

Press Release

# Workers hold counter SONA, challenge PNoy's social transformation agenda

Sunday 31 July 2011, by [Partido Manggagawa](#) (Date first published: 25 July 2011).

Some 1,000 members from different workers groups comprising the anti-contractualization coalition KONTRA held a labor counter SONA at Mendiola this morning. Renato Magtubo, Partido ng Manggagawa (PM) national chairperson, slammed PNoy for anti-labor policies in his first year in office.

"How can social transformation be real when groups calling for social change are blocked miles away from hearing distance of PNoy and Congress? Social transformation is impossible without political and economic reforms," he said.

In the afternoon, PM, KONTRA, Philippine Airlines Employees Association (PALEA) and Alyansa ng Maralitang Pilipino (AMP) joined the multisectoral groups Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC) and Kampanya para sa Makataong Pamumuhay (KAMP) in a march from Tandang Sora to Batasang Pambansa. Meanwhile youth groups such as PM-Kabataan and Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK) assembled at Philcoa, Quezon City then merged with PM and the multisectoral groups in the march along Commonwealth Ave.

Gerry Rivera, PM vice chair and PALEA president argued that "After one year of PNoy, there is no new program to generate jobs, no new mechanism to increase workers wages and no change in the no-union policy in the ecozones. PNoy has given the go signal for contractualization at Philippine Airlines (PAL). He has praised Hanjin's investments but has been silent on the deaths and injuries of workers at the shipyard-cum-graveyard. PNoy has continued with sacrificing labor rights at the ecozones to attract foreign capital."

Labor counter SONAs were also held in other cities. In Metro Cebu, PM and other groups under the coalition Kahugpungan sa Nagkahiusang Mamumuo sa Sugbo (KANAMASO) marched this morning from Sto. Rosario Church to downtown Colon. In Metro Davao, PM massed up at Magsaysay Park then marched along Magsaysay Ave. to Orcullo Park for the rally. In Iloilo, PM held a forum at UP-Iloilo and also a press conference to air its reaction to the SONA.

"Workers challenge PNoy to jumpstart his so-called social transformation agenda by reversing the Office of the President decision on PAL, declaring the security of tenure bill as a priority agenda and implementing a massive public employment program," insisted Judy Ann Miranda, PM secretary general.

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