

Mindanaoan's Appeal: Immediate Humane and Fair Treatment and Quick Response to Typhoon Yolanda Victims and Survivors in the Philippines

Thursday 14 November 2013, by [Collective / Multiple signers](#) (Date first published: 12 November 2013).

On October 15, 2013, a 7.2 magnitude killer earthquake devastated the Visayas region costing thousand of lives and properties. This was after a two-week long stand-off between Philippine troops and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in Zamboanga City in Mindanao that killed hundreds of people and paralyzed the city's economy and brought fears, panic and dislocation of peoples.

Impact of these two incidents are still fresh in the minds of everybody in the country wherein affected populations are still on the verge of rebuilding their lives when super typhoon Yolanda, respectively known as Haiyan internationally, hit the central part of the country (Eastern to Central Visayas and Northern Mindanao) on 7 November 2013 that left thousands of dead people and billions of destroyed properties (industries to farm) while search and retrieval are still on going. Cadavers of humans and animals and destroyed properties and infrastructures are scattered everywhere in the affected areas mainly in the Visayas region with four million estimated affected population. Victims and survivors left with no option but to survive in whatever ways and means resulting to ransacking of stores and establishments for food, water, clothing and other means of survival. Generally the picture is a total chaos, devastation and desperation and the condition put the survivors in a very miserable situation.

For several times, the government structures and mechanisms that are supposed to be responsible in responding to the needs of the victims and survivors failed to do their duties. Institutions such as charity foundations, non-government organizations and volunteer organizations and among others remained to be the first to respond. Way back on the case of typhoons Ondoy, Pablo and Sendong, the government agencies and institutions were very slow using system installation, accounting of victims, etc. as excuses of this failure. In the case of typhoon Yolanda, after five days, more and more victims are starving to death despite the announcement of the stocks of supplies and donations from local and international donors.

The intensity and destructions brought upon by typhoons year after year in the Philippines are evident enough to take Climate Change seriously not just a mere pronouncement and propaganda. Philippine government has to be consistent when it comes to its policies towards environment and public protection and preparedness. The Philippine Mining Act contradicts with the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction Act and among other ecological and sustainable environment laws. It seems that the Philippine government passed a law on disaster preparedness as preparation for the damages cause by the Mining and Logging policies and programs. One can never understand the neoliberal capitalist logic that our government has adopted.

We, from the tri-people communities, peoples' organizations, non-government organizations, academic institutions, religious denominations and the whole Mindanao community would like to express our sympathy to the victims of typhoon Yolanda. We felt the hardships and anxieties

specially those of overseas workers, women, elders, and those who lost their loved ones.

We are dismayed on the projected looting and the idea of charging the victims of criminal liability where in fact it should be the government and line agencies' duty to respond and should be criminally charged being ineffective and so slow in responding to a disaster.

We call for all politicians, political groups and parties not to take advantage on the situation for grandstanding and for their vested political interests instead, serve as what public servant really means and set aside then their political differences and importantly serve the victims first and foremost.

We also demand for the government to properly and effectively regulate the prices of goods and commodities (which it failed to do during Pablo and Sendong) in the affected region and improve its services to the victims and survivors.

We believe that Indigenous People and Moro populations are also affected by the typhoon in the Visayas region, we therefore pray and demand for a fair and non-discriminatory response and treatment to all victims and survivors from all intervening organizations and groups. The same fair treatment to all victims from different religion, gender and social classes should be treated fairly.

We also appeal to media organizations to observe responsible reporting and respect the sufferings and difficulties of the victims and survivors, instead be an effective instrument in airing the sentiments and needs of the survivors and send the message to the service providers.

We strongly appeal to revolutionary groups and the Philippine Government forces to be responsible with their ranks and file and hold ceasefire and help the survivors and communities in rebuilding by any means they could. Installation of peace and order should adhere to the principles of human rights.

We call on survivors, citizens and national and international communities to watch and monitor all interventions from the opportunists and corrupt. Donations should be properly accounted for.

Particularly to the victims and survivors, our prayers and solidarity are with you and we encourage you to find hope, organize and claim for your rights collectively.

And, to all agencies and intervening organizations, we should be responsive and sensitive to the real needs of the survivors and victims and avoid parachuting of uncoordinated disaster response. We have to treat the survivors as partners in regaining their lives and rebuilding their dreams.

And in rebuilding these communities, sustainability, ecology and human rights should and always be the core consideration and not profit and partisan politics.

12 November 2013

Signed and Endorsed,

1. Tri-People Organization Against Disasters, Incorporated (TRIPOD)
2. Ranao Disasters Response and Rehabilitation Assistance Center, Inc (RDRRAC)
3. Mindanao Peoples' Peace Movement (MPPM)
4. Sumpay Mindanao, Incorporated (SMI)
5. Iligan Survivors Movement (ISM)
6. Kaagapay OFW Resource and Service Center, Incorporated (KAAGAPAY OFWRSC)
7. Mindanao Tri-People Women Resource Center, Incorporated (MTWRC)

8. Mindanao Tri-People Women Forum (MTWF)
 9. TriPeople Youth for Change (TRYChange)
 10. Kagkalimwa OFW Federation (Kagkalimwa)
 11. Umpungan Nu mga Babai sa Bagua 2 (UBB2)
 12. Mamalu Descendants Organization (MDO)
 13. Teduray-Lambangian Youth and Student Association (TLYSA)
 14. Timuay Justice and Governance (TJG) of Teduray and Lamabangian tribes
 15. Lumad Development Center, Incorporated (LDCI)
 16. Alyansa ng Kabataang Mindanao para sa Kapayapaan (AKMK)
 17. Liga ng Makabagong Kabataan (LMK) - Mindanao
 18. Mindanao Tri-People Youth Center, Incorporated (MTPYC)
 19. Peoples' Endeavors for the Advancement of Community Empowerment (PEACE)
 20. St. Anthony de Padua Parish, Filipino Katoliko Church
 21. Movement of Young Catalysts for Change (MYCC)
 22. Lanog Mindanao 113.0 Online Radio Broadcast (Lanog Mindanao)
 23. Demokratikong Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas - Lanao (DKMP-Lanao)
 24. Bukluran ng Kababaihan sa Kapatagan (BUKAS-Kapatagan)
 25. Lanao Fisheries Advocacy Network (LFAN)
 26. Nagkahiusang Mangingisda sa Karumatan (NAMANGKA)
 27. Nagkahiusang Organisasyon sa mga Mangingisda sa Tubod (NOMATUB)
 28. Kahugpungan sa mga Mangingisda sa Kolambugan (KASAMA KO)
 29. Muntay Active Young Leaders Association (MAYLA)
 30. Nagkahiusang Kabatan-onan Alang sa Tuburan sa Kinaiyahan (NAKATUKI)
 31. Lanao Aquatic and Marine Fisheries Center for Community Development (LAFCCOD)
 32. Sustainable Alternatives for the Advancement of Mindanao, Inc (SALAM)
 33. Ranao Women and Children Resource Center, Inc (RWCRC)
 34. Coalition of Lanao Utility Transport for Change (CLUTCH)
 35. Lig-on ug Hiniusang Kusog sa Kabus-Dakbayan (LIHUK-Iligan)
 36. Paglingkawas Women Organization (Paglingkawas)
 37. Lanao Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (LAHRA)
 38. Alliance of Tri-People Advocates for Human Rights (ALTAHR)
 39. Samburon Women Organization (SWO) - Linamon, Lanao del Norte
 40. Kahugpungan sa mga Mag-uuma ug Mamumuong Kababayen-an (KASAMMA KA) - Zamboanga del Sur
 41. Kilusan ng mga Maralita sa Kanayunan (KILOS KA) - Mindanao
 42. Master Peace - Philippines
 43. DUYOG TriPeople Youth Organization (DUYOG)
 44. United and Active Youth in RTR, Agusan del Norte (UNAYT)
 45. Seasonal Farmers and Service Providers Association in Lanao del Norte
 46. Convergence of NGO and PO in Zamboanga del Sur for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, Inc (CONZARRD)
 47. YAPAK Artists Collectives (YAPAK)
 48. Ranao Tri-People Movement for Genuine Peace and Development (RTMGPD)
 49. Interfaith Movement for Peaceful and Clean Election (IM4PEACE)
 50. Electoral Reforms and Development Assistance Center
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