

# LIBERATION INTERNATIONAL

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44<sup>TH</sup> NPA ANNIVERSARY

## NPA to intensify armed offensives, increase mass base

By Roselle Valerio

**T**he Communist Party of the Philippines on 29 March called on the New People's Army to intensify its armed offensives against the US puppet government of Benigno Aquino III and to realize the plan to advance to a strategic stalemate against the reactionary state. In a message released on the occasion of the NPA's 44th founding anniversary, the CPP also called on the NPA to gain the support of Filipinos and other friendly forces abroad.

The NPA was founded on 29 March 1969 under the absolute leadership of the CPP which is guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. It is the principal instrument of the Filipino people in smashing the armed power of the ruling classes of big compradors and landlords, supported by US imperialism. Its main tasks in the people's war are to carry out agrarian revolution, build the mass base, and wage armed struggle.

On its 44<sup>th</sup> year, the Central Committee of the CPP praised the NPA for fiercely fighting the US-Aquino regime, and for defeating the US-designed counter-insurgency plan *Oplan Bayanihan*. "The NPA continues to accumulate strength in terms of fighting experience and skills, armed strength and mass base," the CPP declared.

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# NPA to intensify armed offensives, increase mass base

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“It has people’s militia units with personnel in the tens of thousands and self-defense units with personnel in the hundreds of thousands. It enjoys the inexhaustible support of the people in their millions. At various levels of command, it has strike forces capable of wiping out enemy units and waging battles, while other NPA units carry out mass work, production and other kinds of work for the benefit of the people.”

The CPP added, “The NPA enjoys the wide and deep going participation and support of the people in the process of armed revolution. It is therefore confident of winning greater victories and advancing in the people’s war until the total victory of the new democratic revolution.”

The CPP also cited the exemplary experiences of comrades in central and southern Philippine regions. “The NPA forces in various regions in Mindanao, in Negros and in Samar-Leyte have come under concentrated enemy attacks. But they have become stronger as a result of fighting the enemy. They have excelled at seizing initiatives and inflicting casualties and material damage on, and seizing arms from, enemy forces.

“Regions such as Southern Tagalog, Bicol, Ilocos-Cordillera, and other regions can learn from the regions where the NPA has not been weakened but strengthened by repelling enemy attacks and seizing every opportunity for launching offensives.”

Jorge Madlos – Comrade Oris – spokesperson of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in Mindanao island, joined the CPP in praising the achievements of the people’s army in southern Philippines. In his message, Comrade Oris declared that the NPA in Mindanao is “marching in step with the entire nation in the advance towards the strategic stalemate phase of the people’s protracted war in the next few years.”

He reports, “The NPA operates in more than 200 municipalities in Mindanao. Hundreds of villages have been added to the more than 2,000 areas of responsibility of the revolutionary movement in the past year. At the same time, mass bases have rapidly widened and mass organizations now number in the hundreds of thousands in membership.

“We have established the people’s revolutionary government in several villages, and some, at municipality level. We have carried out revolutionary land reform in more areas, benefiting hundreds of thousands of people in numerous villages in Mindanao.”

Comrade Oris added, “More than 400 tactical offensives have been launched in the year 2012 alone. In the first three months of 2013, more than 100 annihilative, attritive and punitive armed offensives have been initiated by the NPA across the five regions of Mindanao. Through these, the NPA has confiscated hundreds of high-powered rifles, and has decimated more than a battalion of the combined forces of the Philippine Army, Philippine National Police and the paramilitary Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU).

“Making a striking mark in the first quarter of 2013 was the



• successful NPA raid to punish the environmentally-destructive imperialist agribusiness giant Del Monte-Philippines in Bukidnon.”

• The NDFP also announced significant victories in Rizal province in the past year, despite intensified and more brutal military operations by the reactionary armed forces.

• Arman Guerrero, Spokesperson of the NDFP in Rizal, reported that the NPA launched 16 armed offensives in the last 15 months, resulting in the annihilation of one platoon of the enemy’s armed strength. Red fighters in the province were also successful in punishing comprador-owned corporations like the Pacific Concrete Products, Inc., responsible for destroying the environment and exploiting their workers.

• “Almost a company of Red fighters has been added to the NPA’s strength in the last two years,” Guerrero declared. “The number of People’s Militia also increased by 38% compared to last year.”

• Rizal province is very close to the capital region of Metro Manila, only 25 kilometers from the presidential palace.

• Meanwhile, the Central Committee of the CPP called on the NPA to further gain the solidarity and support of fellow Filipinos abroad, as well as friendly forces and peoples. As a consequence of the chronic crisis in Philippine society, 10% of the population or approximately 10 million, now work and reside outside of the country. The CPP stressed the need for the Red fighters to “develop ever closer relations with the families and communities left behind by our overseas compatriots.”

• The CPP explained that the NPA can also avail of the international work of the Party, the NDFP and various Filipino mass organizations abroad in order to “inform the people of the world, the working class parties and the movements for national liberation, democracy and socialism about the role of the NPA” in the people’s democratic revolution in the Philippines.

• Through these channels, the CPP added, the NPA can “seek international solidarity, and moral and material support for the NPA and the Filipino people.” ■





MILITARY OFFENSIVES

# Destroyers of environment, exploiters of workers punished by NPA

By Roselle Valerio

**T**he New People’s Army punctuated the commemoration of its 44th founding anniversary with a series of armed offensive actions in the last three months against companies found guilty of destroying the natural environment, exploiting their workers, and physically threatening the surrounding communities. NPA units in Southern Tagalog and North Central Mindanao regions reported victories in February in punishing a mining company and two multinational agribusiness plantations. In December 2012, the NPA punished another mining company in the Bicol region, south of Metro Manila.

In the early evening of 19 February 2013, Red fighters under the Mt. Kitanglad Command of the NPA North Central Mindanao Region launched simultaneous attacks on the Del Monte and Dole-Stanfilco companies in Bukidnon province. Several companies of the NPA Red fighters swooped down on the Del Monte motorpool garage at Manolo Fortich, Bukidnon; the Del Monte fertilizer warehouse and logistics office at Vista Villa, Sumilao, Bukidnon; and the Dole Philippines office in Impasug-ong, Bukidnon. They proceeded to disable the equipment and destroy other capital goods used in the pineapple plantations.

Other guerilla units set up several checkpoints along the highway stretching from Malaybalay, Bukidnon to Cagayan de Oro to prevent the entry of military reinforcements. The NPA command reported that 19 assorted firearms as well as computers were confiscated in simultaneous raids. An armed security guard was killed while two others were wounded, all belonging to Kadre Security Agency.

The Del Monte and Dole companies are among the biggest multinational corporations operating in the Philippines. Del Monte has 23,000 hectares of pineapple plantations in the country. Its Camp Philips plantation in Bukidnon spans 9,000 hectares. It also operates a 5,000-hectare banana plantation in Agusan del Norte. Dole Philippines, on the other hand, operates more than 35,000 hectares of pineapple and banana plantations in various parts of Mindanao.

The Communist Party of the Philippines saluted the NPA for

the simultaneous raids saying, “These punitive attacks have long been demanded by the indigenous people and peasant masses in Bukidnon and other parts of Mindanao whose ancestral lands have been seized, plundered, despoiled and poisoned by big foreign multinational corporations.”

The CPP added, “Workers and farm-workers employed by these big multinational corporations are among the most exploited and oppressed.”

Two weeks earlier, in the afternoon of 3 February, a platoon of the Narciso Antazo Aramil Command of the NPA Rizal province raided the offices of the Pacific Concrete Products Incorporated in Rodriguez town, Rizal, about 30 km from the capital city Manila. Heavy equipments valued at millions of pesos were razed to the ground by the Red fighters. Also confiscated were one shotgun, two .38 caliber handguns and two computers.

The PCPI is owned by the Lopez family, a big comprador with close ties to the ruling US-Aquino regime. The NPA declared that the raid serves as a punishment for the environmental destruction caused by PCPI quarrying in the mountains of Rizal.

Macario Liwanag, Spokesperson of the NPA Narciso Antazo Aramil Command said, “The residents of Rodriguez have long complained about this company’s destruction of the mountains. This destruction is considered one of the main causes of flooding in the plains of Rodriguez, San Mateo, Marikina and other outlying towns, which in turn caused massive destruction to crops, property and cost countless lives in the province.”

Another noteworthy action of the NPA was the punishment on 11 December 2012 of the VIL Mines Corporation and Macro Asia company in Tagkawayan, Quezon, some 280 km south of Metro Manila. Red fighters of the Armando Catapia Command of the NPA Camarines Norte province raided the premises of the mining company, destroying three heavy machineries and other company equipments, and confiscating a number of firearms and communications equipments.

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An official of the NPA also handed over the order of the People's Democratic Government for the eviction of the mining companies from the area, and banning any future large-scale mining activity in the environs of Mt. Cadig.

VIL Mines Corporation and Macro Asia were conducting nickel exploration activities in Mt. Cadig, covering eight villages and three towns in the provinces of Camarines Norte and Quezon – a total of 11,126 hectares. The companies are owned by big compradors Lucio Tan and Eduardo Cojuangco, both former cronies of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. Cojuangco is an uncle of US puppet president Benigno Aquino III.

A statement released by the NPA Armando Catapia Command after the raid declared that, "All foreign mining corporations and their armed collaborators in the mercenary Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, and Citizens Armed Forces Geographical Unit, will be the constant targets of punishment and tactical offensives of the New People's Army."

Meanwhile, the CPP urged the NPA to continue stepping up its offensives against foreign multinational corporations and their armed minions. "The revolutionary forces must punish the worst of the plunderers and destroyers of the environment which are responsible for grave calamities which have killed thousands upon thousands and dealt massive harm on the people's livelihood over the past several years." ■

## Developing the people's militia

By Bagani Dong-ilay

The revolutionary movement in the Philippines is waging a people's war to overthrow US imperialist domination and the reactionary rule of the local classes of compradors and landlords, and thereby achieve national freedom and democracy.

The people's war in the Philippines can also be called a peasant war because the peasants are the main force and their demand for land reform is the main democratic content of the struggle for national freedom and democracy.

The Filipino proletariat leads the revolutionary struggle for national freedom and democracy through the Communist Party of the Philippines. But the proletariat relies mainly on the peasantry who compose 75% of Philippine society. Together, the proletariat and the peasantry form the basic alliance of the Philippine revolution. The revolution wins over the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie so as to isolate the compradors and landlords who comprise less than 1% of the population.

The New People's Army (NPA) which is the main weapon of the people in waging people's war is mainly a peasant army. Peasants form the main bulk of the people's army.

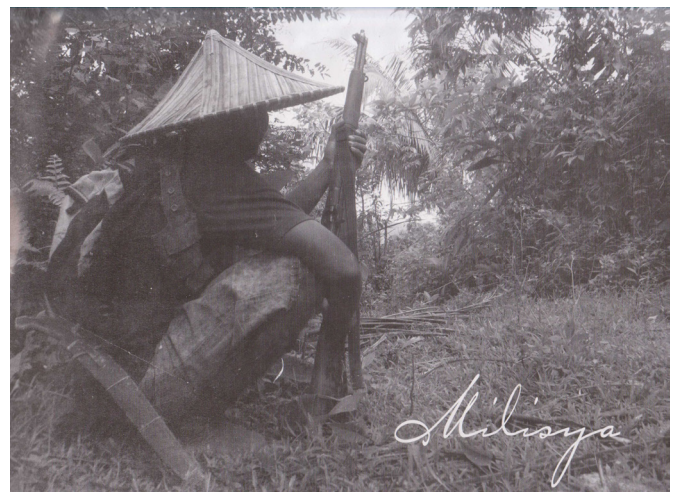
The regular members of the NPA are full-time fighters. The members of the people's militia on the other hand are part-time fighters and are mainly based in their own villages.

The role of the people's militia is growing in importance in the context of the Party's call to exert all-out efforts to achieve the stage of strategic stalemate of the people's war in the coming years. It constitutes the broadening of the peasants' direct participation in the people's war.

The main tasks of the people's militia are to insure peace, order and security in the villages under revolutionary governance; support the plans and operations of the NPA; and give political-military training to the Self-defense groups of the mass organizations.

In advancing the people's war towards strategic stalemate, company-sized formations of the people's militia are now being formed in the advanced guerrilla fronts. It means that platoons are being formed in every village.

These formations of the people's militia are undergoing advanced training to raise their fighting capabilities to be able



to launch attritive operations like harassing and sniping actions in support of the tactical offensives of the NPA. They also carry out defensive military actions against enemy forces that are conducting military operations against the villages under the control of the revolutionary movement.

In defending the villages against enemy attack, the people's militia conduct sniping operations and use traps with pointed stakes to cause disruptions in the enemy's movements and strike fear among the enemy troops. They are also gaining more experience in the use of command-detonated-explosives against operating enemy forces.

The people's militia are effective in waging attritive actions against enemy troops because they have mastery of the terrain, being natives of the place.

They can attack the enemy from many directions using traditional weapons and improvised explosives. The military actions of the militia are important in defending the villages and the revolutionary mass base, in tiring and weakening the enemy, in eroding their morale and causing them to make mistakes, and in exposing their vulnerabilities for the annihilative military operations of the regular NPA units.

The general advance of the people's war into the next stage depends on the breadth and consolidation of the guerrilla fronts, on the strength of the NPA, and the building and strengthening of the people's militia. ■





## TYPHOON PABLO DISASTER

## Revolutionary forces launch relief & rehabilitation campaign

By Isah Antonio

On 4 December 2012, supertyphoon Pablo (international name Bopha) struck southern Philippines. Heavy rains and hurricane winds ravaged the island of Mindanao continuously for six straight hours. When the rain and wind subsided, the great destruction caused by Pablo was evident. Reports gathered by *Liberation International* showed more than a thousand people dead, more than 800 missing, 5 million individuals affected, houses and schools destroyed, mountains and forest denuded, and agricultural fields buried under mudslides.

Hardest hit were the provinces of Compostela Valley, Davao Oriental, Surigao del Sur and Bukidnon in Mindanao. The great majority of the victims were poor peasants, farm and agricultural workers, mining workers and fisherfolk. Countless families were left without shelter, suffered hunger and diseases, they lost their farm implements, and lost their sources of income.

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) through the NDFP-Mindanao immediately declared a 29-day unilateral ceasefire in areas affected by the calamity to allow the safe, unhampered and speedy rescue and retrieval of all victims, and also to facilitate the fast and unimpeded delivery of relief services to the affected communities.

Members of the New People's Army were with the masses when typhoon Pablo lashed at the island of Mindanao. They immediately surveyed the areas affected, comforted and attended to the people, helped in the rescue efforts and shared their food supply with the masses.

On 8 December, the revolutionary forces in Mindanao established Task Force Pablo to institute a mass movement of rescue and relief operations where the people's army and the masses can work together.

NPA medics erected makeshift clinics to attend to the health needs of the Pablo victims. The NPA's stock of medicines for fever, cough, diarrhea, pneumonia and allergy were distributed to those most in need. Red fighters conducted psychological therapy to children and elderly who suffered shock and trauma by the disastrous events.

The NDFP also called on its forces to prepare and mobilize the people from disaster-prone areas in their localities. Actions that need to be taken to prevent disaster, such as infrastructure to construct or repair, rehabilitation of the environment and the bans on operations that are destructive to the environment and the masses' livelihood were defined.

It drew up mechanisms to be implemented during actual calamity for the organized rescue of victims, for providing shelter for children and elderly, giving first aid to the sick and wounded and the immediate setting up of soup kitchens for collective food preparation. For long term measures, it called for the reforestation of the mountains to abate the denudation of the forest, and the implementation of programs of genuine land reform to provide livelihood for the people. It is noteworthy that the masses themselves are implementing communal farming for they have seen the advantages that result from collective farming.

On the other hand, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) of the reactionary government, instead of immediately giving aid to the hungry people,

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withheld food and goods for the victims of typhoon Pablo. On 15 January, more than 5,000 people barricaded the highway in Montevista, Compostela Valley, and demanded that relief donated by foreign agencies such as rice, clothing and other relief goods stacked in the DSWD warehouses since December be released to them. The masses accused the DSWD, headed by Corazon “Dinky” Soliman, of discrimination and refusing to give relief goods to people living in areas it suspects as areas of the revolutionary movement.

The people also accused the DSWD of using the distribution of relief goods to get votes for the electoral candidates of the ruling party of the Aquino regime.

The DSWD and the police threatened the protesters and charged the leaders of the barricades with public disorder. One of the leaders of the barricades, Cristina Morales Jose, was killed by motorcycle riding assassins, the modus operandi of military and paramilitary carrying out extrajudicial killings in the country.

Jose was a village councilor and member of Bayan Muna (People First Party) and Barug Katawhan (Alliance of Typhoon Pablo Survivors). But the people were unafraid and continued their action, thus forcing the DSWD to release the relief goods meant for the victims of the disaster.

The relief and rehabilitation of the typhoon victims have also been a source of corruption by the officials of DSWD and the Philippine National Police (PNP). Goods meant for victims of the disaster are sold at shopping malls and markets. Construction materials of bunkhouses for temporary shelter of the victims are overpriced and so are the rubber boats procured by the PNP for use in evacuation operations from flooded areas.

Last 26 March, more than 2,000 victims of typhoon Pablo staged another barricade and an overnight vigil that completely blocked the entry of trucks and paralyzed the operations of Apex Mining Company in Compostela Valley. The action of the people forced the company and the local government to stop the demolition of the houses of 42 families, the suspension of mining operation in the ancestral domain of the Mansaka tribe, the rehabilitation of the Masara river which suffers from siltation, the planting of bamboo trees along the river banks, and reparation of 3 million pesos for damaged houses.

• A local peasant leader, seeing the gains of their struggle stated: “There are benefits in the struggle. Because of this I will encourage my children and whole members of families to join militant organizations and participate in the people’s struggle.”

• The Aquino regime has even used the disaster to intensify militarization of the affected areas. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is using the evacuation of the typhoon victims as a scheme to evict the peasants and indigenous people Lumads from their lands which is a main objective of the regime’s militarization campaign.

• The propaganda machinery of the US-Aquino regime had the audacity to blame the masses for their wretched situation. But the oppressed and exploited people of Mindanao know that the cause of their situation is the greed and profligacy of the imperialists, comprador bourgeoisie and landlords. Their abject poverty and having no access to sources of livelihood have forced them to live in unsafe areas in the mountainsides, seashores, riverbanks and other areas vulnerable to disaster.

• The people are also holding the Aquino regime responsible for gross negligence and favoring the interests of the landlord-compradors and multinational big agricultural and mining corporations above the interest of the Filipino people.

• Mindanao had a large forest covering which protected the area from typhoons thus it was known as a typhoon-free area. But the forests have been depleted because of big-business logging and mining operations.

• The Aquino regime has further opened the mountains and forests in Mindanao to plunder activities of big logging and mining concessions. Its aggressive drive to promote large-scale foreign mining and commercial logging, despite the widespread demand to stop these operations, have caused the denudation of the forests, the destruction of mountains and plains and poisoned the rivers and lakes. These logging and mining operations are the real cause of the disasters that continues to devastate the country.

• According to Ka Leon, who is part of Task Force Pablo and interviewed by a correspondent of *Liberation International*, “It is not a coincidence that the areas hardest hit by the disaster were towns overspread with vast plantations and big logging concessions. The Manila government continues to resist



the demand of the people to put a stop to foreign mining and commercial logging.

“It continues to promote these through its Comprehensive Forestry Agreement which opened the forests and mountains to wide-scale plunder by foreign corporations like Dole and Sumifru and big comprador landlords like the Soriano, Valderama, Alcantara and Sarmiento families. The plunder of forests and uplands has resulted in the grave destruction of the environment and is the real cause of the disasters that devastate the country year after year.”

Ka Leon also called on the international community to support the relief and rehabilitation program of the revolutionary movement. He stated: “We have limited resources so we are calling on the migrant Filipinos and the international community to support the revolutionary movement’s program for the people. The people affected by the disaster need food, clothing, medical supplies, farm implements, construction materials to rebuild their houses and schools. The present shelters are makeshift and their materials will surely deteriorate in a few months. So there is a need to immediately rebuild the homes of the masses.

“The farmers need seedlings because the seedlings for sowing the fields were buried in water and mud. We need

resources to replenish the forest. Reforestration is important to avoid future flooding and mudslides.

“We also need the support of the international community to expose the plunder of our forests and mountains by big multinational corporations. Plunder is not only an issue of the environment. It is an issue of hunger and poverty for chemicals from mining areas flow into the fields, rivers and lakes poisoning the source of food and income of the masses.

“It is also an issue of people being evicted from their lands. It is an issue of human rights because people are being killed, disappeared or imprisoned because they resist the landgrabbing by these logging and mining corporations. Soldiers of the AFP serve as the protector and private army of logging and mining companies.”

Ka Leon added: “The Filipino people are waging a national democratic revolution to change the unjust system prevailing in the country today. They are slowly building an alternative society that truly upholds the interest of the people, especially the basic masses of peasants and workers. It is a long and arduous struggle but the Filipino people persevere and with the help of our international friends we know that victories will continue to be achieved.” ■



(left) Village youth perform a tribal dance expressing militant struggle. (below) Children from the village welcome the unit of the New People’s Army. NDFP photo.





AQUINO SURRENDERS PHILIPPINE SOVEREIGNTY

## Noynoying\*, while Sabah burns

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III

The Aquino regime sits idly, while Sabah burns, quite literally. This has been the state of things since the crisis in Sabah began and continues as of this writing. The current casualty toll is more than 80 dead and counting, more than a hundred arrested, and hundreds of thousands of evacuees fleeing the conflict and a snowballing humanitarian crisis.

The Sabah bloodbath began in late February this year when around 300 armed members of the Royal Army of the Sultanate of Sulu entered several locations in Sabah to assert their claim of ownership to the oil-rich region. The Malaysian government immediately dispatched battalions of its security forces, in a manner described by international media as over-kill, to suppress the Royal Army of the Sulu Sultanate, and to reaffirm its claim of ownership over Sabah.

Instead of protesting the unnecessary deaths caused by the excessive use of armed force, the US-puppet president Noynoy Aquino of the Philippines even blamed the Sulu Sultanate’s assertion of ownership over Sabah, and “ordered” it to surrender to Malaysia, virtually recognizing Malaysia’s bogus claim over Sabah.

Even before the arrival to the Philippine islands of Spanish colonizers in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, the Sulu Sultanate already owned and ruled over what is now known as Sabah, or North Borneo. According to historical accounts, the land was a reward from the Sultan of Brunei to the Sultan of Sulu for his help in quelling the former’s enemies.

In 1878, the Sulu Sultanate leased Sabah to the British North Borneo Company, a private trading company, for an annual rental fee of 5,000 Malaysian ringgit. This sum was increased to 5,300 when the Sultanate leased additional lands to the trading firm in 1903. Up to this day, the Malaysian government, through their embassy in Manila, issues a check of 5,300 Malaysian ringgit monthly (US\$1710 or approx 77,000 Philippine pesos) to the heirs of the Sultan of Sulu as rent payment.

: In 1962, the reigning Sultan of Sulu ceded the territory of North Borneo and their full sovereignty, title and dominion to the Philippines. The Sultanate also gave the Philippine government full authority to pursue the Sulu Sultanate’s claim in international courts.

: When Malaysia was formed in 1963 by the British imperialists, Sabah was included as a territory in the Malaysian federation. To legitimize its illegal annexation of Sabah, Malaysia conducted a so-called plebiscite among the residents of Sabah, composed mainly of people with ancestry from Mindanao, to get a vote in favor of incorporation into the Malaysian federation. The Philippines broke diplomatic relations with Malaysia after the federation included Sabah in 1963.

: The Marcos regime initially took interest in pursuing the claim of Philippine sovereignty over Sabah. Succeeding regimes chose to remain silent on the Sabah claim, despite the fact that a significant number of Filipinos from Mindanao fled to Sabah for refuge to escape the military suppression by the Philippine government of the armed resistance of the Moro people then led by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), and later the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

: President Aquino’s condemnation of the political act of the Sulu Sultanate in asserting ownership of Sabah lays bare Aquino’s treachery to the Filipino and Moro people. More than avoiding confrontation with Malaysia, Aquino has shown mockery of the sovereignty of the Philippines and its people whom he has supposedly sworn to protect and defend.

: Aquino gave the go-signal to Malaysia to seal the illegal annexation of Sabah, and allowed the massacre of Filipinos in their own land. ■

: *\*Noynoying (pronounced noy-noy-YING[1] or noy-NOY-ying[2]) is a play on the term planking and Aquino’s nickname, “Noynoy”, and alludes to Aquino’s inaction on urgent national issues. Noynoying involves posing in a lazy manner, such as sitting idly while resting their heads on one hand and doing nothing. (derived from Wikipedia)*



# Tribunal condemns migrants rights violations, calls for GFMD abolition

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III

An international tribunal, attended by at least 300 delegates from progressive grassroots-based migrant and refugee organizations from the Asia Pacific, Europe, Africa, Australia, Latin America and the United States, handed down a guilty verdict on the states-initiated Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD) including the countries and states behind this quasi-formation. The Tribunal was held at the University of the Philippines College of Law in Diliman, Quezon City, in the Philippines, on 28-29 November 2012.



The International Migrants Tribunal (IMT), which convened to examine the indictment submitted to it by several migrant organizations from the Philippines, Mexico, Indonesia and Germany, delved into the neoliberal design of the GFMD and the cases of human rights violations by the sending and receiving States. The tribunal also heard the resistance of the grassroots migrants against these violations.

The IMT looked into the evidence presented and applied the various international treaties and conventions on the rights of migrants including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, among others.

As defendant, the GFMD was charged with: 1) violation of the Complainants' human rights. At the pretext of protecting Complainants' human rights, the Defendants prescribe migration policies in furtherance of their neoliberal agenda of commodification of labor and modern-day slavery. 2) criminal neglect of Complainants' economic rights and violation of their political, economic, social and cultural rights by the Sending States. 3) violation of the Complainants' political, economic, social and cultural rights by the Receiving States.

Nine witnesses from the Philippines, Mexico, Italy, Germany, Malaysia and Canada testified to the inhuman situation of many migrants, and the violence, abuse and exploitation that many migrant workers and refugees, particularly women, are subjected to in their countries of origin and the countries, usually advanced capitalist states, where they have been received as migrant labor.

In handing down a guilty verdict on all charges, the IMT strongly admonished the Defendants, to "provide redress and justice for the Complainants that continue to struggle for the most basic of their human rights and against institutional exploitation and oppression."

Being mainly a political tribunal, the IMT recommended the following:

1. The abolition of the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GMFD) and the abrogation of its policies.
2. The adoption by sending States of genuine national economic development policies that will curb forced migration. States are enjoined to adopt policies that will develop local economy, promote employment opportunities for its people and discourage migration;
3. The adoption and implementation by the States of national policies that are in line with international instruments such as the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Migrants and Their Families. Existing policies that do not accord with such international instruments should be rescinded;
4. The investigation, prosecution, institution of effective mechanisms, compensation and indemnification of migrant victims and their families for the damage they have sustained as a result of the violations, crimes, and offenses;
5. The restitution to the migrants of the material, personal, and moral damages that resulted from the implementation of the immoral, unjust, and inhumane policies of Defendant GFMD like the EU Return Directive;
6. The scrapping of the globalization policy of receiving and sending States as it was proven detrimental to rights of the peoples of the world to life, dignity, liberty, livelihood, and self determination, among others;
7. The scrapping of the labor export policy and the institution of a rights-based policy approach on migration.

The panel of judges was composed of Osamu Niikura from Japan of the International Association of Democratic Lawyers; Bishop Soritua Nababan from Indonesia of the World Council of Churches; Monique Wilson, Philippine theater actress and women's rights activist; Ana Lorena Delgadillo Perez, a Mexican human rights lawyer; and Dean Roland Tolentino of the UP College of Mass Communications. ■

# 10 years after US invasion in Iraq: Costs and Resistance



By Bagani Dong-ilay

**O**n 19 March 2003, George W. Bush went on television to declare to the American people and to the world, “My fellow citizens, at this hour, American and coalition forces are in the early stages of military operations to disarm Iraq, to free its people and to defend the world from grave danger... We will bring freedom to others and we will prevail.”

In proclaiming this lie, he was following Goebbels advice: “The bigger the lie, the more people will believe it.”

The lie that Saddam Hussein possessed a large stockpile of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) was the excuse given for waging the war of aggression and occupation that continues to the present.

The invasion of Iraq to effect regime change is part of US strategy to establish unchallenged global dominance. This is spelled out in a blueprint for the creation of a ‘global Pax Americana’ that was drawn up for George W. Bush, Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, and Lewis Libby. The document, entitled “Rebuilding America’s Defences: Strategies, Forces and Resources for a New Century”, was written in September 2000 by the neo-conservative think-tank Project for the New American Century (PNAC).

The document argues for a “blueprint for maintaining global US preeminence, precluding the rise of a great power rival, and shaping the international security order in line with American principles and interests”.

It refers to key allies such as the UK as “the most effective and efficient means of exercising American global leadership” and describes peace-keeping missions as ‘demanding American political leadership rather than that of the United Nations’.

The document states: “The United States has for decades sought to play a more permanent role in Gulf regional

security. While the unresolved conflict with Iraq provides the immediate justification, the need for a substantial American force presence in the Gulf transcends the issue of the regime of Saddam Hussein.”

It states that “even should Saddam pass from the scene, bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait will remain permanently as Iran may well prove as large a threat to US interests as Iraq has”.

In April 2001, Bush and Blair came to an agreement to use military action to get rid of Saddam Hussein. But they had one problem: regime change was illegal. It was therefore “necessary to create the conditions” which would make it legal. And the lie that Saddam Hussein possessed a large stockpile of WMDs which was a threat to the security of the region and the world was the pretext that was to be invented to “create the conditions” which would make it legal.

The western big corporate media proved to be an important adjunct in the US war machine, they played their dirty part in repeating the big lie over and over again until people would eventually believe it following Goebbel’s advice.

### The costs of this imperialist war

An estimated one million Iraqis have died both as a direct result of the armed conflict and indirectly such as the denial of health and safety provisions for infants, children and adults.

Cancers and birth defects continue to plague the population from the effects of white phosphorous and depleted uranium. About five million Iraqis have been internally displaced or have fled to other countries as refugees.

In 2007, there were an estimated 5 million Iraqi orphans or one out of every four Iraqi children below 18 have lost one or both parents. In 2008, only about 50 percent of primary-school children were attending classes. Before the war, Iraq had the lowest illiteracy rate. Now it has one of the highest.

The “shock and awe” tactic of continuous aerial bombing has wrought widespread destruction of the civilian infrastructure such as facilities for drinking water, sanitation, sewage,



irrigation, electrical grids, communications and the pharmaceutical industry.

The social fabric is torn by sectarian strife between Shiites and Sunnis who had lived in relative peace and inter-married for centuries before the US invasion and occupation.

Close to five thousand US soldiers died in the war. Others continue to suffer from post-traumatic disorders. Some have even committed suicide. Tens of thousands more continue to suffer from various physical disabilities.

The US has spent more than US\$3 trillion for this war. The financial burden of this war has contributed in no small measure to the crisis that besets the US economy.

In carrying out this war of aggression, US forces have committed war crimes and crimes against humanity.

They are guilty of killing hundreds of thousands of civilians through bombings, gunfire and deliberate deprivation of medical provisions; the murder of pro-Saddam officials and employees by death squads; the torture of prisoners of war; the wanton destruction of hospitals, schools, water facilities,

civilian power grids, cities, towns and villages not justified by military or civilian necessity.

Bush and Blair and their cabal of warmakers must be prosecuted for crime against peace (war of aggression), war crimes and crimes against humanity.

**People's Resistance**

The Iraqi people have put up heroic resistance against the "shock and awe" tactic and overwhelming military superiority of the US killing machine. They continue to wage both armed and unarmed forms of struggle against the US occupiers and their local lackeys.

People around the world have given valuable solidarity to the people of Iraq in their struggle to defend their national sovereignty and freedom. Millions marched in the streets to condemn the imperialist war and show their solidarity with the Iraqi people.

But in order to free the world from the terrible human cost of imperialist wars, the imperialist system must be overthrown and cast into the dustbin of history. ■



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

# Women mark IWD, renew commitment for militant struggles

By Isah Antonio

8 March 2013 marked another year of commemorating the heroism and militancy of women that carried and continues to carry the torch of struggle for meaningful change in the situation of women and society.

The day was an occasion to renew women's commitment to fight against continuing class exploitation and gender oppression of women together with the other masses, for the emancipation of women is inseparably linked to the struggle of workers, peasants, urban poor and other sectors of society that suffer from the yoke of imperialism and local reaction.

It is also a renewal to strengthen the defense of the victories and gains of women's struggle achieved throughout the years.

This year, women celebrated the International Women's Day (IWD) in the face of the challenges of the economic, financial and political crisis brought by monopoly capitalism. They marked the red-letter day by launching different kinds of activities in different parts of the globe. They held protest actions, marches, strikes, pickets, study forums and conferences, and cultural presentations on issues confronting women. Together with their men supporters, the women poured into the streets to express their militant struggle against a system that induces a patriarchal and feudal society that keeps women in class and gender bondage.

Prior to 8 March, the global action of women “One Billion Rising” held simultaneous activities last February 14 to protest violence against women. Millions upon millions of women went into the streets in different parts of the world and said no to the violence of the state, no to violence of poverty, no to the violence of wars of aggression and no to gender violence.

The creativity of the women was manifested in the different ways they came together to commemorate International Women’s Day and celebrate the economic, political and social achievements of women.

Following are the initial reports of the activities celebrating IWD:

◆ In the Philippines, more than 15,000 women marched through the main streets of the country’s capital Manila, to the Presidential Palace and the US embassy calling for a stop to US intervention and the immediate pullout of the US troops stationed in the country. The marchers, led by the nationwide women’s alliance GABRIELA, Gabriela Women’s Party List and the International Women’s Alliance, carried banners that read “Women defend our motherland! Fight plunderous imperialists! Down with the Aquino puppet regime!”

The women held the US-Aquino regime responsible for the wretched situation of Filipino women, for the plunder and destruction of the Philippine economy and the massive attack on women’s economic and political rights and welfare. They deplore the poverty and the violence that the people are being daily subjected to.

Tens of thousands of women and their families also joined street protests, mobilizations and other Women’s Day

activities in other parts of the country such as Manila, Baguio, Laguna, Batangas, Iloilo, Bacolod City, Davao City and other key cities and provinces all over the country to commemorate International Women’s Day.

◆ In the Netherlands, women marched in the streets of Amsterdam and Utrecht to raise the different issues confronting women. In Utrecht, the women and their male supporters marched through the city center chanting slogans and carrying placards expressing the situation and struggle of women.

The march culminated in a forum where MAKIBAKA spokesperson Coni Ledesma spoke of the continuing extra-judicial killings in the Philippines with women becoming more and more victims of said killings. Ledesma cited the recent killing by a motor-riding assassin of Cristina Morales Jose, member of Bayan Muna and Alliance of Typhoon Pablo Survivors who led a protest against the social welfare department in the Philippines for not promptly distributing relief goods to the hungry typhoons victims.

Ledesma also spoke on the need for women’s participation in the national democratic movement. She called on the women to persist in their struggle and take inspiration from women all over the world who resist, participate and fight in different arenas of struggle whether in the picketlines, in the mass movement, in the parliament and in armed revolution.

◆ In Ankara, Turkey, women held marches and paid tribute to the three Kurdish activist women, Fidan Dogan, Sakine Cansiz and Leyla Soylemez, who were shot dead at the Kurdistan Information Bureau in Paris, France last January. Hundreds of demonstrators took part in the rally calling for a stop to violence towards women.



(above) Manila, Philippines, by Neil Ambion.  
(right) Utrecht, Netherlands.





- ◆ In the United States, from Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle to New York and Washington D.C., women took their demands to the streets and called for living wage jobs, access to health care and education and protection from violence against migrant communities as basic human rights.  
Organizations such as Babae San Francisco, Mujeres Unidas Y Activas, AYPAL, Chinese Progressive Association, Her Rising, Palestinian Youth Movement, Arab Resource and Organizing Center, SEIU 1021, WORD, Amnesty International, BAYAN USA, Migrante Northern California, FiRE, International Working Women' Day Coalition, Dancing Without Borders and GABRIELA-USA joined with multi-ethnic women and men from immigrant, migrant and working class communities across the US to demand an end to the suffering and violence afflicting women and children amidst heightening contradictions of a global imperialist system.
- ◆ In Canada, women and their supporters held marches and solidarity meetings in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. They raised the theme of women resisting structural violence and exploitation. The mobilizations in Canada were organized by women's organizations such as International Women's Alliance, Women of Diverse Origins, Pinay in Montreal, ILPS-Canada and the Vancouver IWD 2013 Organizing Day Committee composed of several organizations from the First Nations, Iran, Pakistan and the Philippines.  
The marchers carried the issues of women, immigrant and migrants, human rights, refugees, political prisoners, health, peace and social justice, migrants and refugees, and protection of the environment.

- ◆ In India, women from the working class and peasantry demonstrated in Calcutta to demand equal social and financial rights and security. In New Delhi, young men and women staged a street play reflecting the attitude of society of closing their eyes to sexual abuse against women and how to raise their voice against such violence. In Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, women demonstrators demanded the passing of the bill which will reserve 33 percent of all seats in the Lower house of Parliament and in all state legislative assemblies to women.
- ◆ In Indonesia, thousands of women held a protest action in Jakarta last March 8 calling for the concrete implementation of formal laws that regulate protection for women and conventions on the abolition of all forms of discrimination against women.
- ◆ To mark IWD in Colombo, Sri Lankan women rallied last March 8 and demanded that the government act on issues facing women such as domestic violence and rape.
- ◆ In Karachi, Pakistan, women marched into the streets and lighted candles to commemorate IWD.

Majority of women, more than 90 percent, belong to the oppressed and exploited classes of workers and peasants who suffer from class exploitation, oppression and societal and state violence. They are, therefore, a powerful force of the revolution and their participation is decisive in dismantling the system that breeds their exploitation and oppression. In the process of their participation in the revolutionary movement to realize a radical transformation of society, women create the basic conditions for their full emancipation and contribution to social development. ■



Women marchers holding a banner of portraits of three Kurdish activist women shot dead at the Kurdistan Information Bureau in Paris in January 2013. ADEM ALTAN/AFP/Getty Images

## Amsterdam peace talks scuttled by Aquino officials



(left-right) Prof. Jose Maria Sison of the NDFP, Ambassador Ture Lundh of the Royal Norwegian Government, and Secretary Ronald Llamas of the Manila government, during the 18 December 2012 meeting in the Hague, the Netherlands. NDFP photo.

By Ed Ladera

Peace talks held on 25-26 February 2013 in Amsterdam were scuttled by the Aquino government's delegation. These talks were sponsored by the Royal Norwegian Government, the Third Party facilitator of the peace talks between the Manila government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

The Amsterdam meeting was part of the process started in January 2011 by the offer of the NDFP for truce and cooperation on the basis of an agreement on principles in answer to the repeated demands for unprincipled ceasefire by the Aquino government.

The NDFP offer was an initiative to start a "special track" in the peace negotiations to complement and advance the "regular track". The special track aimed to achieve truce and cooperation on the basis of an agreement that includes a common declaration on national unity and just peace, the creation of a consultative committee for national unity, peace and development, upholding national independence, democracy and human rights, agrarian reform, rural development and national industrialization, and truce.

The regular track had suffered an impasse since 2011 due to the Manila government's refusal to release NDFP Consultants and political prisoners in accordance with binding bilateral agreements, namely, the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (1995) and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL, 1998). The regular track was scheduled to take up the second substantive agenda, social and economic reforms. This was to be followed by political and constitutional reforms, and finally, end of hostilities and disposition of forces. This substantive agenda had been agreed upon in 1992 in the framework agreement, The Hague Joint Declaration.

On 17-18 December 2012 special representatives of both Parties met in The Hague at the Royal Norwegian Embassy.

• They exchanged initial drafts towards a "General Declaration of National Unity and Just Peace" and announced a ceasefire of 27 days from 20 December 2012 to 15 January 2013. • The simultaneous and unilateral ceasefires were meant to create a favorable atmosphere for a "historic meeting" in Hanoi, Socialist Republic of Vietnam between President Benigno Aquino III of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and Founding Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), Prof. Jose Maria Sison, the NDFP Chief Political Consultant.

• At the February talks in Amsterdam, the NDFP delegation proposed a Draft Communique for the Hanoi meeting in which five guideposts for a General Declaration for National Unity and Just Peace are incorporated. The GPH delegation, however, parried the proposal and expressed the wish to take up first the NDFP Initial Draft for a General Declaration dated 18 December 2012. The NDFP delegation immediately pointed out that it would take several months if a General Declaration must be agreed upon before the projected meeting between the GPH President and the CPP founding chairman.

• The NDFP delegation further said that it had a new draft of the General Declaration dated 23 February 2013 in the same manner that the GPH had a new draft dated 20 February 2013. The GPH draft sought to impose on the NDFP, an indefinite, simultaneous and unilateral ceasefire within the GPH constitutional framework, instead of a mutually binding truce with the premises and requisites for asserting national sovereignty and carrying out genuine land reform and national industrialization.

• The GPH delegation head Secretary Ronald Llamas announced that it was withdrawing the new GPH draft. But even then Alexander Padilla, GPH negotiating panel chairperson, read into the record of the meeting the content of the entire GPH draft supposedly as a matter of information input. At this point, it became clear that the GPH delegation was not interested in any Hanoi meeting but in trying to

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soldiers of the reactionary army, filed her case before the justice system of the revolutionary forces. She had been denied justice by the soldiers' officers. Furthermore, she and her family have been subjected to threats. Hence, they and supportive organizations filed the criminal case of rape before the people's court.

The NDFP has forged twelve bilateral peace agreements with the reactionary government of the Republic of the Philippines, with the aim of addressing the roots of the armed conflict. The aim of the NDFP in engaging in peace negotiations is to address the roots of the armed conflict through fundamental economic, social and political reforms. But the Manila government only wishes to impose capitulation. So, despite the widespread calls of peace advocates, the peace talks have not prospered.

The revolutionary forces led by the CPP are intensifying their revolutionary armed struggle. They are aiming to advance from the strategic defensive of people's war to the strategic stalemate in the coming few years. The revolutionary forces throughout the country are resolutely carrying forward their liberation struggle in the face of intensified attacks of the Aquino regime and the escalating US military intervention in the country.

In celebrating the glorious victories and achievements of the NDFP over the last 40 years, we must render honor to the many martyrs and heroes who have sacrificed their lives for the people's struggle for national and social liberation and for a just and lasting peace. There are so many; we cannot mention all their names. But a few, we wish to especially honor: Antonio Zumel, journalist, first Chairperson of the NDFP; Atty. Romeo T. Capulong, the Chief Legal Counsel of the NDFP; Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, NPA Commander and CPP Spokesperson. ■



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misrepresent the 18 December 2012 NDFP Initial Draft of the General Declaration as the full and final draft of the NDFP, and in preventing the NDFP from submitting its 23 February 2013 draft of the General Declaration.

It became obvious that the GPH delegation was maneuvering to impose the indefinite unilateral ceasefires in their 20 February 2013 draft on the NDFP Initial Draft of 18 December 2012, which was a response to the GPH draft of 17 December 2012.

The NDFP delegation made absolutely clear that the NDFP will never agree to capitulation and pacification through unprincipled indefinite unilateral ceasefires. Since The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992, the NDFP has insisted on parity and reciprocity in the peace negotiations. No Party may impose its constitution, political authority, or legal and judicial system on the other. But the GPH, since February 2011, has attacked The Hague Joint Declaration as "a document of perpetual division."

After GPH delegation head, Secretary Ronald Llamas left the conference hall on 26 February, Royal Norwegian Ambassador Ture Lundh made an effort towards reconvening the meeting and called for a sidebar consultation between Prof. Jose Maria Sison and GPH Political Adviser Llamas.

Prof. Sison said he would consult the NDFP delegation if they would agree to reconvene in order to present their Draft Agreement to Formulate the General Declaration on National Unity and Just Peace and the NDFP Initial and Partial Draft General Declaration on National Unity and Just Peace. The NDFP delegation agreed to reconvene the meeting.

Prof. Sison returned to the next sidebar consultation with Ambassador Lundh and Secretary Llamas.

However, Llamas said he wanted to go home first to consult his principal. Likewise, Ambassador Lundh also stated he wanted to consult his principal. Hence, Prof. Sison could only agree with their wish. However, he handed to Secretary Llamas and Ambassador Lundh, the two above-mentioned drafts of the NDFP dated 26 February 2013.

The NDFP delegation, in its report to the NDFP National Council on 4 March 2013 stated that the offer of Secretary Llamas for a so-called "historic meeting" between Aquino and Sison was not a serious offer but a mere ploy or bait to get the NDFP to approve an agreement on indefinite unilateral ceasefires in only one or two meetings. The ploy or bait became obvious when the GPH delegation refused to take up the Draft Communique for the Hanoi Meeting and pretended to have a mandate only for discussing the 18 December 2012 Initial Draft of the NDFP.

The NDFP delegation report stresses that the NDFP remains open to a response of the Aquino government to the two NDFP drafts presented to the GPH on 26 February 2013.

Peace advocates who strongly and persistently call for resumption of GPH-NDDFP peace talks are informed about this opening given by the NDFP. Representatives of the NDFP Negotiating Panel have been attending peace forums and workshops organized by peace advocates in different parts of the country.

The full report of the NDFP Delegation to the NDFP National Council, 4 March 2013, can be accessed at <http://www.ndfp.net/joom15/index.php/peace-talks-mainmenu-75/analyses-articles-mainmenu-78/1663-aquino-government-scuttles-amsterdam-peace-meeting.html> ■

# NDFP celebrates 40<sup>th</sup> Founding Anniversary

By Ed Ladera

**O**n 24 April 1973, seven months after Ferdinand Marcos imposed martial law on the Philippines, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines was born. It proclaimed its 10-point program to unite the Filipino people in a life and death struggle against the US-backed Marcos dictatorship and to resolutely fight for national and social liberation.

Forty years after, the struggle continues. It survived the massive attacks of the dictatorship from the early 1970s up to 1986. It even grew. It built mass organizations and organs of political power. By 1980, NDFP forces had built 29 guerrilla fronts throughout the country.

In 1980, revolutionary organizations in the Philippines and abroad organized the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal (PPT) Session on the Philippines in Antwerp, Belgium. The 10-member international jury, headed by Nobel laureate Prof. George Wald, declared the NDFP "legitimate representative of the Filipino people". While judging Marcos guilty of crimes against the people and unfit to govern, the jury declared that the armed struggle of the Filipino people enjoyed the status of belligerency and deserved the support of the international community.

In February 1986, the dictator Marcos was overthrown by a people's uprising.

The revolutionary forces of the NDFP survived major internal errors committed by renegades among their leadership. The Communist Party of the Philippines launched the Second Great Rectification Movement (SGRM) in July 1992. Its aim was to identify, repudiate and rectify the major errors of insurrectionism, prematurely building big formations of the New People's Army, and an anti-informer hysteria, among others. This rectification movement was an educational campaign. It was embraced by the masses and the broad membership of the revolutionary movement. It was completed in 1998.

The First Great Rectification Movement was launched from 1965 until 1971. It gave birth to the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army, and the NDFP. It criticized the major errors of the old communist party, and the old people's liberation army.

After the success of the SGRM, the revolutionary movement has been able to consolidate and expand. It is now rooted in 70 provinces, out of a total 81 provinces in the country. It



has built mass organizations of workers, peasants, women and youth, of national minorities and indigenous people, urban poor and fisherfolk. The New People's Army is now operating in more than 100 guerrilla fronts wherein organs of political power form the backbone of the people's democratic government.

The people's democratic government carries out programs of genuine land reform, health, education and literacy and culture. It has a justice system far superior to the corrupt anti-people justice system of the reactionary government. There are a growing number of cases wherein the victims of human rights violations by the regime approach the revolutionary forces to attain justice.

Recently, a woman victim of gang rape by three

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The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) is an alliance of revolutionary organizations with roots in the various sectors and regions of the Philippines. Its goal is to build a society that enjoys national sovereignty, genuine democracy, social justice, progress and peace.

It seeks to unite with all forces willing to achieve these goals.

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