as the tax collecting agency will not pose itself as the competitor of the indigenous peoples in the matter of taxation of any business corporation at the national or regional level. IPs or workers or trade unions are independent of any tax agreement and are at the same time beneficiaries of regulations and requirements imposed by the revolutionary government on a corporation regarding community relations, workers' rights and environment issues. The reactionary military and their agents are misrepresenting the revolutionary movement as competitors to the IPs in getting so-called benefits from the mining corporations.

There is the revolutionary government's policy of total ban and dismantling the mining operations, similar to the ban on logging for export. But the military, paramilitary and private security agencies protect the mining corporations. According to Manny Zamora of Nickel Asia that after the NPA raid on Asia Nickel and Sumitomo in Mindanao, costing them US\$ 11M or half a billion pesos, they armed themselves to continue operating.

*IEV: How many Lumads have been killed by NPA forces? How many of these were unarmed but deemed 'unfriendly' to rebel forces? The datos have given a figure of more than 300. Even groups helping the Lumads acknowledge that, for a time, the Lumads spurned the CPP-NPA and it was only after a period that trust returned. What weaknesses/errors can you point out? What changes were made? The AFP says 75% of the NPA in Mindanao come from Lumad*



*communities. How true?*

JMS: The military psywar and the paramilitary datu-datuans are caught in a hopeless self-contradiction. They claim that the NPA has 75 percent of its membership from the Lumads and is dependent on the Lumads but at the same time they claim that the NPA kill hundreds of Lumads. They also say that once upon a time the Lumads spurned the CPP-NPA but after a period the trust returned. The self-contradictions are glaring. We in Utrecht do not make any count of Lumads support- ing the NPA but we do recognize that the Lumads and other people love the NPA for opposing the mining, logging and plantations which plunder and poison the environment and which the Aquino government and its military and paramilitary forces are desperately trying to protect with brute force.

*IEV: I have read Mr. Jalandoni's statement rebutting the UN Sec- General's statement regarding children in conflict. But there is a young man, just 18, who says children at the Talaingod alternative school were made to man NPA posts and to run errands. The AFP also says children at the Alcadev schools were made to undertake armed training during weekends – no proof given. The young man from Talaingod, however, insists he personally underwent the experience. Can you react?*

JMS: The military and paramilitary forces are quite capable of inventing or coercing the young man you refer to in order to badmouth the children and their mentors at the Talaingod alternative school and Alcadev schools as working for the NPA and in order to give the military and paramilitary forces the pretext to occupy or destroy the schools and to intimidate and even murder teachers and the supporting datus and community leaders.

*IEV: In many struggles worldwide, the Left has a bad record with respect to the rights of indigenous peoples. China and Russia, of course, are the foremost examples. But even in the Americas where much of the leftist revolutionary growth was also centered on indigenous peoples, these alliances unravelled, sometimes with much bitterness, due to heavy-handedness of the Left. I'm sure you've studied much on the topic. What's your assessment? What lessons did you take from these and apply to the CPP/NPA/NDF?*

JMS: I disagree with the sweeping statements. Marx and Engels held in high respect the communal and cooperative character of indigenous communities and

practically considered them as models of socialism, with the crucial difference that socialism takes advantage of the available high level of science and technology for the benefit of far larger communities. Lenin put forward the right of oppressed nations to self-determination, up to secession against the oppressor state. Stalin's line on the unity of the majority and minority nationalities kept the Soviet Union united against the foreign interventions, the Nazi invasion and the Cold War until the modern revisionists restored Great Russian chauvinism.

China also followed the aforesaid lines of Lenin and Stalin and succeeded in uniting the Han and other nationalities until the capitalist restoration occurred, imposing Chinese Han chauvinism on other nationalities and causing resentment. We should not conflate or confuse Soviet socialism of the past with Russian capitalism and Chinese socialism of the past with Chinese capitalism.

Since its founding day, the Communist Party of the Philippines has enshrined in its Program for a People's Democratic Revolution respect for and militant support for the right of the indigenous peoples and national minorities to national self-determination, including the right to regional autonomy in a non-oppressive state and the right to secede from an oppressive state

The CPP, NPA and the NDFP learned the principle and practice of respecting and supporting the right of indigenous peoples to self-determination from previous revolutions and socialist states in Russia, China and elsewhere. At present, within the fold of the NDFP are such formations as the Moro Resistance and Liberation Organization, the Cordillera People's Democratic Front and Revolutionary Organization of Lumads.

The revolutionary forces in the Philippines have also learned negative lessons from the way the white supremacists of the US have brutally oppressed the First Nations, the Mexicans, the African-Americans, the Asians and Hispanics and of course from the colonialists and imperialists that have exploited and oppressed the peoples in colonies and semicolonies.

*IEV: What is the CPP/NPA/NDF's policy towards the exploitation of natural resources? What is your reaction to the charge of collecting revolutionary tax from mining companies? If it's true, why? If it's true, wouldn't the Left then be complicit in the oppression of the Lumads? Some sectors say it should be all or nothing and the Left's engagements with big corps in exchange for revolutionary tax is nothing but extortion. Your reaction?*

JMS: The policy of the CPP/NPA/NDF is to uphold national sovereignty, conserve the national patrimony and wisely utilize the natural resources and protect the environment in the course of undertaking the balanced development of the socialist economy, with heavy and basic industry as the lead factor, agriculture as the basis and light industry as the bridge between the aforesaid two in order to produce immediately consumer and producer goods for the people.

The revolutionary forces and the people oppose the foreign and big comprador mining companies because they export the nonreplaceable mineral ores, sabotage the demands for national industrialization, cause soil erosion and deforestation and poison the land and the streams. They oppose the companies that engage in logging for export because they are detrimental to agriculture, environment, biodiversity and climate. They oppose the plantations for export crops because they lessen the land available for land reform and severely damage the food self-reliance of the country, among other reasons.

For the reasons already stated, the policy of the revolutionary movement is to attack and destroy the foreign-owned and big comprador mining companies even as these are being protected by the reactionary government, the paramilitary forces and the private security agencies. Has there been any force other than the NPA which have tried to dismantle mining companies? One should not jump from one false assumption to another, like the NPA (more precisely the people's revolutionary government) collecting taxes from the mining companies and therefore oppressing the Lumads. One should also avoid echoing the military propaganda that tax collection by the people's revolutionary government is extortion.

The people's revolutionary government, as such, has the right and duty to collect taxes from companies that are granted the privilege to do business, which is socially beneficial and environment-friendly. The taxes collected by people's democratic government are to support its administrative cadres, mass organizers and Red fighters in the people's army and its programs of education, health, land reform, raising production, self-defense, justice, cultural work and others.

# **The People of Irian Barat Must Be Free!**

**March 26, 2017**

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The International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) is filled with joy over the holding of "Merdeka: A study conference on West Papua self-determination" this March 26-27, 2017 in Davao City, Philippines.

We salute the organizers and participants of this study conference, especially the delegates from Irian Barat (West Papua) who are risking their lives and personal liberty for the most important cause of their country's national and social liberation.

On this occasion, we also remember and pay tribute to the tens of thousands of people in Irian Barat who have been killed by Indonesia's US-backed genocidal campaign, especially the martyrs of the struggle for their country's self-determination and liberation.

This is an historic gathering, as it is a major effort towards forging unity among the anti-imperialist forces of the world in support of the just and heroic, longstanding yet relatively unknown, struggle of the people of Irian Barat.

## ***History, principle and current situation***

Let me state some points regarding the history of Irian Barat, the principle of national self-determination and the related current situation. In Indonesia's Declaration of Independence in 1945, Irian Barat was already encompassed by the Indonesian nation-state.

This was based on the historical ground that the indigenous people of Irian Barat

had close relations with those of Irian Jaya and the rest of Indonesia in various major respects as well as on the principle in international law that the continuous colonial territory like Dutch East Indies is ceded by the outgoing colonial power to the successor newly independent state in the process of decolonization.

A distinction must be made between the formation of the Indonesian nation-state in 1945, to include Irian Barat and its people against Dutch colonialism on the one hand and the inalienable right of the people of Irian Barat to assert national self-determination on the other hand, including the right to opt for regional autonomy or federation in a nonoppressive state and up to the right to secede from an oppressive state like what the Indonesian reactionaries are running.

There is definitely a difference between the Indonesian state under the leadership of Sukarno and NASAKOM and the state that was taken over by the Indonesian military fascists in 1965. The latter state continues as an oppressive instrument of the US and the Indonesian reactionaries. It is a state that deserves revolutionary overthrow by the people of Irian Barat (the indigenous people and the mainly poor agrarian settlers) and the rest of Indonesia.

When the revolutionaries win anew in Indonesia and establish a non-oppressive state, the people of Irian Barat can opt for regional autonomy or the federation as the case may be. Thus, it is good for the Indonesian revolutionaries to cooperate with the people of Irian Barat in revolutionary struggle against the present Indonesian reactionary state. Thus, the basis is developed for the people of Irian Barat to opt for being part of a non-oppressive Indonesian state in the future.

According to recent population statistics, the original Melanesian and Papuan population in Irian Barat amounts to 51.5 percent of around 900,000. The rest are settlers from various parts of Indonesia. They also need to be taken into positive account in sharp contrast to the reactionary accommodation of foreign mining companies and big plantations.

They must be regarded as class brothers and sisters by the indigenous people. For decades, they have been driven by the current Indonesian oppressive state to transmigrate because of dispossession and poverty where they come from. As in Mindanao, the poor settlers can no longer be sent back to Luzon and the Visayas. There must be a balance between accommodating them and the ancestral rights of the indigenous people.

## ***The US and Indonesian reactionaries***

The US-backed colonization and occupation of Irian Barat by the Indonesian ultrareactionaries since 1965, its plunder of the latter's immense natural resources, and its longstanding campaign of genocide against the people, deserve the utmost opposition and condemnation by the peoples of the world.

The people of Irian Barat must unite to stop the operation of the giant mining corporations such as Freeport McMoran; the campaigns of massacre, torture and rape perpetrated by the Indonesian military; and the increasing displacement of the indigenous people because of government-sponsored transmigration.

The racist brutality of the US and Indonesian governments towards the people of Irian Barat, still unknown to many peoples of the world including anti-imperialist activists, deserve to be exposed widely and passionately and condemned vehemently.

The just, non-stop, and courageous struggle of the people of Irian Barat for national self-determination and liberation deserves the widest and sustained support from the peoples of the world. Faced with their dire condition, we say, together with them: To rebel is justified!

The holding of this study conference is timely. Because of the protracted global economic crisis, which for one saw the rise of Donald Trump to the US presidency, imperialist powers are becoming more aggressive in plundering colonies and neocolonies and more brazen and brutal in launching wars of aggression.

## ***Strengthening solidarity and support***

Given this situation, the plunder and repression of the people in Irian Barat and other countries are bound to worsen. Strengthening solidarity and support for the people of Irian Barat and their struggle for self-determination and liberation is a most urgent task.

The International League of Peoples' Struggle, for its part, is organizing the conference "Solidarity and Fightback: Building Resistance to US-led War, Militarism and Neofascism" on August 5-7 in Toronto, Canada in an effort to strengthen and intensify the anti-imperialist struggle. Solidarity for struggle for self-determination and liberation of the people of Irian Barat against plunder and

militarism will surely be on the agenda.

It is also auspicious that this study conference is being held on the year of the 100th anniversary of the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. The October Revolution freed Russia from imperialist control and served as an inspiration for the peoples of the world to struggle for national and social liberation.

Those who are celebrating the centennial of the Bolshevik Revolution's victory should remember the words of the great Vladimir Lenin in thinking about the struggle of the people of Irian Barat and other peoples of the world for self-determination and liberation.

The butchers of the people of Irian Barat, the US-backed Indonesian government and military, are also responsible for the massacre of more than one million to three million Communists and Communist sympathizers in 1965-1966.

The struggle of the people of Irian Barat is proof that without justice, there won't be genuine peace, that oppression will surely beget resistance, and that fascism cannot stop revolutionary struggles from continuing to emerge and gain in strength.

We hope that this study conference's objectives are met. We hope that it comes up with materials that will help unite the peoples of the world behind the West Papuans' struggle for self-determination and liberation. We hope that it clarifies the various means that the peoples of the world can show solidarity for the struggle of the people of Irian Barat for national freedom.

The people of Irian Barat must be free and independent!

They must achieve independence from oppression! Down with imperialism and all reactionaries!

Long live the struggle of Irian Barat for national liberation!

# **Respect the Rohingya People's Right to Self-Determination, End their Oppression and Foreign Intervention in Myanmar**

**February 5, 2018**

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We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), call on the Myanmar government to respect the Rohingya people's right to self-determination and end their oppression. We strongly condemn the continuing persecution, genocide, ethnic cleansing and escalating military offensives against the Rohingya people in the Rakhine State of Myanmar.

Since August last year, more than 668,000 Rohingya have fled Myanmar for camps over the Bangladeshi border. This has swelled the number of refugees to 800,000 aside from the estimated 100,000 internally displaced persons in camps inside Myanmar. Others have fled to other countries even as ASEAN states continue to refuse them entry into their borders. The world continues to watch in horror as thousands of Rohingyas are left to die, without proper food, shelter and protection. Majority are children. Migrant detention camps and mass graves have been reported along the Thailand-Malaysia border.

The Rohingyas have long faced systematic military repression under the social-fascist (socialist in words, fascist in deeds) dictatorship of Ne Win (1962-88) and again after the 1988 uprising with repeated military crackdowns in 1991-1992, 2012, 2015 and 2016-2017. Over the past 50 years, Burma's military rulers have enabled state and large corporations to take over land and water supplies in what used to territory of the ancient Kingdom of Arakan before it was incorporated



into Burma under British colonial rule.

They have facilitated the expansion of mining, oil, natural gas, timber and agricultural plantations in these areas, displacing ethnic minorities such as the Rohingya, Karen, Mon and Shan in the process. They have even facilitated the entry and operations of Chinese, Korean, Japanese and other monopoly capitalist investors.

The current government of Myanmar headed by Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy (NLD) ascended into power after a decades-long struggle against the nation's military that ruled Burma since 1962. Suu Kyi and those occupying top positions within her government are also the product of decades of US-UK and European backing, training, and indoctrination.

Now in power, they represent US and European monopoly capitalist interests that continue to provide them with tens of millions of dollars in US, British, and European aid in exchange for the far greater superprofits exacted by the foreign monopoly firms. Entire networks of fronts posing as nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have also been created and funded by the US National Endowment for Democracy to undermine and sabotage Myanmar's sovereign institutions.

But despite putative "democratic" reforms, the military retain enormous power over Myanmar society at present. Suu Kyi's government does not recognize the 1.3 million Rohingya people as an ethnic minority. They are severely persecuted and denied basic rights, including the freedom of belief and freedom of movement, state education and civil service jobs.

Myanmar's armed forces and police started their latest crackdown on the Rohingya people in Rakhine State in August of last year ostensibly in response to attacks perpetrated by the Arakan Rohingya Solidarity Army (ARSA), a newly formed militant Islamic group, alleged to have ties with Saudi Arabia.

The Myanmar military have since been carried away by Buddhist chauvinism and perpetrated wide-scale human rights violations, including extrajudicial killings, gang rapes, arson and infanticides. Right-wing ultra-nationalists, including Buddhist religious leaders and supporters of Suu Kyi and the NLD, have also increased incitement of hatred and religious intolerance.

US and other Western imperialist powers have blamed "some among the

Burmese military, security forces, and local vigilantes” for the genocidal rampage, while calling on Suu Kyi to play a more constructive role to resolve the crisis. They are mindful that Myanmar might turn towards China for support, noting that the Rakhine state is an important node in China’s One Belt One Road blueprint – connecting Sittwe Port located there to infrastructure that crosses Myanmar to China’s southern city of Kunming.

Indeed, the violence in Rakhine state potentially threatens Chinese interests. More importantly, it can provide a pretext for direct US military involvement – either in the form of “counter-terror assistance” as is being offered to the Philippines to fight US-Saudi-backed militants from the Islamic State, or in the form of a “humanitarian intervention.” In either case, the result will be US military assets placed in territory directly on China’s border just as US war planners have sought to do for decades.

Meanwhile, with its growing clout in Burma, China has deferred to Myanmar and kept silent on the human catastrophe. The United Nations and the European Union are providing token assistance, but not nearly comparable to resources dedicated to addressing the refugee crisis in Europe that has resulted from the US-led wars of aggression in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria.

Neither SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) nor the ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations), two regional intergovernmental organizations, has stepped up to help mediate a diplomatic or even humanitarian solution. Even with voluntary repatriation, no real progress has been made in solving the larger economic, social, and political problems facing the Rohingya people.

The Rohingya people are now asserting their right to self-determination and liberation. They deserve the solidarity and support of the working class and all oppressed peoples and nations all over the world. In the same spirit, we likewise stand in solidarity with and support the Myanmar people’s struggle for genuine national independence and democracy towards real socialism with full respect for the rights of all national minorities.

# **Duterte Sets Stage for Bigger War in Bangsamoro**

**January 20, 2019**

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The MILF seems to be satisfied with the BOL. But many people and forces in Bangsamoro are resolutely and vigorously opposed to it. They call it BOL-shit.

Those prominently opposed include the MNLF under the leadership of Nur Misuari, several sultans and government officials from the level of governor to mayor in Sulu, Lanao and Maguindanao provinces.

Both the governor and sultan of Sulu are openly and strongly against the BOL. The former filed before the Supreme Court the petition to freeze the plebiscite on BOL on constitutional grounds. Even Duterte did a double face or had no choice in acquiescing to the filing of the petition.

Thousands of MNLF followers in red shirts and Cotabato city officials made it a point to demonstrate at city hall to counter Duterte's presence and campaign for BOL in the vicinity. In Maguindanao, the BIFF and other forces do not agree with MILF's collaboration with Duterte on BOL.

Duterte presumes wrongly that the Maranaos are in his pocket. Despite his claims to being a Maranao, he is now hated by the Maranaos for destroying Marawi City, failing to make prompt rehabilitation and preventing the residents from returning to their homes and livelihood.

Duterte is quite heavy-handed and yet so sloppy in failing to offer satisfactory terms and secure the agreement of those strongly opposing the BOL. He is

railroading the BOL through the plebiscite, under the duress and unfair condition of martial law.

He is setting the stage for a bigger armed conflict in the Bangsamoro and adjoining areas. The MNLF enjoys the support of the OIC and is angry that previous agreements and arrangements it has made with the Manila government under OIC auspices are being swept away so arbitrarily by Duterte.

The main enemy of the Bangsamoro is still the oppressive Manila government that violates their right to self-determination. What Duterte is doing is to use the BOL to divide and rule the Bangsamoro by making the various Bangsamoro forces fight each other.

Although Duterte comes from Mindanao, he is in cahoots with the oligarchs of “imperial Manila and Luzon” in subjugating the Bangsamoro and in controlling and plundering their human and natural resources in collaboration with imperialist powers.

# **On Duterte and the Plebiscite on BOL**

## **Further Comment**

**January 21, 2019**

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Despite the strong opposition of the MNLF, BIFF, several major sultans, governors and mayors and the popular sentiment among Maranaos against the destruction of Marawi City, it is highly probable that the yes vote will win in the plebiscite on BOL because of the advantageous position of Duterte due to the suasive force and effect of martial law, control of the Comelec and putting the PNP in charge of voting in so-called trouble spots, vote buying at 200 pesos per vote and 1000 pesos for each vote buying agent and payments in the millions to Comelec officials and to certain governors, congressmen and mayors.

The big problems will come after the railroading of the yes vote in the plebiscite. The MILF leadership in the Bangsamoro Transition Authority will either be willing to become an instrument of Duterte for the suppression of the opposition forces and become embroiled in armed conflict with them or become assertive against the Manila government and try to win them over, especially the MNLF, BIFF and other Bangsamoro forces in order to enhance and fortify the Bangsamoro right of self-determination against the oppressive Manila government, which retains excessive powers and exploitative control over the human and natural resources of the Bangsamoro.

Like the ARMM, the BARMM and BTA will also be besieged by the conflicting demands of the Manila government and the local interests of dynasties, warlords and tribes. Remember that the MNLF leadership in ARMM became split and then was taken over by the Ampatuan dynasty. The adoption of the BOL and

formation of BARMM have not been premised on regional autonomy under a nonoppressive Manila government and on basic social, economic and political reforms for the benefit of the Bangsamoro people and not for that of the local dynasties and warlords.

As I said before, Duterte is high-handed and heavy-handed. He did not make sufficient consultations and consensus with all Bangsamoro forces concerned in order to make a clearer and more just path to peace, stability and development in the Bangsamoro region. He is a bumbling tyrant who does not solve problems intelligently with the consent of all concerned. He is complicating further a longrunning complicated and violent situation in the Bangsamoro region.

### ***Reply to Duterte's tirade in Lucena City***

Duterte and his propaganda agents claim that I do not know much about the problems in the Bangsamoro region. I am in touch with the representatives of various Bangsamoro forces and other people in mixed communities. Thus, I know exactly how much the vote-buying agents of Duterte are paying to the ordinary poor voters and how much in millions are the Comelec officials and certain governors, congressmen and mayors are getting to rig the plebiscite. It is something easily expected that Duterte will get the yes vote for BOL as a result of martial law and vote-buying. It would indeed be too embarrassing to him if the no vote would win.

# **Defend the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Struggle for Land and Independence**

## **Message of Solidarity to the International Meeting of Indigenous Peoples of Guatemala and Latin America**

**March 15, 2019**

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As Chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle, I convey warmest greetings of solidarity from the entire ILPS to all the delegates to the Encuentro Internacional de los Pueblos Originarios de Guatemala y America Latina (International Meeting of Indigenous Peoples of Guatemala and Latin America). We congratulate the Movimiento de Pueblos Indigenas por la Autodeterminacion y Liberacion and the ILPS Guatemala Chapter for successfully organizing this meeting.

We agree wholeheartedly with the theme of the meeting, "Por la defensa de los derechos de los pueblos originarios y la lucha por la Tierra y la Independencia." [For the defense of the rights of indigenous peoples and the struggle for Land and Independence.] This is a rallying call for all indigenous peoples and their organizations to unite in Guatemala and in the entire Latin America. You have a common cause in fighting for your rights, for land and for your independence.

You must have a strong united front and rise from the conditions of division that are always taken advantage of by imperialism and the reactionaries in adjacent dominant communities. We hope that your meeting today can strengthen the indigenous people's movement in Guatemala and Latin America by sharing histories and struggles in defense of territories, sovereignty and independence.

You can have a common understanding of the history of the indigenous people's movements in Guatemala and Latin America and you can share experiences in the struggles for the defense of land, water, territory, cultural heritage, and autonomy among the indigenous peoples of Guatemala, Latin America and other indigenous peoples of the world.

You can discuss and have a common understanding of indigenous people's rights. Thus, you can create a platform to introduce and learn more about the Indigenous Peoples' Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL) as a framework to establish a strategy and concrete program on advancing the indigenous people's struggle for land, water, territory, sovereignty, and independence.

We wish you the utmost success in this gathering. May the IPMSDL serve as the model framework for bringing together the indigenous peoples in other countries and in all continents. We hope that you can promote and propagate on a global scale the unity and common cause that serve to strengthen your organizations in the struggle for national and social liberation and protecting the environment.

In concluding, we take this opportunity to invite all participating organizations in this meeting to send their respective delegates or observers to the Sixth International Assembly of the ILPS in Hong Kong on June 23-26, 2019. In this assembly, you can present the IPMSDL, especially to ILPS Commission No. 10 on Rights of indigenous peoples, oppressed nations and nationalities against chauvinism and racism. You can also network with organizations of indigenous peoples in various continents.

Long live the Movimiento de Pueblos Indigenas por la Autodeterminacion y Liberacion and the ILPS Guatemala Chapter!

Fight for the right to national self-determination and other rights and for land and for independence of the indigenous peoples!

Long live the Indigenous Peoples' Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation!



# **Opening Statement on the Discussion of Semifeudalism in the Philippines**

**December 12, 2020**

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Dear fellow activists, I thank the officers and members of Kabataan Para sa Tribung Pilipino (KATRIBU) for inviting me to speak on semifeudalism in the Philippines. I salute you as an organization of indigenous youth and student advocates from different schools and universities, dedicated to uphold the indigenous peoples' rights.

I appreciate highly that KATRIBU has done a great deal of work to deepen the awareness and understanding of the youth on the issues, plight, and struggles of the indigenous peoples, to organize and mobilize the youth to advocate IP rights and undertake solidarity actions for the struggles of the indigenous peoples and to generate financial, material, technical, and volunteer support for IP communities.

I make this opening statement to underscore the relevance and impact of semifeudalism on the indigenous peoples, to acknowledge the fact that fertile land and other rich natural resources are in their ancestral domain and have been coveted and ravaged by the semifeudal gang of foreign corporations, big compradors, landlords and bureaucrats and to point to the important role of the indigenous peoples in asserting their right of self-determination, the right to their ancestral domain and all other democratic rights.

The entire Filipino nation owes a great debt of gratitude to the indigenous peoples for their integrity and heroic struggle against the colonial and feudal

system imposed by Spain and then against the semi-feudal system under the colonial and then semi-colonial domination by US imperialism. The indigenous peoples have also cooperated with the resistance of the people who are on the seacoast and along the big rivers and who have been more exposed to foreign aggression and domination.

The indigenous peoples resisted effectively the attempts of the Spanish colonialists to grab their land and gold mines in more than three centuries. Thus, they have preserved their integrity, identity, customs and other cultural traits. But in the semifeudal system the US imperialists have used their military prowess and the Philippine reactionary state to make relatively more successful incursions in the ancestral domain of the indigenous peoples and grab the land and other natural resources from them.

In the current semicolonial and semi-feudal ruling system, the US and its imperialist allies and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords have made the Philippines a cheap source of raw materials for export. In this connection, they keep on expanding their mining, logging and plantation operations and building dams to generate power and irrigate the plantations. They do so by aggressing against the indigenous people and grabbing their land and other natural resources.

The social structure of the indigenous peoples have been affected by the dominant semifeudal mode of production and superstructure. Amidst mass poverty, there are a few who own productive property and who get higher levels of formal education. Among the poor, some of them have become workers in the mines, logging sites and plantations. But most of the indigenous people belong to the peasantry. They have class brotherhood with the poor settlers and swidden farmers who are driven to till land within their ancestral domain.

It is in the interest of the indigenous peoples and the entire Filipino people that they are aroused, organized and mobilized to rise up and struggle against foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes. Only within the framework of the people's struggle for national and social liberation can the indigenous peoples effectively assert their right to self-determination and benefit from their ancestral domain. Against the reactionary state, the right to self-determination extends to the right to secede or engage in armed revolution.

Only in relation to a nonoppressive state, can the right to self-determination

allow local autonomy and integration with the Filipino nation. The rights and interests of the entire Filipino nation and the indigenous people can be harmonized in order to uphold and realize national sovereignty, democracy, social justice, economic development, cultural progress and international solidarity with all peoples.

Thank you. I am ready to receive your questions and answer them.

*Initial Questions from KATRIBU & Answers (Translation from Tagalog original)*

*1. With the expanding movement of the people in various countries and large-scale protests as a result of the contradiction in the economy and politics brought about by the worsening conflict with capital and surplus value, do you think that the Philippines will be able to get rid of the feudal society, especially at this time, despite the massive protest in our country?*

JMS: The rapid worsening of the crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines and the crisis of the global capitalist system occur at the same time because the two are intertwined and encompassed by the neoliberal policy of the imperialist powers. Thus, large mass protests occur in the Philippines and overseas.

The rapid aggravation of the crisis of the global capitalist system and large-scale protests on an international scale are favorable for the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people and for its goal of getting rid of the feudal system in the Philippines.

The crisis of the feudal system is worsening because of its internal weaknesses, mainly the exploitation by the big compradors and the landlords and the corruption of the bureaucrat capitalists. Added to these are the pandemics and the typhoons and floods as a result of the monopoly capitalist destruction of the natural environment.

The more immediate aggravation of the Philippine crisis is the large reduction in the export of raw materials, the collapse of foreign exchange earnings of Filipino migrants and the rapid growth of public debt from within and outside the country due to the crisis of surplus production of monopoly capitalism and also because of the pandemic. The Philippine and the world economy has fallen or is depressed.

*2. What is the effect of the conflict between the US and China on the Philippine feudal system? Is there a chance that China will seize control of it?*

JMS: Both the US and China are monopoly capitalists. They are both interested in the Philippines remaining feudal and remaining a source of cheap raw materials and a constant market for manufactured goods from industrialized countries. In the rivalry between the two imperialist powers, each of them wanted to claim the Philippines as a semicolony.

Because of China's large and growing economy, it is greedy for raw materials and will try to control the Philippines. Mineral ore is strongly exported and due to the corruption of government officials, what is exported is not even recorded to avoid tax. From the Philippines as well as land that was used to build seven Chinese military bases in the exclusive economic zone of the Philippines.

*3. How should we deal with those who say that the Philippines is a capitalist country and not a feudal one? How can it be better explained that the concrete conditions of the basic sectors are still tied to their relations of production and more, to the land.*

JMS: Just patiently explain to others that the Philippines is capitalist to insofar as the system of commodity production dominates and the entire economy is no longer completely feudal. But the Philippines is not an industrial capitalist because it does not manufacture machines but imports machines in exchange for raw materials.

The system is feudal and the ruling class are big compradors who are the chief agents of the imperialists in terms of capital and finance. At the same time, they own haciendas as landlords. Thus, they are often called big comprador-landlords. They are mestizo in their role in the economy, most of them are also mestizo in skin and appearance (with Spanish or Chinese blood).

*4. Does social democracy or democratic socialism only retain the semifeudal society and not entirely abolish the current type of our society?*

JMS: Disciples of social democracy or democratic socialism are reformists. They don't want to get rid of the semifeudal nature of society because they fear a violent reaction from US imperialism and the big comprador-landlords and then they don't want to get rid of the semifeudal economy. They are said to be evolutionary and they want change only if the ruling class is willing to avoid

violent change.

*5. The feudal nature of families is tied to the orientation of society, how can it be combated and corrected towards remolding?*

JMS: The feudal nature of society and the large comprador-landlord family is rooted in and is the product of the mode of production or economic base. Next only to the economic base is the feudal mentality and custom in a family or in the superstructure of society (politics and culture).

Since the big comprador and ascendant classes and families control the economy, they also control the political and cultural system. The high officials of the reactionary government are members and agents of the big comprador-landlords. Along with the imperialists, this class decides the policies and methods of governance.

*6. Sex work has become a hot issue, how is this issue of women anchored on the colonial and feudal orientation of our society? Should it be dismissed forever or how should we look at this matter?*

JMS: In semicolonial and semifeudal societies, many women are vulnerable to deception or outright recruitment by criminal syndicates due to widespread and extreme poverty. In my opinion, most of those who are deceived and converted to prostitution are first promised non-prostitution jobs such as restaurant waitress, sales girl, domestic help, etc. Others are those who willingly become high class call girls or drug addicts.

Prostitution is a criminal activity even in a semifeudal society. But the criminals are syndicates and capitalists, not women from poor families whom they deceive and enslave. There should be programs and campaigns to provide shelter and decent work to prostitutes from poor families, as well as women who are mistreated and enslaved by their husbands.

*7. Trade systems and tariffification models of the Philippines greatly impact the maintenance of the feudal status of the peasants in rural areas. In what way does neoliberal policies play a big part in the overall maintenance of power among landlords and big comprador bourgeoisie in our country?*

JMS: Under the neoliberal policy, the state gives every favor to the capitalists and landlords in order to increase their income and their ability to create jobs and

"develop" the economy. In that way, it is up to the existence of the market, if there is wealth that will fall to the masses from the hands of the prophets.

In reality, the wealth created by hard-working people is funnelled into the hands of the exploitative classes. The growth of unemployment and the spread of poverty accelerated. In the case of easing the importation of rice and other agricultural products, the beneficiaries are foreign monopoly capitalists and their accomplices big compradors in the Philippines.

*8. As for the culture and lifestyle of the natives, has the past decade had a big impact on the Philippines? Is it easing or intensifying both US and Chinese imperialist intervention?*

JMS: In the competition of imperialist corporations that take raw materials from the Philippines, especially between the US and China, the national minorities are increasingly victimized. The imperialists encroach on their ancestral land and drive them out to expand mines, timber and plantations; and to build dams.

Because China is big and its capitalist economy is still growing fast, it is greedy for raw ingredients from the Philippines. The culture and lifestyle of the national minorities is increasingly disrupted and damaged. They are forced to leave their homes and lands and move to different places and adapt to the new environment.

*9. When will the indigenous people's right to their own decision or self-determination be won if the orientation of society is still feudal and our national minorities are more abused and robbed of land, culture, and life?*

JMS: In the program of the people's democratic revolution is the respect and implementation of the rights of the the national minorities to self-determination, to their ancestral land, their own way of life and their own culture. The people's democratic revolution must succeed and defeat the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in order to fully implement the rights of the national minorities.

*10. Based on the documents available on the internet, in the early 80's some individuals first introduced the analysis that the Philippines is no longer feudal. One of their bases here is "urbanization" or population growth in cities. For example, even if "urbanization" is still true (obviously the population of the cities is getting denser), what is its relationship with the continued existence of the feudal system?*

JMS: To ascertain the feudal nature of the current Philippine economy, examine closely the nature of the forces of production and relations of production. It does not yet manufacture machinery for production but imports machinery from outside the country, in exchange for the export of raw materials.

*The principal means of production in the Philippines is agricultural land and the laboring classes are mostly peasants, not industrial workers. At least 60 percent are peasants and workers do not exceed 30 percent.*

*The ruling class is the big comprador bourgeoisie with haciendas. They are merely agents of foreign monopoly capitalism. The ruling class in the Philippines is not an industrial bourgeoisie. The landlords are also no longer the ruling class as in previous pure feudalism.*

# **Review of Rudy D. Liporada's Novel, Red Rising Cordilleras**

**July 17, 2021**

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*Red Rising Cordilleras, the novel of Rudy D. Liporada, has for its panoramic background the entire Cordilleras, including Baguio City, the villages of Cordillera, the resource-rich valleys and heights, the fluid field of the people's war conducted by the New People's Army under the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines.*

The people of the Cordilleras are fortunate because of their natural riches but these are at the same time the cause of their misfortune when foreign aggressors like Spanish colonialism and US imperialism and the Filipino reactionaries covet and grab such riches for their own profit.

By their own resistance, the Igorot tribes of the Cordilleras overcame their differences to unite against Spanish colonialism and prevent it from grabbing all the gold mines. They joined up with the Filipino revolutionaries of 1896, including the Ilocanos and Tagalogs to put an end to Spanish colonialism.

But US imperialism interrupted the revolution by unleashing its war of conquest. It came to the Cordilleras with troops trained in massacring Indians and using far superior military forces to grab the gold mines and other natural riches and to deploy the American religious missionaries and the primary public school system.

The historical period of the novel is specifically the years of Marcos rule, before



and after the 1972 declaration of martial law, under the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system.

The novel draws life and intensity from the social and personal conflicts arising from the brutal Marcos regime and its scheme to put up a mega- hydroelectric dam project in collaboration with the World Bank in order to sweep away the homes, farms, hunting grounds and burial grounds of the Igorot tribes to benefit the exploiting classes beyond the Cordilleras.

The village of Chidlawan becomes the initial focus of attention in the novel as it brings together Pangat Lakay Sam-ang, his granddaughter Lumayang who has just returned from her studies in the city and the new incoming parish priest Fr. Carlo Paterno.

As a student in the city, Lumayang has become connected to the national democratic revolution and to the New People's Army expanding in the Cordilleras. She is tasked to facilitate the entry of the New People's Army to her village and she is suspicious of the Catholic priest Fr. Carlo as a clerico- fascist.

The novelist uses a series of surprise twists in an ironic manner to keep his reader riveted to the book. In the first of surprise twists, Fr. Carlo proves himself a devoted priest and servant to his parishioners and ultimately wins the heart of Lumayang after proving himself in confronting and outwitting the military officer of an enemy team in search of the NPA.

Fr. Carlo is the first of three young Baguio City friends to be in the countryside of the Cordilleras to be with the people even if at first in the service of his God. The two other friends are Noel Altamonte and Julius Madrigal. The novel interweaves the trajectories of their lives and connect them to the rising of the people of the Cordilleras and the struggle of the NPA.

Noel is the son of a successful and well-to-do doctor of medicine. He drives his own car and is happy-go-lucky but becomes a Kabataang Makabayan activist and revolutionary against the wishes of his well-to-do parents. Julius Madrigal is a cadet of the Philippine military Academy and is bound to become a commissioned officer of the reactionary armed forces.

After the proclamation of martial law in 1972, Noel Altamonte and his wife Lina are compelled to join the NPA and do mass work in the countryside. But after sometime he decides to return to the city due to his physical difficulties and due

to the pregnancy of his wife which he thinks would be better taken care of in the city.

He falls into the trap set by his own uncle Captain George Altamonte who arrests him and Lina and proves incapable of protecting them from the orders of General Tobias to torture them. Noel withstands the torture for a while until he sees his wife abused by the military torturers and decides to collaborate with the enemy.

Lt. Julius Madrigal is assigned by his superiors to take charge of the arrest and safehouse detention and torture of a leader of the revolutionary movement, Jose Saludo, his former beauty queen wife Lilian Gomez and a woman companion. After the escape of Saludo from the safehouse and the rape and murder of the two women, by his sergeant subordinate, Julius is scapegoated by his superiors, charged and imprisoned as the rapist-murderer.

While in prison, he is eventually contacted by his friend Fr. Carlo through Sister Aurencia to join the NPA and escape from prison. By this time, Carlo has become the NPA leader Aline after being tagged by the enemy as communist cooperating with the NPA. Embittered by the false charges of his superiors, Julius agrees to join the NPA and escape from prison. Before the escape, he receives revolutionary education from a fellow political prisoner Arnulfo.

The novelist uses the conversion of Julius to being a revolutionary and NPA commander to show how the correct strategic and tactics of the people's war have led to the expansion of the NPA from Central Luzon to other regions. Liporada also uses the dream of Julius as literary device to depict him as the biblical Joshua teaming up with Carlo as Moses against the Ethiopians and then the Egyptians.

After escaping from prison with other comrades, Julius reunites with his friends Carlo and Noel in the countryside. He assumes the nom de guerre Paulo. He uses to the advantage of the NPA his knowledge of the enemy's strategy and tactics. The three friends work together well in the revolutionary movement until the return of Noel and Lina to the city. As a result of Noel's capture, torture and betrayal, the enemy succeeds in encircling the camp of Carlo and Julius.

The enemy military officer Julius dies as a revolutionary martyr by diving on a grenade thrown by the enemy in order to save Carlo and others. The novel ends

with vengeance exacted against the revolutionary turned renegade Noel by armed city partisans in the garb of two nuns, one of whom is Sister Aurencia who is Julius' beloved.

Noel is depicted as the example of the upper petty bourgeoisie who loves the comforts and fun of belonging to a well-to-do family, becomes a KM activist and makes the effort to become a revolutionary but breaks at some point because he cannot stand the rigors of struggle, torture and the threat of death.

I commend the novelist for reflecting and putting life into the revolutionary struggle of the Igorots, the NPA in the countryside and the Kabataang Makabayan and the social and personal circumstances and peculiarities of the characters. His characterizations are credible because they are concrete and probable.

I also commend the language and style of Liporada. He uses poetic language in describing the natural landscape of the Cordilleras. At the same time, he commands the pace of his narrative by using the crispy prose of Hemingway and the journalist.

He is also fond of ending a chapter with a short sentence to imply or indicate the outcome of a previous narration of events. Only a master storyteller can use such a device. A lesser writer would make a long explication.

The novel is excellent material for a film filled with overwhelming landscapes and dramatic figures in dramatic situations of life-and-death, social and personal conflicts and romances such as those of Carlo and Lumayang, Julius and Aurencia and even of the ill-fated Noel and Lina.

I recommend that you read, enjoy and learn from the book first before you expect to watch an audio-visual version of it. There is already a movie script of the novel and deserves the attention of a serious producer. It is best to take hold of the book now, savor its full substance and style and thereafter brace up for the film to be produced in due time.

# Message to Anakbayan Cordillera on Its 8th Congress

November 30, 2021

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Dear co-activists of the Cordillera, I am pleased to extend patriotic greetings and solidarity to the leadership and membership of Anakbayan Cordillera on the occasion of its 8th Congress this November 30, 2021 in Baguio City, simultaneous with the 23rd Anniversary of Anakbayan and the 57th Founding Anniversary of Kabataang Makabayan (Patriotic Youth).

Thank you for inviting me to be your keynote speaker on the opening of your Congress as a recognition of my contributions to the youth movement and the whole mass movement of the Filipino people and for considering my contributions as inspiration for the youth of the Cordillera.

The Kabataang Makabayan and other national democratic forces rose up and gained strength in your region during the decade of the 1960s. Cordillera is the backbone of Northern Luzon and became the base of my investigation of the situation of Northern Luzon in 1969 and for so many times, my launch to reach Ilocos or Cagayan Valley at the start of the armed struggle in 1969.

I was part of the first efforts to build the revolutionary forces in the Cordillera. When martial law and the fascist Marcos dictatorship was declared upon the Filipino people, Cordillera became the bulwark of the revolutionary forces to fight for national liberation and democracy.

Red salute to you! You carry the glorious victories and lessons of the historical struggle of the Igorot against the Marcos dictatorship. I am confident that you will fight with renewed courage and proficiency now that you are being challenged by the state terrorism of the treasonous, tyrannical, murderer,

plunderer and swindler Duterte regime

The crisis of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system is now very intense due to the heinous crimes of Duterte, especially his plunder and excessive squander of public funds through military campaigns of suppression. The crisis further intensified when state terrorism was promulgated into law, a big chunk of the budget was allotted to the National Task Force-Elcac, and when Duterte stole funds allotted for fighting the pandemic and support for millions of people who lost their livelihood.

Your theme, “Strengthen Our Ranks: Fight resolutely in the face of the pandemic and tyranny! Youth, stand firm and fight with all your might!” is timely, correct and appropriate. We should all be angry that at a time when we are being besieged by the pandemic (due to Duterte’s allowing half a million Chinese tourists to enter the country last December 2019 up to March 2020), Duterte took this as an opportunity to intensify his oppression and exploitation of the Filipino people.

Since 1902 up till June 2016, the accumulated debt of the Philippines was Php 5.9 trillion. In five years alone, Duterte doubled the debt to Php 11.9 trillion in September 2021. The economy and reactionary government of the Philippines are bankrupt. Debt continues to increase rapidly due to large government budget and trade deficits. The value of exported raw materials is falling and the income from overseas contract workers is also decreasing. Despite this, importation of manufactured products continues to rise.

You must strengthen your ranks, be firm and with all might fight until the plague that is the Duterte regime is ousted from power and until Duterte and his cohorts are punished. Do not allow him to use the 2022 election to avoid responsibility for all his crimes against human rights and his many cases of plunder. He plans to cheat in the election and make Bongbong Marcos or Bong Go the president, his daughter, vice president and himself a senator.

The Filipino people is pitiful if Duterte will be able to insist his cheating in the election. If this happens, the Filipino people must rise up to stop the monsters, like Ferdinand Marcos and Rodrigo Duterte, from taking power. The people were able to cause the downfall of Marcos in 1986, it should be easier to fight Duterte who backtracked to a lower position and gave way to Bong Go or Bongbong Marcos as his successor. Nobody believes that the minion of a tyrant

being vomited by the people nor the son of a dictator whom Duterte himself called a drug addict will win in a clean election.

If by any chance, Duterte could still use his co-fascists in the military and police to put into power Bong Go or Bongbong Marcos, the Filipino people will surely rise up in the form of huge mass protests. The armed revolution will further strengthen. People's war for the people's democratic revolution will intensify. The whole Philippines will easily be inflamed like dry cogon due to the heinous crimes of Duterte and his military and because of the extreme worsening of the crisis of the ruling system.

The crisis of the rotting ruling system is rapidly intensifying and the Duterte regime is fast weakening. On the other hand, the legal democratic forces like Anakbayan are growing rapidly and so do the forces of armed revolution. It is your duty to uphold and implement national and democratic rights. And if state terrorism stops you, you have no problem going to the mountains because you are already in the mountains of the Cordillera, and guerrilla fronts already exist in all its provinces.

While there is still space for you to uphold and implement national and democratic rights, you must do all you can to explain the issues and encourage the youth to take the correct position, organize them so they will have unity and determination and mobilize them to demand from those responsible that they should act according to the needs and demands of the youth and the Filipino people.

Because of the continuous pervasiveness of state terrorism, the organization must be strengthened further through persuasion, organizing and mobilizing while being vigilant and concealing from the enemy what it should not know and having the readiness to cross over to the path of revolution. The revolution is always in need of more young people who are ready and has the experience in correct ideology, politics and organization,

The people of the Cordillera have a rich experience in the tradition of the tribal warriors during the Spanish colonization, in their participation in the democratic revolution against Spain and the United States, in fighting against Japanese Occupation, in the annihilation of the 100,000 to 150,000 Japanese soldiers assembled by Yamashita, and in the revolutionary forces in the guerrilla fronts of the new democratic revolution.

The people of the Cordillera have greatly contributed to the advancement of the Philippine revolution and for its being outstandingly known as one of the leading revolutionary movements in the whole world. Together with the Philippine revolution are the many mass struggles for national independence, democracy and socialism. These are the fruits of the rapid deterioration of the crisis of the world capitalist system. Today, the Philippine revolution is considered as a torch bearer of the world proletarian revolution.

Long live Anakbayan Cordillera!

Advance the Philippine revolution!

Long live the Filipino people!