



UPDATES PHILIPPINES

RELEASED BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF THE PHILIPPINES

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EDITORIAL

Fascist demagoguery spreads disease and death

President Rodrigo Duterte of the Manila government exhibited classic symptoms of fascist demagoguery on 12 March when he ordered the deployment of police and military units in Metro Manila and the rest of the country for confronting the COVID-19 pandemic. For the Duterte faithful he declared, “this is not Martial Law.”

Surrounded by his military and police generals, Duterte repeatedly warned the public that violating government restrictions and ‘causing public disturbance’ will result in police and military action, criminal prosecution and detention. Left unsaid is the Manila government’s notoriously overcrowded and inhuman prison system. And the global infamy of Duterte’s security agents in inciting fear, intimidation, harassment, prolonged detention, torture, disappearance and mass murder. They would be incapable of ‘protecting the public safety’ but instead see quarantine violators and public nuisances everywhere and contribute further in spreading disease and death.

At the 43rd Session of the UN Human Rights Council, UN experts and Philippine human rights defenders have called out the Manila government for the worsening human rights situation in the country. In particular, they lament the labeling of human rights defenders as ‘communists’, setting them up for assassination by these same security agents. Duterte’s so-called diplomats retaliated with outright lies and more intimidation, indeed labeling Philippine human rights groups as ‘communists’ and the UN experts as ignoramuses.

The revolutionary forces of the NDFP commend and support the valiant efforts of Philippine human rights defenders and UN Special Rapporteurs for their resoluteness in fighting against the death squads and demagoguery of the Duterte government. UN investigators and rights defenders visiting the Philippines would be provided the necessary assistance in the territories of the revolutionary government.

As well, NDFP revolutionary forces commend and support the efforts of Philippine health care workers in containing the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite Duterte’s fascist demagoguery, and despite the country’s economic bankruptcy, they have valiantly stood at the frontlines and proficiently kept the contagion at bay. They would be provided all the necessary assistance and work hand-in-hand with the health care workers of the revolutionary movement, in Metro Manila and in the vast countryside territories of the revolutionary government. **UP**



CPP Founding Chairman Jose Maria Sison.
Photo: josemarisison.org

Renewed threats against Prof. Jose Maria Sison condemned

Dutch police warned National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) Chief Political Consultant Prof. Jose Maria Sison of new threats to his personal safety. The Dutch authorities visited Prof. Sison in his residence on 7 March and informed him of a planned rally against him in The Hague, The Netherlands. He was advised to take precautionary measures in his residence and when going out.

Reacting on the information, Sison said those plotting against him can only come from “the Duterte regime and its increasingly isolated band of paid supporters in The Netherlands and Europe.” He added that the plotters need to concoct a scheme after Duterte’s ‘Department of Fake News’

led by his Communications Secretary Martin Andanar, made representations in the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva, regarding the mass murders and human rights abuses committed by the Duterte regime.

UN Special Rapporteurs and Philippine human rights defenders led by Karapatan alliance for human rights, National Union of Peoples’ Lawyers and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines recently [provided the UNHRC with reports](#) on the worsening human rights situation in the Philippines.

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Fidel V. Agcaoili, Chairperson of the NDFP Negotiating Panel, issued the stern warning that threats against Prof. Sison would certainly threaten any possible resumption of the peace talks between the NDFP and the Duterte government.

Agcaoili stressed that the Duterte regime is engaging in its vintage 'double faced' tactic in dealing with the revolutionary movement: on the one hand reaching out to talk peace, while the other hand is viciously attacking the people and the revolutionary movement.

He warned: "Those in the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) who are for resuming the peace talks should set the record straight with the other minions of the Duterte regime that the NDFP is determined to negotiate and forge agreements on basic social, economic and political reforms in order to address the roots of the armed conflict and pave the way for a just and lasting peace in the country."

Prof. Sison is the Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines. He has been living for more than 30 years in the Netherlands as a political refugee, with guarantees of protection from the UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights.

The International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS) and the Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany issued solidarity statements in favor of Prof. Sison and condemned the threats against him. **UP**



*Ms. Johanna dela Cruz of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (R) during the UN Human Rights Council's 43rd Session.
Photo: kodao.org*

Rights defenders plead UNHRC anew on worsening situation in the Philippines

A team of Philippine human rights defenders from the Ecumenical Voice for Human Rights in the Philippines (EcuVoice) provided four oral interventions during the 43rd Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) on 2 and 6 March, calling for official investigations into the worsening human rights situation in the Philippines.

The EcuVoice team spoke of the smear campaign and red-tagging being orchestrated by the government of Rodrigo Duterte against human rights defenders, lawyers, Church people, and environmental defenders who dare speak against the Duterte regime.

In her oral intervention, Karapatan human rights alliance Secretary General Cristina Palabay revealed that 12 of her

colleagues have already been killed by suspected security agents of the Duterte government.

According to Edre Olalia, Interim President of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), at least 48 private lawyers, judges and public prosecutors have already been murdered under the Duterte administration. The victims include human rights lawyer, Ben Ramos, as well as lawyers handling drug-related cases.

Olalia urged the UNHRC anew to look into the state of human rights in the Philippines.

Johanna dela Cruz of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), in her oral intervention, said that Church officials are being labeled as 'communists' and are set up for assassination by Duterte security agents. Priests and bishops of the Philippine Independent Church are especially being targeted.

Clemente Bautista of Kalikasan People's Network for the Environment spoke about the serious challenges to life, security and liberty of environmental defenders in the Philippines.

During the Council meeting, a report of eight UN human rights experts was published which revealed "wide-ranging and cumulative violation of the rights of defenders."

They said, "We express additional concern at the statements made by high-level officials (of the Duterte government) threatening human rights organizations and accusing them of having ties with the communist movement. Such statements reflect a worrying broader trend in the Philippines of so-called 'red-tagging' of, for example, human rights defenders, journalists, rural communities and legitimate organizations, perceived as threats or enemies of the State, as having links to communist groups."

The EcuVoice team welcomed the UN Special Rapporteurs' reports. The UNHRC is holding its 43rd Session on 24 February until 20 March 2020 in Geneva, Switzerland. **UP**

NPA repulses intensified armed attacks against revolutionary villages

Various units of the New People's Army (NPA) in the islands of Samar, Negros, Panay and Mindoro, and in the provinces of Quezon and Sorsogon in Luzon Island, successfully repulsed the intensified armed attacks of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) in the last four weeks.

Two sections of fascist troops belonging to the PNP Regional Mobile Force Battalion 6 had been conducting combat operations since 10 February 2020 in the villages of Janiuay town in Panay Island when they were ambushed by the NPA Jose Percival Estocada, Jr. Command. Killed in action was Police Captain Efren Espanto. Having lost their commander, the mercenary troops rapidly retreated, leaving their fallen commander and several belongings behind.

The NPA saluted the Red fighters of the Jose Percival Estocada, Jr. Command in their determination "to courageously attack the enemy that operates inside the territories of the people's revolutionary government."

In Guihulngan City in Negros Island, armed troops of the AFP 303rd Infantry Brigade were ambushed by Red fighters of the NPA Leonardo Panaligan Command on 3 March 2020. According to the NPA command's spokesperson, Ann Jacinto, the 10 mercenary soldiers were aboard a military truck when the NPA unit fired upon them.

Two of the AFP soldiers, she said, were killed and four others were wounded. The rest of the fascist troops immediately fled the scene. One of those wounded was AFP unit commander 2nd Lieutenant Neil Christian Cureg.

In Samar Island, Red fighters of the NPA Rodante Urtal Command successfully undertook harassment operations against AFP troopers belonging to the 20th Infantry Battalion. The fascist troops were conducting intensive combat operations against community residents of Gamay and Mapanas towns. NPA sniper teams were able to repeatedly hit at the enemy units on the 17th, 18th, 24th and 25th of February, killing a total of seven.

Hundreds of families have been forced to evacuate due to the fascist activities of the 20th Infantry Battalion. The enemy troops camp inside school compounds and churches, and steal and destroy the food, personal properties and livelihood of the community residents.

In Quezon province, NPA units launched a tactical offensive against the armed troops of the PNP in San Narciso town on 14 February, killing three police officers and wounding two more. Meanwhile, a PNP officer of the 2nd Provincial Mobile Force Company was injured when his combat unit was harassed by NPA Red fighters in the town of Bulan, in Sorsogon province, on 16 February. **UP**



New People's Army in company formation. Photo: cpp.ph



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