

10 December 2017

# Call for international support for Justice and Peace in the Philippines

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On the occasion of the International Human Rights Day, people across Europe view with deep concern the rapid deterioration of the human rights situation in the Philippines.

The news and images from the Philippines speak of brutal state-sponsored killings and repression committed by the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police, paramilitary groups and motorcycle-riding assassins against unarmed civilians and advocates of human rights, social justice, social development and peace – indigenous peoples, poor farmers and landless peasants, urban poor, environment activists, human rights defenders, journalists and religious leaders.

- Last week, 03 December, units of the Philippine Army and Philippine Marines shot and killed eight farmers and injured two others in the town of Lake Sebu, South Cotabato province in southern Philippines. The victims were part of a group of indigenous farmer families asserting their ancestral claims against the DMCI corporation, which displaced them to use the lands to plant coffee for Nestlé.
- On the same day, elements of the Philippine National Police shot and killed Lovelito Quiñones, a pastor of the Kings Glory Ministry, in Mansalay town, Oriental Mindoro, in central Philippines. The police alleged that Pastor Lovelito was a member of the New People's Army. Witnesses claim that the pastor was unarmed and police planted a handgun near the victim's body. A paraffin test on the victim's body confirmed that the pastor never fired a gun.
- Two days later, on 05 December, motorcycle-riding assassins shot and killed Fr. Tito Paez, provincial coordinator of the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines. Earlier that day, Fr. Tito assisted in facilitating the release of political prisoner Rommel Tucay.

These atrocities, combined with the daily murder of suspected drug users and small-time dealers by police forces, paint a government callous to individual liberties, human rights and human life. The Duterte government's so-called War on Drugs has reportedly claimed more than 7,000 lives, mostly coming from the urban poor. Even so, by Duterte's own admission, the illegal drug trade remains as pervasive as ever.

As of October 2017, 449 prisoners of conscience are languishing in detention centers of the Duterte government. They are uniformly charged with trumped up criminal cases, allowing the government to claim that there are no political prisoners in the country. Among them are 30 senior citizens, 117 suffering from chronic illnesses and five under the age of 18. Bishop Carlos Morales of the Philippine Independent Church has been kept in jail since May 2017 on spurious charges of illegal possession of explosives.

In the rural areas, units of the Armed Forces of the Philippines routinely occupy villages and conduct artillery and aerial shelling in populated areas. These are areas where the people are actively resisting mining exploration and extraction, corporate farms expansion, resorts development, and various forms of environmental destruction.

From July 2016 to November 2017, human rights group KARAPATAN recorded about 365,000 cases of indiscriminate shooting and bombings of communities, 39,600 cases of military occupation of public places, and more than 426,000 villagers forced to evacuate as a result of military operations. Just on 26 November 2017, 12 communities of indigenous peoples in Surigao del Sur, composed of about 244 families, were forced to evacuate due to intensive military operations. Worse still, on 01 December, humanitarian aid groups were prevented by the military from entering the evacuation area.

We will not allow ourselves to just sit and watch as a humanitarian disaster unfolds in the Philippines. We heed the call of the Filipino people to defend their basic human and democratic rights and join them in condemning the increasingly fascist character of the Duterte government. With our linked arms, we vow to strengthen our solidarity with the Filipino people in their continuing fight for genuine democracy, economic and social development, and national liberation.

On the occasion of the International Human Rights Day on 10 December, we hereby convene ourselves as the **Europe Network for Justice & Peace in the Philippines**, and dedicate ourselves to:

- Raise our awareness and others in Europe about the situation in the Philippines
- Organize and participate in activities in support of the Filipino people's rights and democratic aspirations
- Condemn the intensifying killings, repression and other human rights violations in the Philippines
- Stop the support of governments in Europe and the EU for the repressive Duterte government

**Signatories:**

NAME	ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY
Fr. Herbert Fadriquela Jr.	Chairman, Migrante Europe	United Kingdom
Fr. June Mark Yañez	Iglesia Filipina Independiente	Germany
Johanna Mortensen	Southeast Asia Group, International Forum	Denmark
Sr. Elizabeth Pedernal	Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo	Italy
Luciano Seller	Italy-Philippines Friendship Association (IPFA) / International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP) Global Council	Italy

Fr. Aristelo Miranda, MI	Camillian Disaster Service International (CADIS)	Italy
Archbishop Joris Vercammen	International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP) Global Council	The Netherlands
Dr. Angie Gonzales	ICHRP Global Coordinator	The Netherlands
Romy Corpuz	President, Ugnayang Pilipino sa Belgium	Belgium
Phil Butland	Co-Speaker, Die Linke Internationals – Berlin	Germany
Karin Louise Hermes	Humboldt University of Berlin	Germany
Cathy Abon	Gabriela Germany	Germany
Boyen Baleva	Chairman, Filipino Refugees in the Netherlands	The Netherlands
Bro. Louie Salle	ICHRP Rome Spokesperson	Italy
Marie Mercado	Secretary, Nagkakaisang Pilipino sa Pransya	France
Hameed Khasawnih	DiEM 25 – Berlin	Germany
Paloma Polo	UNREST	The Netherlands
Pierre Massilia	Front Revolutionaire Antifasciste de Provence	France
Alessio Arena	General Secretary, Fronte Popolare	Italy
Vito Meloni	Secretary, Partito della Rifondazione Comunista Federazione di Roma	Italy
Father Barry Naylor	Church of England	United Kingdom
Steven Bouvier	Collectif Livreurs Autonomes Paris	France
Kaleb Lloyd	Secretary, Campaign for Human Rights in the Philippines (CHRP)	United Kingdom
Eva Mayor	Chairperson, Kanlungan Filipino Consortium	United Kingdom
Phoebe Dimacali	Chairperson, Filipino Domestic Workers Association	United Kingdom
Rafael J. Maramag	Coordinator, UNISON Filipino Activist Network	United Kingdom
Rev. Dr. Klaus Schäfer	Director, Center for Global Ministries and Ecumenical Relations – Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northern Germany (ZMÖ)	Germany
Rev. Stefan Block	CEO, Center for Global Ministries and Ecumenical Relations – Evangelical Lutheran	Germany

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Shanthi Sivakumaran	International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP) Global Council	United Kingdom
Sophia Seaton	Chairperson, Belgian-Filipino Friendship Association (BFF)	Belgium
Sophie Passelecq	Secretary, Belgian-Filipino Friendship Association (BFF)	Belgium
Theo Droog	Chairperson, Dutch-Filipino Solidarity Movement (NFS)	The Netherlands
Rev. Salvador Telen	St. Saviour's Walthamstow	United Kingdom
Fr. Franz Segbers	Professor, University of Marburg	Germany

*(partial list of signatories, more names to follow)*