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Editorial

Raise the level of people's war in the new decade

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), New People's Army (NPA) and the revolutionary people are in a rock-solid position to advance the people's war in the new decade to a new and unprecedented level.

Its accumulated strength and experiences and the brilliant victories of people's war in the last four decades, and its having been tempered even more as it successfully confronted and defeated the US-Arroyo regime's allout war and Oplan Bantay Laya this past decade serve as the firmest foundation of this declaration.

With the world capitalist system in the throes of depression and the semicolonial and semifeudal system in the Philippines mired ever deeper in permanent crisis, objective conditions are even more favorable for the Philippine revolution to further advance and make great leaps.

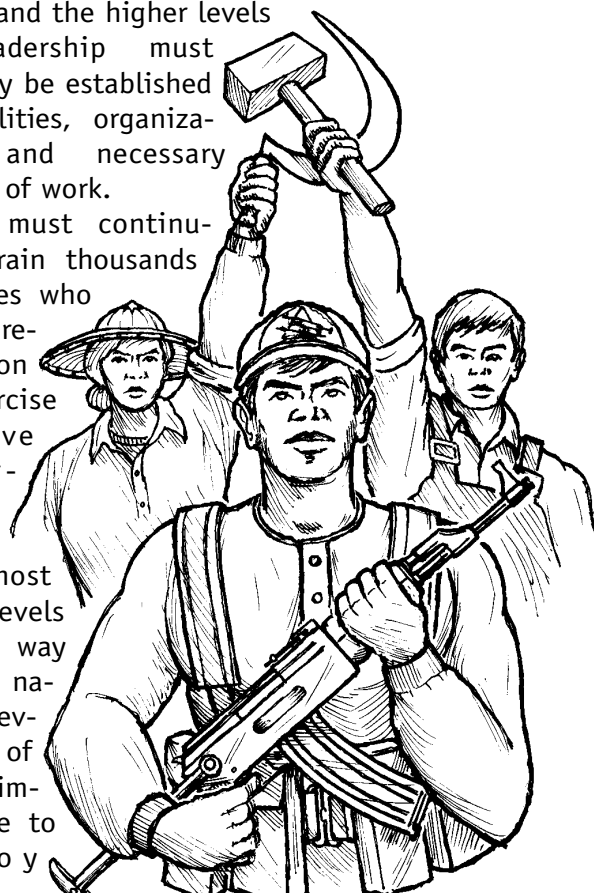
The Party and all the revolutionary forces are determined to fulfill the tasks needed for the people's war to make a major leap in the first five years of this decade from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate.

All cadres, members, fighters, activists and the revolutionary people must make many preparations and exert much effort in confronting this great challenge.

First of all, we must further expand the Party that leads the revolutionary movement. Recruitment must be stepped up especially from the ranks of workers, other toiling masses and the petty bourgeoisie. Let us

mould from them the tens of thousands of proletarian revolutionaries who can teach and lead the Filipino people in waging revolution. They must early on be equipped with the three-level Party course and be continuously honed in the Marxist-Leninist-Maoist standpoint, viewpoint and method. Party branches, groups and the higher levels of leadership must promptly be established in localities, organizations and necessary spheres of work.

We must continuously train thousands of cadres who can be relied upon to exercise effective leadership from the most basic levels all the way to the national level. It is of utmost importance to d e p l o y



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cadres and cadre material from the cities and town centers to join the people's army. It is in the countryside where the most number of cadres with well-developed proletarian qualities and high levels of intellectual and other skills is most needed.

We must further develop, raise the number and daringly field hundreds of thousands of mass activists to perform tasks for the revolution. Through them, the Party and people's army are able to amplify their capabilities severalfold to reach, arouse, organize and mobilize the toiling masses and other sectors of the people in countryside and city, through both open and clandestine means.

We must further intensify extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare based on an ever expanding and deepening mass base. The New People's Army is already able to launch more than one tactical offensive per day. It can surpass this rate in the coming years with the further expansion and development of the people's army and by taking advantage of the conflicts among, and weaknesses of, the enemy. Let us make the enemy bleed by in-

flicting head and body blows and let the NPA's military actions resound throughout the archipelago.

We must increase the number of recruits for the people's army from the hundreds of thousands of activists and the revolutionary people in the countryside and cities. We must raise their level of ideological, political and military consolidation to enable them to persevere in protracted people's war and serve as wellsprings of fine Party cadres and Red commanders of the people's army.

We must raise the level of the majority of guerrilla fronts to company strength and strive to build platoon-strength units of the people's army in most of the municipalities within our areas of operation. We must ensure the establishment of people's militia units and even more self-defense corps in consolidated barrios. We may deploy armed city partisans in urban areas within guerrilla fronts. We must carefully study, prepare for and effectively resist the new and even more vicious counterrevolutionary oplan that will replace the failed OBL.

It is the objective of the cur-


rent extensive and intensive guerrilla warfare to continuously and cumulatively drain the enemy of its strength by inflicting ever more frequent blows, especially on its weak and isolated parts.

Regions and guerrilla fronts that are ready may gradually develop appropriate vertical forces within the people's army and advance some initial elements of regular mobile warfare in the process of expanding, intensifying and raising the level of guerrilla warfare. This will provide a smooth transition towards fullblown regular mobile warfare which is the main form of warfare in the strategic stalemate.

Let us expand and deepen the revolutionary mass base wave upon wave. Let us raise the number of the millions of people who currently comprise the mass base and consolidate them. Let us determinedly build contiguous guerrilla fronts in the majority of congressional districts in the countryside that have not been covered by the existing 120 or so guerrilla fronts, and let us do so until we cover the majority of municipalities within each district.

It is of utmost importance to expand and invigorate agrarian revolution. We must strengthen the revolutionary mass base in the organizational, political, military, economic, public welfare and cultural fields. From the millions of people we have reached, we can recruit the biggest numbers into the Party, people's army and the various mass organizations.

Let us continuously raise the level of consolidation of the revolutionary mass base in all areas and establish organs of people's democratic government and other organs of political power in consolidated areas from the barrio, municipal and district level up. We must give full play to the people's self-organization and governance

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guided by the local Party organizations in consolidated guerrilla bases. This will provide the Party and people's army greater leeway in accomplishing other tasks, among them the further advance of armed struggle.

By qualitatively raising the level of consolidation of the revolutionary mass base and dismantling the enemy's political power in vast areas, we foresee the emergence of developed and relatively stable revolutionary bases and war fronts, even as people's war advances from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate.

Let us further invigorate, expand and intensify the mass movement and anti-imperialist, antifeudal and antifascist struggles on various levels nationwide. Let us broaden the scope and raise the level of planning and coordination in mass struggles to enable the people to join them in ever greater numbers, to more effectively attain their objectives and inflict more intense blows on the enemy. Let us tirelessly disseminate revolutionary propa-

ganda through various media and venues in order to reach, arouse and mobilize the people in their numbers and win them over to the side of revolution.

Let us continuously raise the level of militancy of mass movements and struggles until they culminate in people's uprisings in various areas nationwide and shake the foundations of reactionary rule.

Meanwhile, the intensity of the international capitalist crisis will fire up other proletarian, democratic and anti-imperialist revolutions and mass movements in various countries, especially in the Third World. We anticipate even greater cooperation among proletarian revolutionaries and other progressive, anti-imperialist and propeople movements and forces worldwide. This will serve to inspire and invigorate revolutionary movements in various parts of the globe.

The advance of many other revolutionary struggles worldwide and the expansion of international support for people's war in the Philip-

pines will serve as a broad shield against the intensifying intervention of US imperialism in the revolutionary war in the Philippines and its support for the moribund puppet reactionary state.

For as long as the much-hated US-Arroyo regime continues to wield power, it will remain as the main target of attack nationwide.

Whether or not Arroyo is replaced by a new chief puppet, the revolutionary movement will not relent in fighting the entire reactionary puppet state and system until it is completely overthrown and replaced with a new democratic state and system with a socialist perspective.

Depending on the seriousness of the succeeding regime with regards to the peace process, some or most of the revolution and the people's substantive aspirations may be realized. The resumption and progress of the peace talks can be of help in achieving revolutionary objectives and shortening the stages and overall course of the protracted people's war. **AB**

Comrades hold successful CPP anniversary celebration in Mindanao

The main celebration in Mindanao of the Party's 41st anniversary led by Jorge "Ka Oris" Madlos was a success despite brazen violations by the AFP of its own ceasefire declaration that was supposed to have been in force from December 24 to 26. Up to 3,000 people attended the colorful celebration, including people from different provinces, towns and barrios, 39 media workers and local politicians.

Ka Oris called for the allout implementation of tasks by the revolutionary forces in the next five years with the objective of raising the level of people's war from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate.

He called for the intensification of armed struggle. He said that 90% of more than 300 high-powered firearms added to the NPA arsenal in Mindanao in 2009 alone came from tactical offensives against military and police ele-

ments. Hundreds of thousands of peasants also benefited from the fruits of agrarian revolution in Mindanao island. Areas of operations expanded in Northeastern Mindanao Region (NEMR) as well as other parts of the island.

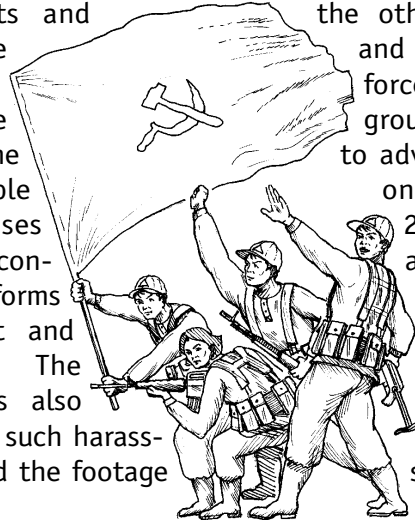
Among the highlights of the Party celebration was a tribute to media workers who were cold-bloodedly murdered in Ampatuan, Maguindanao on November 23. After reading the tribute, Ka Oris mentioned all the names of the 31 media workers who fell victim to the Maguindanao massacre. Meanwhile, NDF-NEMR spokesperson Ka Maria Malaya and the journalist guests led a candle lighting ceremony dedicated to the martyrs from the media sector.

AFP violations of the ceasefire. Meanwhile, Ka Oris reported attempts by the AFP to disrupt the main celebration of NDF-Mindanao. Elements of the 58th IB and the 41st DRC put up checkpoints in Barangay Ganayon and Diatagon in Lianga, Barangay Poblacion and Buhisan in San Agustin and Barangay Amontay in Marihatag on December 25 to harass people, allies and friends who intended to join the celebration. They also intimidated some motorcycle drivers to extract information on the actual site of the celebration.

A day after the celebration, a company from these military units, along with two armored personnel carriers, a military tank, a military jeep and a military pick up entered the site of the Party celebration in Barangay Mahaba, Marihatag, but by then, the guerrilla forces had already left the area after the invit-

ed guests from the media and other sectors had safely exited. The guerrillas closely monitored the enemy's movements. They were under strict orders to refrain from firing at the military units in deference to the local residents' observance of the new year.

On the other hand, all vehicles leaving Marihatag were stopped at checkpoints and searched while videos were taken of the passengers. The media people and the masses courageously confronted these forms of harassment and intimidation. The media workers also took videos of such harassment and aired the footage on television.



Also on December 25, the 58th IB set up a tactical command post near the site of the Party anniversary celebration of Front 30 along Tago River, San Manuel, Surigao del Sur. The following day, military forces took position to prepare for an attack. As a consequence, the committee overseeing the celebration decided not to push through with the other parts of the program and transferred the guerrilla forces and the masses to safer ground. But the AFP continued to advance, resulting in a clash on the morning of December 27 between an AFP unit and an NPA unit, wounding several soldiers. The military retaliated by firing 105 mm howitzer shells that missed their target. The next day, the AFP sent two helicopters to evacuate their casualties.

Progressive mass leader in Davao City seeks refuge with the NPA

A former progressive mass leader in Davao City has formally announced that he has sought refuge with the New People's Army (NPA) and is currently under its care.

According to former Bagong Alkansang Makabayan secretary general Alvin Luque, "This is the most logical choice on my part because these are the very organizations that can guarantee not only my protection from political killings but also, above all, freedom of the people from the oppressive grip of a reactionary fascist state."

"I am still breathing and fighting precisely because of this choice," said Luque. Since 2002, the AFP has included him in its order of battle and has made him a target of intense repression. Trumped-up cases of arson and rebellion were filed against him and

he was nearly arrested in 2007.

Luque surfaced on December 26 during the CPP anniversary celebration in Marihatag, Surigao del Sur, spearheaded by the National Democratic Front. According to Luque, he has taken the opportunity to reveal to the public his present status and involvement to put an end to all the lies and speculations peddled by the AFP since he left the legal democratic movement in 2007.

Luque explained that he chose to seek refuge with the NPA because if he had allowed himself to be arrested, he would have been vulnerable to various forms of attack, especially since the AFP has

branded him "an enemy of the state." Luque also pleaded innocent to the criminal charges leveled against him before a court in Davao City. "I would have wanted to face trial and articulate my side of the case, but that, like I said, was impossible given the state of impunity under this regime."

He pointed out that under the US-Arroyo regime, more than a thousand of its critics and dissenters have been victimized by extrajudicial killings, including journalists, media workers, lawyers and the religious. "I cannot sit idly by, stand watch, and simply bear one gruesome murder after another, and still pretend the situation is fine. Just action must be taken. Therefore, it is incumbent upon me to do everything in my power not just to live but also to go on living fighting for the people whom this regime incessantly exploits and oppresses." **AB**



AFP suffers defeat in Samar

Despite feverish attempts by Gen. Arthur Tabaquero, Philippine Army 8th ID chief, he has miserably failed to crush the revolutionary armed struggle in the region. From January to November 2009, the NPA successfully launched 60 tactical offensives, where it was able to seize 37 firearms and kill 90 on the enemy side.

In Samar province, in particular, the NPA and the people valiantly frustrated 17 big military offensives by the 8th ID that consisting of 14 battalion-, two brigade- and one division-size operation.

In the face of these brutal attacks, not a single NPA unit was dismantled in the province. Instead, NPA units were able to carry out counter-offensives, according to Ka Vicente Magbuhat, spokesperson of the NPA Arnulfo Ortiz Command in Samar.

From January to November 2009, the NPA was able to conduct 32 tactical offensives, seize 18 high-powered firearms and several rounds of ammunition, kill 21 soldiers and wound 10 others. In the course of engaging the reactionary fascist troops, the Red fighters were able to boost their fighting capability.

Not a single guerrilla front in Samar was constricted by the enemy due to its desperate terror tactics. In fact, the NPA even expanded to new areas.

Because of the growing strength of the revolutionary forces in Eastern Visayas, General Tabaquero has been forced to admit that the military will not be able to crush the NPA according to its set deadline. AB

Ambush in Cagayan Valley

Ten elements of the 17th IB were killed in successive attacks launched by Red fighters under the NPA Henry Abraham Command in East Cagayan, according to the latest correspondence reports from Cagayan Valley.

On October 28, four troops from an undersize platoon of the 17th IB were killed when they were ambushed while conducting patrol operations in Barangay Sta. Clara, Sta. Ana town.

On October 30, six soldiers were confirmed dead after a 15-minute firefight between an NPA unit and an enemy platoon in Barangay Kapanikian, Sta. Ana town. The enemy soldiers were only five meters away before the Red fighters fired at them. The NPA seized an M16 rifle and 10 magazines full of bullets.

The enemy scampered away during the ambush, with the wounded soldiers eventually dying in the forest.

The AFP began its intense operations on October 12 when the 17th IB unleashed a Reengineered Special Operations Team (RSOT) in several barangays in Sta. Clara, Kapanikian and Dungeg to terrorize the people who were opposed to the massive land grabbing being perpetrated by the Cagayan Export Zone Authority of the Enrile dynasty. AB

NPA ambushes 16th IB troopers

At least three soldiers of the 16th IB were wounded in a raid conducted by members of the Mario Corpuz Command of the NPA on a detachment of the 16th IB Alpha Company in Sitio Taiwanese, Barangay Magsaysay, Infanta, Quezon on January 4. The NPA was able to confiscate rifles, pistols, rounds of ammunition and several communications equipment. These pieces of equipment were left behind when the military squad led by Lieutenant Marcos scampered away from the scene of battle. There were no casualties on the NPA side.

Meanwhile, the Apolonio Mendoza Command (AMC) of the NPA operating in Bondoc Peninsula reported seizing 18 firearms in a raid staged on a police station in San Narciso, Quezon on December 20.

The AMC also belied reports that it was responsible for the burning of eight classrooms in a school in Catanauan town on December 26. It said that the burning was most likely part of the AFP's psywar operations because the perpetrators obviously made the crime appear like it was the NPA's doing.

In Rizal province, the Narciso Antazo Aramil Command ordered its units to launch tactical offensives against the enemy pursuant to the Party's call. Prior to this, it was able to carry out victorious tactical offensives on December 7 and 9, further angering the 16th IB led by Lt. Col. Marc Ernest Rosal. AB

Thousands of farmers in Caraga region benefit from agrarian revolution

More than 30,000 farmers are benefiting from the coordinated agrarian revolution campaign conducted in various barrios and towns in the Caraga region (Northeastern Mindanao) in 2009. *Ang Bayan* gathered this from preliminary reports shared during an interview with a leading Party cadre in the region.

The agrarian campaign began in April and ended in December. The agrarian campaign focused on the struggle to raise the wages of agricultural workers and reduce usurious interest rates on loans as well as rent for farm implements. The revolutionary movement also succeeded in launching seven inter-barrio campaigns to raise the prices of bananas and coconuts.

In a span of six months, almost all guerrilla fronts were able to launch over 30 antifeudal mass actions. There were barrio-level mass actions in 23 barangays. The cam-



aigns to raise the prices of bananas and coconuts. About 36 barrios and 380 families participated directly in this campaign, with 6,780 families or over 33,900 individuals

from eight barrios benefiting from it.

The peasant masses were overjoyed by these gains. Before, coconut farmers would suffer huge cuts in their income because of a practice where merchants refused to pay for “bungkig” or anything in excess of three, four or five kilos per sack of copra. The farmers won their demand to have the “bungkig” included in the computations.

They were also able to raise the daily wages of coconut farmers from ₱100-120 to ₱150-200, and negotiate free lunch and snacks. Rent for a hand tractor was also reduced from ₱150 down to only ₱120 per hour. Payment in kind equivalent to five to seven sacks of *palay* (unhusked rice) for every ₱1,000 loan was also reduced to only three sacks of *palay*.

The farmers and agricultural workers succeeded in asserting their demands by negotiating with the landlords and merchant-usurers. During the negotiations, the farmers clearly presented their case studies showing how the landlords and merchant-usurers raked in excessive profits and how the farmers were at a terrible disadvantage. The landlords and merchants were left with no choice but to concede to the just demands of the peasant masses and their effective manner of negotiating.

These victories are but the latest additions to the previous victories gained from the sustained conduct of agrarian revolution in Caraga. At present, antifeudal campaigns are ongoing in almost 20% of the total number of barrios covered by the revolutionary movement in the region. Areas covered by agrarian revolution are continuously being expanded to serve as a strong foundation for waging armed struggle and for expanding and consolidating the revolutionary mass base.

Victories in Panay

Panay Regional Party Committee spokesperson Concha Araneta reported that in the past year, the NPA was able to carry out 13 tactical offensives in the region. These military offensives inflicted 21 casualties on the enemy side, consisting of eight killed and 13 wounded. She stressed that these successful offensives were but part of the Party’s victories in the entire island. Aside from advancing armed struggle, protest actions against the corrupt regime have also been continuous both in the countryside and in the island’s urban centers.

She added that in spite of the heightened military offensives under OBL, the revolutionary forces had gained strength. In the coming months, the regional committee will be completing the establishment of two to three company-size guerrilla fronts. The revolutionary forces are thus confident that they can defeat all the counterrevolutionary campaigns of the enemy.

End monopoly capitalism to arrest climate change

The following are excerpts from a statement by International League of People's Struggle chair Prof. Jose Maria Sison outlining his critique of the Climate Change Summit which took place from December 7-18 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The assembly was attended by representatives of almost all countries in the world in order to address the problem of global warming. But the conference produced only empty promises due to the domination and sabotage of imperialist nations led by the US.

The unprecedented rise in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions which is causing the rise of the earth's temperature coincided with the onset of the capitalist system at the industrial revolution and its attendant intensive use of machines, fossil fuels for transportation and energy. The anarchic, wasteful and pollutive capitalist production for profit has put our world into the brink of destruction. Under a system where profit is the primary objective of social production, the environment and our ecosystems are reduced to being a source of raw materials and dumping grounds for wasters.

Plunder and pollution of the environment have made victims of poor communities many times over. These are the same communities that are also the most vulnerable to environmental backlashes, which come in the form of floods, droughts and other occurrences triggered or heightened by the prevailing imbalances in the ecosystem. Women and children shoulder the greater cost of these circumstances because of wider risks to their health, and added complications to their productive and reproductive functions.



Systematic and unabated deforestation through rampant industrial logging has multiplied at ever increasing rates. The destruction of the world's forests has also led to the conversion of agricultural plantations for export-oriented crops, farms for cattle raising or monoculture tree plantations. The relentless extraction of mineral ores and wanton destruction by mining multinational corporations in the Asia Pacific, Latin America and African countries that are naturally endowed with rich mineral deposits persists while they leave massive environmental destruction and pollution, widespread landlessness and displacement, loss of livelihood, distortion of local culture, and rampant human rights violations to the peoples of these regions in their wake.

The recent wars of aggression of the US and its allies have not only increased the production, sale and use weapons of mass destruction but have also caused the massive destruction and contamination of human property, health and environment in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq and other war-ravaged countries. Forest clearings and land conversions necessitated by continued military exercises in different parts of the world led by

Armed men murder Lumad leader

Armed men ambushed on December 24 Alberto "Berting" Pinagawa, 54, while he was on his way home. The crime occurred in Barangay Eureka, Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental. Pinagawa suffered 20 gunshot wounds from an M16 rifle, resulting in his death.

Before he was assassinated, Pinagawa was active in opposing logging operations by Southwood Timber Corporation, which covers 11,476-hectare concession area including the Higaonon ancestral lands. The 25-year logging concession also covers critical watershed areas in this locality.

Despite several death threats, Pinagawa continued with his fight against the logging company to end the denudation of the forests, especially the Higaonon ancestral lands.

After his brutal murder, the Sangguniang Panglunsod of Gingoog City endorsed a resolution to be submitted to DENR calling on the withdrawal of the Integrated Forest Management Agreement (IFMA) granted by the DENR to Southwood Timber.

Pinagawa is the 140th Lumad defending their ancestral domain who has been murdered in Northern Mindanao since 2001.

the US pollute the environment and destroy natural habitats. Toxic wastes from current and previous US military bases continue to wreak ecological havoc in the surrounding areas. US military joint exercises bring with them not only direct US military aggression but the dangerous weapons and waste from these activities.

The United States is currently the number one producer of GHGs, emitting more than 28% of all the historical GHGs emitted since 1840 worldwide. About 84% of US GHG emissions arise from the petroleum related energy and electrical power sectors. The US is also the biggest processor and unregulated user of oil and petroleum products all over the world.

Yet the US government has refused to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, an international treaty signed by 169 countries which aims to reduce global levels of carbon dioxide and five other GHG emissions by 5.2% from their 1990 levels. It is also the US that remains adamant in refusing to commit to long-term and rapid reductions of emissions in the ongoing negotiations for new commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen.

Indeed, climate change already aggravates other environmental problems that poor communities have to face as a result of imperialist globalization's ever increasing destruction of our ecology. It is no longer a question that human activity has produced dangerous climate interference but on how to avoid catastrophic effects that could affect more than half of the world's population that are most vulnerable to climate change. Industrial-

ized countries should commit to real targets and not shift the burden to underdeveloped countries. The capacity of local communities to respond to disasters should be strengthened. Community-based disaster response, monitoring and mitigation should be undertaken and livelihood should be provided for those who are vulnerable to climate change impacts.

Great advances have been made in technology, but these are not being applied towards solving fundamental problems of humankind, such as the breakdown of health systems, famine and hunger, ecological destruction, and social decay and disintegration. Instead, unbridled monopoly capitalist globalization has opened up Third World resources for the use of transnational corporations extracting raw materials while leaving their pollution and emissions to the host communities.

We need to fundamentally reorient production and consumption based on human needs rather than for the boundless accumulation of profit for a few. Society must take collective control of productive resources to meet the needs of sustainable social development and avoid overproduction, overconsumption and overexploitation of people and the environment which are inevitable under the prevailing monopoly capitalist system.

To arrest climate change, we need to put an end to this systematic plunder of the environment for the superprofits of corporations in industrialized countries. We need to organize and defend our future against this parasitic and moribund system. We need to end monopoly capital's dominance over our lives and build a socialist future. **AB**

MSP launches lightning rally

The Makabayang Samahang Pangkalusugan (MSP) launched a lightning rally on November 26 in Manila in conjunction with the celebration of the 31st founding anniversary of their organization.

In a statement, MSP members called on all doctors, nurses and health workers to join the New People's Army (NPA) and take part in the people's war in the countryside.

In urban areas, the MSP actively responds to the call of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) to assist the people and work with them in recovering from disaster. It has been active in relief operations and medical missions and providing stress debriefings in poor communities struck by calamity. MSP acted to hold the Arroyo regime accountable for its criminal neglect of calamity victims and its responsibility for the widespread disasters the people are suffering from.

In the countryside, MSP is earnestly assisting guerrilla fronts launch medical trainings among NPA medics and health committees of the revolutionary mass organizations in the barrios in order to respond to the people's health needs instead of relying on the rotten health programs of the Arroyo regime.

Meanwhile, members of the Arista at Manunulat ng Sambayanan (ARMAS) painted revolutionary slogans in several parts of Quezon City to commemorate the 41st anniversary of the Party.

The MSP and ARMAS are among the allied organizations of the NDFP. **AB**



A challenge to the dollar's domination in Latin America

It was on the 14th of December when representatives of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (more widely known as the Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América, or ALBA) announced the creation of a common currency among its member countries. The ALBA members' new common currency is called *sucre* (Sistema Único de Compensación Regional or the Unified System for Regional Compensation). Starting January 2010, the *sucre* will replace the dollar as the principal currency for trading goods and services among ALBA's member countries.

ALBA will also establish a central bank based in Venezuela and branches in member countries. Trade and financial transactions among ALBA members will be coursed through these banks.

The *sucre* will not be immediately used as the internal currency in the local economies. It will first be used in external trade, and transactions will initially be coursed through the ALBA banks. ALBA's member countries used to undertake barter trade of goods and services without using the dollar as currency. Now they will be able to use the *sucre* as an instrument to facilitate and further develop trade among themselves. For instance, if Venezuela purchases garments from Bolivia, Venezuela can pay for it with oil or any other product or service needed by Bolivia. Any difference in the value of the exchange will be paid for using the *sucre* and the amount coursed through the ALBA central and local banks electronically. The amount will then be automatically converted to the local currency and paid to the factory or government concerned.

There are plans to use the *sucre* in the next few years in internal transactions of ALBA

members, the same way member countries of the European Union use the euro and the former Soviet bloc countries use the ruble.

The *sucre*'s launching proves that ALBA and its member countries are genuinely determined to fight imperialism. Leaders of the ALBA countries see the importance of the *sucre* not just for their own governments and to protect trade within the alliance, but as a shield against the continued deterioration of the dollar. It is also a protection against the US' manipulations of its dollar in the face of the severe economic crisis obtaining in the US and the dollar-dominated world.

The ALBA member countries also believe that the *sucre* will pave the way for the development of their own economies even in an indirect way. For example, they can agree to impose the same tariffs on

products imported from other countries based on the *sucre*, in order to encourage and protect the emerging industries of their respective countries. And because ALBA covers a rather vast territory, having its own common currency may lead to diversification, complementation and overall industrial development within the region instead of them going at it alone in a few industrial productions and importing more products from the imperialists and other countries (for example, vehicles that are exclusively imported from the US, but whose production could also be a cooperative project of ALBA).

The dollar will still be used by the ALBA member countries in trading with non-member countries. In particular, Venezuela bases the price of its oil exports to the US on the value of the dollar in the international market.

Even so, the launching of the *sucre* can serve as an additional push for the adoption of a new and more stable currency for international trade in place of the dying dollar. Besides ALBA's member countries, China, Iran and many other countries have long been urging the creation of such a currency.

At present, the use of the *sucre* and the participation of their countries in the regional trade alliance still depends on the inclinations of the ALBA member countries' current leaders.

This weakness has been brought to the fore with the expected withdrawal of Honduras from ALBA should there be no reinstatement of its left-wing president who was overthrown in mid-2009 through a coup funded and instigated by the US. **AB**





History of ALBA

PRES. Hugo Chavez of Venezuela led the establishment of ALBA in 2004 as an alternative to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) which was being pushed by the US to serve as the region's trade center under US dominance. The ALBA member countries are Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Bolivia, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica and Honduras. Also sitting as "observer states" are Haiti, Iran and Uruguay.

ALBA began as an agreement between Venezuela and Cuba. Not long after, nine other countries also joined it. The agreement is based on the integration, cooperation and unity of its member countries, has an anti-imperialist character and aims to ensure the protection and mutual benefit of its members.

For example, it developed trade between Venezuela and Cuba without exchange of currency and without depending on the dollar. Venezuela exports oil to

Cuba and Cuba pays for it by supporting societal and industrial programs in Venezuela by sending doctors, teachers and experts in industrial technology. Venezuela also exports oil to Nicaragua, which Nicaragua pays for through agricultural products and technology.

The use of a common currency for trade that is not tied to the dollar and which the imperialists can not manipulate is an improvement over this barter system.

CIA operations in Afghanistan disrupted

THE operations of a major forward operating base of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in Afghanistan have been suspended after the death of several of its operatives. Seven CIA officers were killed after a suicide bomber set off an explosive inside the base on December 30. Six other staff were also seriously wounded.

CIA chief Leon Panetta has confirmed that the seven are officers of the US intelligence agency. Among the casualties is the chief of the Forward Operating Base Chapman in the southeast Afghan province of Khost.

Forward Operating Base Chapman is just a little more than 30 kilometers away from the Afghan-Pakistani border. The incident has prompted media reports exposing the secret base's role as the hub of intelligence gathering in the Afghan region. The forward operating base also identifies targets for drone attacks and plans missions to liquidate suspected Pakistani and Afghan guerrillas. As many as 600 people have been killed by drones since August 2008 in northwestern Pakistan alone.

The base has ceased operations and its up to 150 workers who are mostly Afghani have been detained.

The suicide bomber was able to penetrate the military base's defenses because he was being recruited by the CIA as an informer. He detonated the bomb at the base gym.

PISTON opposes RFID project

MEMBERS of the Pinagkaisang Samahan ng mga Tsuper at Operator Nationwide (PISTON) launched a protest action on January 4 in front of the Land Transportation Office (LTO) in Quezon City to oppose the installation of Radio Frequency Information Devices (RFID) in vehicles. Through the RFID, vehicle registration data as well as the make and color can be read electronically.

PISTON secretary general George San Mateo said that the project is illegal because a public bidding was never carried out. He added that it was not effective anyway and is just a way for corrupt officials to make money. Each RFID costs ₱350.00.

Adding the ₱169.06 computer processing fee, each motorist is required to cough up a total of ₱519.06 for the RFID. San Mateo said that this is just an added expense to motorists and may even result in violations to the right to privacy.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teddy Casiño also said that the RFID is actually meant to raise funds for the upcoming elections.

He said researches reveal that the real cost of each RFID is only ₱10.00, but charges have ballooned to ₱350.00. More than ₱2.45 billion will be raised through the RFID.

Casiño advised motorists to put off purchasing the RFID until the Supreme Court decides on a petition filed by PISTON and other progressive organizations for a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO).

A widespread transport strike will also be launched by PISTON should the project be pursued.

The country's burgeoning debt

Every Filipino now owes ₱47,039, much higher than the ₱45,889 last year. Economists base this estimate on the ₱4.3 trillion public debt in September divided by a population of 92 million.

Government borrowing continues to grow in the face of its ballooning budget deficit. This adds to the debt burden not just of the present but of future generations.

The government's budget deficit already amounted to ₱272.5 billion in November 2009. It was estimated at ₱300 billion at the start of the new year, according to Finance Secretary Margarito Teves. This is beyond the Department of Finance's estimate of ₱250 billion.

Public debt is expected to grow to ₱4.7 trillion this year, pushing the per capita debt to ₱50,000.

Obama burned in effigy by Afghan protesters

AFGHAN students burned US Pres. Barack Obama in effigy on December 30 to protest the death of ten civilians in the latest military operation launched by US Special Forces.

The operation took place in Kunar province on December 26. Nine of the ten civilians killed were students who were sleeping when they were shot by the American soldiers.

Hundreds of students from Na-

ngahar University marched in the streets shouting "Death to Obama" and the foreign occupation forces. They put up barricades along the main roads going to Jalalabad, the capital of Nangahar province.

The students also called for the ouster of US and NATO forces and demanded political autonomy for the Afghan people.

They warned that they would bear arms instead of wielding pen and paper should the war of ag-

gression continue.

They also burned a US flag before dispersing. The youth are scheduled to launch similar protests in Kabul, the country's capital.

The deaths of numerous civilians in eight years of the US's war of aggression in the country has been fuelling the Afghan people's anger towards the puppet president Hamid Karzai and the foreign occupation troops.



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Bayan

Pahayagan ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas
Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

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Editorial

Itaas ang antas ng digmang bayan sa bagong dekada

Nasa solidong katayuan ngayon ang Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas, Bagong Hukbong Bayan (BHB) at rebolusyonaryong mamamayan para maisulong ang digmang bayan sa bagong dekada sa antas na di pa nito naaabot sa nakaraan.

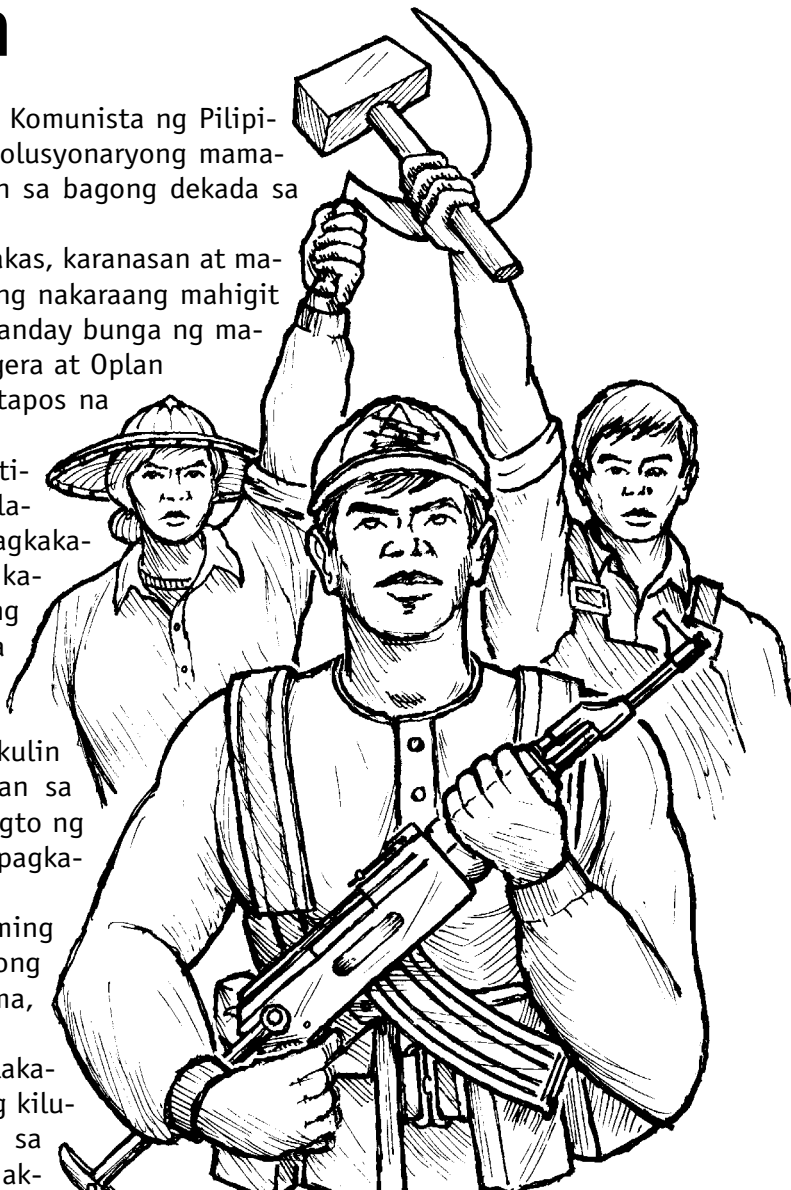
Pinakamatibay na batayan nito ang naipong lakas, karanasan at mangingning na tagumpay ng digmang bayan nitong nakaraang mahigit apat na dekada, at ang higit pa nitong pagkakapanday bunga ng matagumpay na pagharap at pagbigay sa sa todong gera at Oplan Bantay Laya ng rehimeng US-Arroyo nitong katatapos na dekada.

Nagdudulot ng higit pang paborableng obhetibong kondisyon para sa ibayong pagsulong at malalaking pag-igpaw ng rebolusyong Pilipino ang pagkaka-sadlak sa depresyon ng pandaigdigang sistemang kapitalista at lalong pagkakabaon sa permanenteng krisis ng malakolonyal at malapyudal na sistema sa Pilipinas.

Determinado ang Partido at lahat ng rebolusyonaryong pwersa na gampanan ang mga tungkulin upang umigpaw nang malaki ang digmang bayan sa unang limang taon ng bagong dekada mula sa yugto ng estratehikong depensiba tungo sa estratehikong pagkapatas.

Sa pagharap sa malaking hamong ito, maraming paghahanda at pagsisikap ang dapat pursigidong isagawa ng lahat ng mga kadre, kasapi, mandirigma, aktibista at rebolusyonaryong mamamayan.

Una sa lahat, dapat higit na palakihin at palakasin ang Partidong namumuno sa rebolusyonaryong kilusan. Dapat pag-ibayuhin ang pagrerekrut laluna sa hahay ng mga manggagawa, iba pang masang anak-



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