



UPDATES PHILIPPINES

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EDITORIAL

All-out war vs. rights defenders & humanitarian workers

President Rodrigo Duterte and his murderous co-conspirators have been unrelenting in their attacks against human rights defenders, political activists, opposition leaders and humanitarian aid workers.

Just in the past two weeks, several homes and private offices were attacked by Duterte security forces. Dozens of individuals, including minors, were arrested and detained on spurious charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives. A human rights defender from southern Philippines has been missing since 2 November. A labor leader was killed south of the capital Manila on 4 November. A radio broadcaster was killed in Negros island on 7 November.

On 5 November, the Armed Forces of the Philippines revealed a new list of '18 communist front organizations' – a warning that they will be the next targets of intensified repression. Members and officials of activist organizations are constantly subjected to surveillance and death threats.

The Duterte government calls its strategy the 'whole-of-nation approach' in order to end what it calls 'the local communist armed conflict'. Instead of resolving the roots of the armed conflict however, it has instead targeted individuals and their groups 'guilty' of helping the poor and powerless.

Spearheaded by murderous conspirators such as generals Hermogenes Esperon, Delfin Lorenzana, Eduardo Año and Carlito Galvez Jr., this strategy is doomed to fail. It will instead succeed in increasing even more the ranks of the poor, disenfranchised and persecuted. It will surely succeed in swelling the ranks of the protesting masses and the armed revolutionary forces. **UP**



Duterte security forces arrest 62 in Bacolod and Manila

In massive simultaneous raids in the night of 31 October, security forces of the Duterte government arrested 62 persons in Bacolod City in central Philippines and in the capital Manila, based on fake charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

Combined forces of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) raided the offices of opposition political party Bayan Muna (People Foremost), National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) and Gabriela women's alliance in Bacolod, and arrested 57 individuals, including 10 minors.

The armed raiding teams claimed that those arrested were undergoing firearm and explosives training. They also claimed to have 'found' firearms and explosives in the premises.

At the same time in Manila, police arrested a couple who are regional officials of Gabriela women's alliance and urban poor organization Kadamay.

On 5 November, 32 of those arrested in Bacolod City were released. These included the workers of the Ceres Transit Company and members of the Teatro Obrero (Workers' Theater).

Still facing criminal prosecution are 11 persons in detention. Four of them are charged with illegal possession of firearms, which is a bailable charge. Seven are charged with illegal possession of firearms and explosives, which are non-bailable offenses.

Bacolod City is located in Negros island, where 87 political activists have already been killed since the start of the Duterte regime. [[See related story](#)]

Security forces of the Duterte government routinely label progressive and opposition groups as 'legal fronts' of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and New People's Army (NPA). The 'red-tagging' results in the surveillance, harassment, arrests, illegal detention and assassination of officials and members of these groups.

In a public hearing at the Philippine House of Representatives on 5 November, AFP Deputy Chief for Intelligence Maj. Gen. Reuben Basiao claimed 18 organizations, including the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), Gabriela Women's Party and Oxfam Philippines, are legal fronts of the CPP. **UP**



(L-R) Delal Gemikli (HDP Turkey), NDFP's Asterio Palima and Jean-Francois Pellisser (Ensemble! France). Not in photo are Marie-Christine Vergiat (former MEP for Front Gauche) and Angelika Visviki (SYRIZA Greece).
Photo: NDFP-IIO.

NDFP speaks on migration issue at European Forum

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) spoke on the situation of Philippine migrant workers and the causes of forced migration at the [European Forum](#) of Progressive, Green and Left forces on 8 – 10 November, in Brussels, Belgium.

Speaking in the meeting 'Migrations and Wars, War on Migrants', Asterio Palima, NDFP Representative for Europe, revealed that up to 6,000 Filipinos leave the country every day to find work abroad.

"The phenomenon of 13 million Philippine migrant workers and the ongoing civil war are parallel products of the social injustice and poverty in the country, whose roots can be traced to the centuries-long history of colonial and imperialist

domination," Palima explained.

About 800,000 Filipinos are reportedly staying in Europe, working mostly as domestic helpers, nannies and caregivers.

Palima declared that the solution to these social problems rests primarily in the hands of the Filipino people themselves, pointing out the national democratic movement which aims to overthrow US imperialist domination, local feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

He added however an appeal to foreign friends "for closer solidarity with the Filipino people in their struggle for national sovereignty, economic emancipation and social justice. At the moment, there is an urgent need to expose the gross violations of human rights of activists and suspected drug addicts in the country."

Other speakers in the meeting were Marie-Christine Vergiat, former Member of the European Parliament from France (Front Gauche); Delal Gemikli of the People's Democratic Party (HDP) from Turkey; and Angelika Visviki of the Coalition of the Radical Left (SYRIZA) from Greece. Jean-Francois Pellissier of the French political party Ensemble! was moderator for the meeting.

The meeting called for future assemblies to strengthen their unity on the situation and needs of migrants and refugees in Europe, as well as joint actions to address the immediate and long term needs of migrants and refugees.

The European Forum brought together more than 400 delegates representing about 150 parties and movements from 36 countries under the theme "Building together a New Hope for Europe". In the Joint Declaration, the various groups called "to make 2020 a year of mobilization and popular struggle, in which the will of millions of Europeans to fight for a better society can be expressed." **UP**



Duterte's Secretary of Defense Gen. Delfin Lorenza orders military checkpoints to regulate the exit and entry of aid to earthquake victims.
Photo: PNA.

Earthquakes hit Mindanao, NDFP helps victims

A series of above 6.0-intensity earthquakes rocked the island of Mindanao in southern Philippines on 16, 19 and 31 October, leaving 30 people dead, 700 injured, and about 180,000 people in need of assistance in what some observers call a 'humanitarian crisis'.

Hardest hit by the earthquakes were the towns and cities in North Cotabato province, where 80% of those affected live, and Davao del Sur province.

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) in southern Mindanao on 4 November called on all revolutionary forces in the area to help the victims. According

to NDFP regional spokesperson Rubi del Mundo, they have already ordered "to mobilize all means of relief and support in order to ease [the victims'] suffering and hasten the restoration of their livelihood".

Del Mundo explained that community organizations and allies are extending food relief and other materials to the victims. Red fighters of the New People's Army (NPA) are assisting in the repair of homes and farms and in salvaging crops of farmers in hinterland areas.

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She called on all human rights organizations and advocates “to know the situation of the victims in evacuation sites,” and that “all forms and means of aid and relief must directly reach the victims as soon as possible.”

Meanwhile, President Rodrigo Duterte of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) appointed defense secretary and Mindanao’s martial law administrator Gen. Delfin Lorenzana to lead the GRP’s relief drive in the earthquake-hit areas.

Residents are being required first to validate their status as victims and are subjected to intense searches and interrogations. Relief organizations are being asked to undergo a process of vetting to ensure that they are ‘legitimate and authorized’ according to GRP standards. Existing military checkpoints in the provinces were reinforced and new ones have been set up.

Del Mundo described the GRP’s relief operations as marred by “corruption-laden red tape and patronage politics” and the GRP’s militarization of the relief drive as hindering the “maximum participation of all well-meaning individuals and organizations.”

The situation brought about by the earthquake, she said, shows the need to repeal martial law in Mindanao.



Luis G. Jalandoni, NDFP National Executive Committee Member & NDFP Chief International Representative. NDFP-IIO file photo.

NDFP supports President Morales, condemns US-backed coup

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) vigorously condemns the US-backed coup against Bolivian President Evo Morales. After Morales’ victory in the national elections on October 20, 2019, Rightist gangs led by Rightist leader, Luis Camacho, head of the so-called Rightist Committees Civicos, thrashed the house of President Morales and threatened him and his family.

The US-backed opposition refused to accept Evo Morales’ electoral victory. They secured the support of the US-supported Organization of American States (OAS) which claimed electoral irregularities committed by Evo Morales and his party, El Movimiento Al Socialismo. The OAS in turn pressured the Bolivian Armed Forces to withdraw support

from President Evo Morales.

Rightist groups have also attacked the Vice-President of Bolivia and his family and members of the Senate. The Rightist gangs burned the houses of government ministers and elected officials. The brother of the president of Bolivia’s Lower House in Parliament, Victor Brodas, was taken hostage. This attack caused the resignation of Brodas.

During the last 13 years, with Evo Morales, as President and first ever indigenous leader in Latin America to be elected President, the people have benefitted much from his economic, political and cultural policies. He significantly lowered the poverty in Bolivia. He has effectively prevented US imperialism and the Rightwing groups from exploiting and oppressing the Bolivian people.

Forced by the US-backed coup to resign, President Evo Morales has accepted the offer of asylum by Mexico. He, however, declared that he would return quickly “with more strength and energy”!

Meanwhile, his supporters in Bolivia continue to confront the Rightist opposition and gangs supported by US imperialism. They retain a strong mass base among the indigenous people and beneficiaries of social reforms and are therefore in a position to seize the initiative from the fascist gangs unleashed by oligarchic interests opposed to Morales’ social reforms and the nationalization of gas resources and enterprises.

The Rightists who have carried out the coup under the direction of US imperialism and the local oligarchs will soon be at the receiving end of mass protests. The patriotic and progressive forces realize that they can make secure and stable advance in social transformation if the Bolivian people have an armed force that is as free from US imperialism, as the Cuban revolutionary army.

International solidarity for President Evo Morales and the Bolivian people is bound to grow. He is widely recognized as a great champion for the heroic struggles of the Venezuelan people led by President Nicolas Maduro and the militant struggles of the Cuban and Nicaraguan peoples, and the fight for national sovereignty, independence, democracy and peace in Latin America, the Caribbean, and elsewhere in the world. **UP**