



# UPDATES PHILIPPINES

RELEASED BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF THE PHILIPPINES

Amsterdamsestraatweg 50, 3513AG Utrecht, The Netherlands

T: : +31 30 2310431 | E: updates.philippines@ndfp.org

VOL I NO 8

15 AUGUST 2019

## EDITORIAL

### Crimes against the Filipino people

This week in August, we join the world in commemorating the adoption of the Geneva Conventions of 1949. The four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols call for standards of humane treatment and fundamental guarantees of respect for individuals involved in armed conflicts, specifically of soldiers rendered *hors de combat*, of prisoners of war (POW), and of civilians.

In July 1996, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) made a unilateral declaration to apply the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Protocol I of 1977. As the political authority representing the Filipino people and the organized forces fighting for national liberation and democracy, the NDFP regarded the treaties as having the force of law among its forces and in the areas under its control. It additionally called on all High Contracting Parties to ensure that the NDFP and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) respect their obligations to the treaties.

The commemoration of the Geneva Conventions is highly significant given the egregious crimes being committed by the GRP under President Duterte against the civilian populations in the Philippines. The hundreds of activists and human rights defenders persecuted, imprisoned on false charges, tortured and killed; the thousands of indigenous peoples persecuted, forcibly evacuated and their communities bombed and pillaged; and the tens of thousands of the urban poor murdered in Duterte's so-called war on drugs. It is not far-fetched that the Duterte regime will declare nationwide martial law and try to wipe out all communities, organizations and personalities critical of the regime.

The NDFP and the Filipino people have to defend themselves and obtain justice by revolutionary means for those already abducted, tortured and murdered by Duterte's military and police minions. They renew their calls to the community of nations to help put an end to these crimes and to demand justice against this murderous regime. **UP**



*NDFP Senior Adviser Luis G. Jalandoni*

### Duterte's 'killing sprees' block peace talks – NDFP

President Rodrigo Duterte of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) [announced on 8 August](#) that Fidel Agcaoili, Chairperson of the Negotiating Panel of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and Luis Jalandoni, NDFP Senior Adviser, were 'insisting' on resuming peace talks and wanted to talk with Duterte in Manila.

The announcement was immediately denied by Jalandoni, the NDFP and the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

Jalandoni explained that "the NDFP is open to peace talks based on the previously signed agreements with the GRP, namely, the Hague Joint Declaration, and other peace agreements, in order to address the roots of the armed conflict." He added however that "Duterte's anti-people and anti-national policies, including his killing sprees, do not give any indication that he is seeking serious peace talks."

The CPP on the same day reiterated that the NDFP and all its allied organizations, including the CPP, "are always open for peace talks." It also recognizes that various sectors have been calling for the resumption of peace talks. "However, the political environment is not conducive to peace talks," the CPP clarified.

CPP Founding Chairman and NDFP Chief Political Consultant [Prof. Jose Maria Sison stated](#) that "Duterte is completely wrong in presuming and implying that the NDFP will negotiate with his regime under his unilateral terms."

Sison emphasized that Duterte has not removed the obstacles to peace negotiations for which he himself is responsible. He cited Presidential Proclamation 360 terminating the peace talks, Presidential Proclamation 374 naming the CPP and the New People's Army (NPA) as terrorist organizations, and Executive Order 70 creating a Task Force purportedly to end the armed conflict.

"Duterte underestimates (the NDFP forces) by presuming that Agcaoili and Jalandoni will walk into his trap and slaughterhouse in Manila," Sison stressed. **UP**



*Lt. Gen. Macairog Alberto, Philippine Army Commanding General (left) thanks Col Goldfus of the Israel Defense Forces. (PNA photo)*

## NDFP denounces Israel training of Duterte death squads

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) recently denounced the military training provided by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) to officials of the Philippine Army, as a “despicable collaboration of the Duterte regime with Israeli Zionism”.

NDFP Chief International Representative Luis Jalandoni revealed that a 10-man IDF team led by Col. Dan Goldfus of the Nahal Brigade provided a two-week training on ‘anti-terrorism’ to Philippine Army officials in early July in the Philippines. Participants came from the Special Forces, 1st Scout Rangers, and Light Reaction regiments, and troops

from the 2nd, 5th, 7th and 9th Infantry Divisions of the Philippine Army.

Jalandoni condemned the Duterte regime for “taking in the IDF and its Nahal Brigade to play a role in its anti-people and anti-national policies and programs.”

The Duterte government is being condemned locally and internationally for widespread human rights violations, including those committed by Philippine Army units in Marawi City and Mindanao island since the imposition of Martial Law in May 2017.

The Nahal Brigade, according to Jalandoni, “has a horrible record of crimes against humanity.”

“It has been involved in major wars against the Palestinian people, Lebanon, Syria, and others opposed to Israel’s illegal occupation of Palestine, the Golan Heights, and other areas.” **UP**



## Suspension of Lumad schools draws protests

A storm of protests is intensifying over the suspension by the Duterte government’s Department of Education (DepEd) of 55 primary and secondary schools in indigenous Lumad communities in the southern region of Davao. Following unfounded claims of National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon Jr. that the schools were training the students to become members of the New People’s Army, DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones and Davao City DepEd official Evelyn Fetalvero on 12 July suspended the permit of the Salugpungan Ta’ Tanu Igkanogon Community Learning

Center to operate the schools.

In Manila’s House of Representatives, Makabayan parliamentarians Eufemia Cullamat, Sarah Elago and France Castro [lambasted the decision](#), pointing out that it is unjust and a violation to the right to education of the Lumad youth. They said that the DepEd does not want the Lumad to know the truth and continue to be deceived, exploited and be divested of their ancestral lands. They further deplored that the military under President Duterte is now deciding on matters involving children and, worse, taking over every role including school administration.

Various sectors of society condemned the DepEd order. Child Rights Network (CRN), the largest alliance of organizations and agencies pushing for children’s rights legislation in the country, [expressed grave concern](#) about the suspension order. “Depriving them of their education contradicts the 1987 Constitution, which states that the ‘State shall protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education at all levels, and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all.’”

According to the CRN, the DepEd suspension also disregards international laws, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which guarantees “the right to education and that party states should exert efforts to achieve this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity.”

Threats against Lumad schools have escalated since President Duterte’s termination in 2017 of the peace negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). Duterte threatened to bomb the schools. “I will use the Armed Forces, the Philippine Air Force... because you are teaching the children to rebel against government.”

As this is being written, the Salugpungan has issued alerts that the suspension order is now being served by the 67th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army on the remaining Salugpungan Learning Centers, including the K-10 school in Cateel, Davao Oriental and High School in Sibulan, Davao del Sur. **UP**