



UPDATES PHILIPPINES

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EDITORIAL

Duterte Presidency: Crash and Burn

President Rodrigo Duterte and his retinue of sycophant propagandists are already prepping the public to scenarios of keeping himself in power beyond the May 2022 elections. Under the Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines, the President is barred from seeking reelection. But trust Duterte and his cronies to subvert the Constitution, imposing the illegal to be legal.

One scheme is to have daughter Sara Duterte-Carpio run for president. Like father, like daughter: mass murders, drug smuggling, government corruption and the Duterte dynasty live on. Another scheme is for Duterte himself to run for Vice President under a patsy President, the latter resigning after the elections to give way to the despot 'legally' reclaiming the Presidency. It can be surmised that there are even filthier schemes being cooked up, the minions will surely have ready arguments of their 'legality'.

But really now: who's wishing for a second Du-dirty presidency? Xi Jin Ping, Putin and Joe Biden come to mind. Imperialist masters need their unscrupulous despot to keep the Philippines under their thumbs. Top military and police officials with pools of blood in their hands also need Du-dirty to stave off prosecution for their heinous crimes.

The Filipino people will most certainly abhor a second Duterte presidency! This regime has brought only death, repression, worsening unemployment, worsening poverty, untrammelled corruption and barefaced national treason.

It has utterly failed to control the spread of Covid-19 and instead exacerbated police repression and government corruption. Unemployment, underemployment and poverty incidence all increased in the last five years, the projections already worsening even before the pandemic began in early 2020.

More than 30,000 Filipinos, mostly poor, have been murdered amid the sham 'war on drugs'. And yet, by the police's own reckoning, the drug problem has even worsened! What about government corruption? You don't need Senator Manny Pacquiao to tell you, Duterte's sham war on corruption is a total bust. The lower government ranks continue to pinch scraps, his closest cronies pilfer millions of pesos, while Du-dirty himself grabs the billions of pesos for himself.

The regime's war against the Moro and indigenous peoples, and the total war against the revolutionary movement have resulted in hundreds of extrajudicial killings, torture, illegal detention, military occupation of villages and plunder of the nation's natural resources. And yet, after five years, the revolutionary movement managed to strengthen and even expand further, fueled by the peoples' resistance against the murderous regime.

After five excruciating years, the Filipino people are looking forward to the Duterte regime's crash and burn. Duterte and his closest minions being prosecuted for their heinous crimes will be long awaited justice. **UP**



Government emboldens security forces to massacre the poor – Investigate PH

The Independent International Commission of Investigation into Human Rights Violations in the Philippines (Investigate PH) released its [Second Report on 6 July 2021](#), revealing that policies of the Rodrigo Duterte government "have emboldened both the police and military to massacre the poor and marginalized" as well as those advocating for the rights of these communities. The Report spotlights the "prevailing lack of effective domestic remedies" against these state-sponsored crimes.

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According to Ms. Suzanne Adely, Investigate PH High Commissioner and Co-Chair of the International Committee of the US National Lawyers' Guild, Duterte's Executive Order 70 or 'the-whole-of-nation' counter-insurgency program and the 2020 Anti-Terrorism Act are prime examples of policies which encourage Duterte's security forces to murder poor Filipino citizens.

Investigate PH, consisting of [17 eminent individuals in the field of human rights defense](#), highlighted in its Second Report three aspects of 'state terror in the Philippines': War on Dissent, War on the Moro People and War on Poor People, under the guise of the 'war on drugs'.

It highlighted the lack of redress for abuses committed by government security forces and the "routine cover-up" being done by the Philippine National Police. Police and soldiers, it asserted, are now executing political dissenters "in a manner similar to anti-drug operations". Such "institutionalized repression" harms civil society, from alleged communists, to churches, to long-standing democratic institutions.

The report also stressed that the US-backed 'War on Terror' military operations in Mindanao "have failed to distinguish between civilians and combatants" and have caused the mass displacement of Moro communities. The Duterte government's policies, it asserted, "undermines the Moro communities' right to self-determination" and neglects and the needs of those displaced communities.

High Commissioner Rev. Dr. Susan Henry-Crowe of the US United Methodist Church, said, "It was difficult to hear testimony that US military aid is abetting human rights violations. It's simply unacceptable!"

Investigate PH called on the UN Human Rights Council, the International Criminal Court and sovereign states to make the Duterte government accountable for the tens of thousands of extrajudicial killings, abductions, disappearances, illegal arrests and detentions and other forms of violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. Officials of the Duterte government, they said, should also be held accountable for these violations.

They also called for the permanent protection of all witnesses, human rights defenders, journalists, members of the academe and the exercise of pastoral duties of religious ministers.

Investigate PH is scheduled to issue its Final Report in September 2021. The [First Report was published in March 2021](#).

In a related development, the International Trade Union Congress (ITUC) issued its [2021 Global Rights Index](#) citing the Philippines in the Top 10 worst countries in the world for workers. According to the report, there have been too many disappearances and killings of labor leaders and members, sanctioned by President Duterte in his speeches. ITUC further noted that 28 labor representatives have been illegally detained while seven were killed in the past year alone.

Confirming ITUC's findings, Elmer Labog, Chairman of labor center Kilusang Mayo Uno said, "Laborers and union leaders continue to be victims of killings, red-tagging, surveillance and arrests in the hands of authorities." **UP**



US arms delivery to AFP.
Photo: ph.usembassy.gov

US delivers US\$1 million military aid to Duterte government

One million dollars-worth of weapons and munitions were delivered to the Armed Forces of the Philippines by the Joint United States Military Assistance Group-Philippines on 4 July 2021. The delivery was made at the former US military facility Clark Air Base in Pampanga, in northern Philippines.

The delivery included 14 M2A1.50 caliber heavy machine guns, seven M240B machine guns and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

According to the US Embassy in Manila, the Philippines is the largest recipient of US military assistance in the Indo-Pacific region. In 2019, US military aid to the Philippines reached US\$33.1 billion, up by 91% since 2000.

The delivery was made as the US and Duterte governments are working to reach a "satisfactory arrangement" to continue the US-RP Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA). The pact provides a mechanism for the US to station its military forces in Philippine territory. The current agreement took effect in 1999 and is due to expire this year.

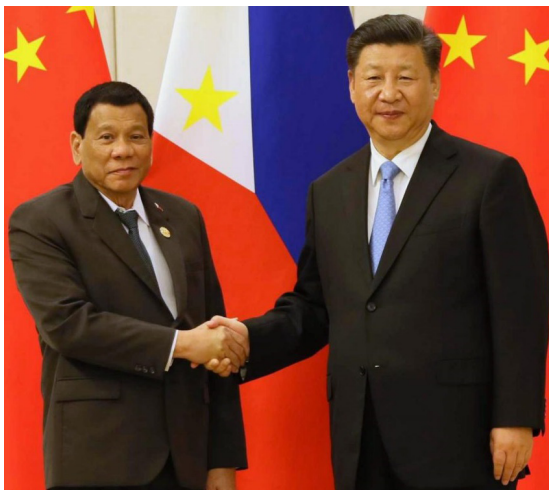
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“The VFA is very important, we support it and we’re hopeful that we can arrive at a satisfactory arrangement to continue that,” US Chargé d’Affaires John Law told reporters.

While the AFP has received substantial military aid from the United States, they have also had accidents with the received aid. On 25 June 2021, a S-70i Black Hawk assault helicopter crashed during a training exercise, killing all six air force personnel on board. At that time, the AFP had just finalized a deal to acquire an additional 16 Black Hawks for US\$241 million, under a military program to modernize its military equipment.

On 4 July, another Philippine Air Force troop plane crashed and broke up in flames killing at least 45. It was reportedly the country’s worst military air disaster in 30 years. **UP**



*PARTNERS. Duterte and Xi Jinping.
Photo: wikimedia.org*

Xi Jinping’s CPC is a big imperialist bully – CPP

The Communist Party of the Philippines on 5 July lambasted President Xi Jinping and the Communist Party of China as “a big imperialist bully” for pushing its ‘Belt and Road Initiative’ to unload China’s surplus capital, compelling other nations to give up their sovereignty and patrimony through financial and economic pressures, and utilizing its enlarged armed forces to harass Filipino fishers and occupy Philippine territories in the West Philippine Sea.

CPP Chief Information Officer Marco Valbuena commented on the speech delivered by Xi Jinping on 1 July marking the Centennial of the CPC, lamenting how “the once great, glorious and correct CPC has degenerated from a party of the working class to a party ruled by modern revisionists and the bourgeoisie; from a party of socialism to a party of capitalism; from a party of revolution to a party of reaction.”

Valbuena said that the 15-page speech did not even once mentioned the word ‘proletariat’, indicating the “CPC has lost its class-based militance and revolutionary spirit,” and that Xi Jinping “echoes Kruschov’s bourgeois populist ‘party and state of the whole people’ to mask their betrayal of socialism and the proletarian cause.”

The CPP criticized Xi Jinping for avoiding the word ‘socialism’, harping instead on ‘national rejuvenation’. “This has no meaning for the Chinese proletariat and toiling masses who are exploited by the state monopoly bourgeoisie and big capitalists to accumulate vast amounts of wealth,” Valbuena said.

Valbuena, reacting to Xi Jinping’s description of China as “moderately prosperous”, said this obscures the deep economic and class divide between those who rule over the state and big corporations on the one hand, and the workers who toil under oppressive conditions and small farmers who were displaced from their land.

“‘Moderately prosperous’ is what you get,” Valbuena asserts, “when you average the wealth of China’s 626 billionaires worth US\$2.531 trillion, to that owned by hundreds of millions of workers and peasants amounting to practically nothing and the possessions of a few tens of millions who toil to keep themselves in the middle.”

The CPP called on the proletarian revolutionaries in China to “stay true to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism... stand up and expose all the bourgeois populist lies of Xi Jinping and the Chinese monopoly capitalists and tell the whole world of the evils that capitalist restoration in China has wrought on the Chinese people.”

“They must reestablish a genuine communist party in China and take back the red flag from the modern revisionists in order to expose their true colors.” **UP**