

Mindanao (Philippines): Our call on the Emergency Crisis in Marawi City

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Condemn Violence! Protect Civilians!

Uphold Human Rights at all times!

May 24, 2017

Around 2 o'clock in the afternoon of 23 May 2017, gunfight between armed men (suspected Maute Group allegedly ISIS sympathizer) and the elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) erupted in public places in Marawi City putting civilian population hostage in the situation. As the violence intensifies, civilian population are exposed to higher risk of being killed or injured. In fact, reports have noted that the gunfight has already claimed 3 lives, wounded 12 other individuals, abducted church leaders, held civilians hostage, occupied hospital and burned and destroyed properties as of midnight of May 23.

We, in the tri-people peace and human rights movements express our strong condemnation of this violence. We are deeply saddened that this atrocity has happened especially in times like this when our Muslim brothers and sisters are about to observe in three (3) days' time the Holy Month of Ramadhan.

In this regard,

We call on all parties involved to stop the hostilities and atrocities in Marawi City;

We call on the warring groups not to use civilians as shields and free all public places from hostile actions and armed confrontations; avoid indiscriminate firing, bombing and shelling; observe compliance to the international humanitarian law and the rules of engagement in the conduct of the operations;

We call for the government to exert all efforts to ensure the safety and protection of the civilians now trapped in the midst of the current emergency crisis; involve and make civilian communities, not just mere passive recipients, but, as part and integral in coming up solution to end this crisis;

Particularly, we ask the Moro National Liberation Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front to maximize the existing peace processes and mechanisms to help arrest the emergency situation;

We call on the religious leaders, council of elders, community leaders and all state and non-state peace actors to intervene and demand for the protection of lives, properties and communities; to lead in maintaining sobriety, critical mind, and prevent inciting religious and cultural biases out of this situation;

We call on humanitarian organizations and agencies to immediately respond to the needs of affected populations;

The current government's response in Placing Mindanao under Martial law will not solve the current situation instead it will only further the violence and curtailment of civilian and community rights to peace and life. Suspension of the legal remedies specifically the Writ of Habeas Corpus would further put the communities and civil societies in a vulnerable situation- a lesson we have learned from the terror of Marcos era. Thus, we demand to the Philippine Congress not to support the declaration of Martial Law and must uphold the supremacy of civilian and the Philippine constitution instead;

As peacebuilders and human rights defenders, we viewed this direct violence as result of governments' neglect in fulfilling the rights and entitlements of its peoples which can be responded to without using arms and violence.

Despite this situation, we appeal to the general public to continue building the infrastructure of peace by strengthening solidarity towards each other, intensify our efforts to build harmonious relationship between and among peoples, strengthen our convictions to build communities of justpeace where respect, social justice and co-existence inspire us all. Let us continue propagating the seeds of understanding and mutual respect we have nurtured for quite some time already.

Signed by:

Alliance of the Tri-People for the Advancement of Human Rights (ALTAHR)

Alyansa ng Kabataang Mindanao para sa Kapayapaan (AKMK)

AKMK Young Women

Alyansa ng mga Mamamayan para sa Karapatang Pantao (AMKP)

Association of OFW Children-Maguindanao-Cotabato

Coalition of Lanao Utility Transport for Change (CLUTCH)

Convergence of NGOs and POs in Zamboanga del Sur for Rural Development, Inc (CONZARRD)

Demokratikong Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (DKMP) - Lanao

Electoral Reforms and Development Assistance Center, Inc (ERDAC)

Erumanen Ne Menuvu Kamal

Federation of Democratic Labor Organizations (FDLO)

Inged Fintailan

Interfaith Movement for Clean and Peaceful Election (IM4PeaCe)

International Institute for Research and Education

Kaagapay OFW Resource and Service Center, Inc (Kaagapay OFW)

Kahugpungan sa mga Mag-uuma ug Mamumuong Kababayen-an alang sa Kalambuan (KASAMMA KA)

Kagkalimwa OFW Federation

Kahugpungan sa mga Mangingisda sa Kolambugan (KASAMA KO)

Kilusang Maralita sa Kanayunan (KILOS KA)

Kilusan ng mga Mamamayan para sa Pagbabago ng Bayan (Kilos Bayan)

Lanao Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (LAHRA)

Lanao Aquatic and Marine Fisheries Center for Community Development, Inc (LAFCCOD)

Lanao Fisheries Advocacy Network (LFAN)

Liga ng Makabagong Kabataan (LMK)

Lig-ong Hinisuang Kusog sa Kabus sa Dakbayan (LIHUK)

Mindanao Peoples' Peace Movement (MPPM)

Mindanao Tri-People Women Resource Center, Inc (MTWRC)

Mindanao Tri-people Women Forum (MTWF)

Mindanao Tri-People Youth Center, Inc (MTPYC)

MindanaOne Tri-peoples Movement for the Advancement of Democratic Rights (MindanaOne)

Multi-Stakeholders Initiative for Humanitarian Action Network against Disasters (MiHANDs)

Nagkahiusang Mag-uumang Organiko (NAMAIO)

Nagkahiusang Mangingisda alang sa Kalambuan (NAMANGKA SND)

Nagkahiusang Organisasyong Mangingisda sa Tubod ug Baroy (NOMaTuB)

Partido Manggagawa (PM)

Ranao Disaster Response and Rehabilitation Assistance Center, Inc (RDRRAC)

Ranao Women and Children Resource Center, Inc (RWCRC)

Sumpay Mindanao, Inc.

Sustainable Alternatives for the Advancement of Mindanao (SALAM)

Timuay Justice and Governance (TJG) of Teduray and Lambangian tribes

Tri-Peoples' Organization against Disasters Foundation (TRIPOD)

Tri-People Youth for Change (TryChange)

Teduray-Lambangian Youth and Student Association (TLYSA)

Umpungan Nu mga Babai sa Bagua 2 (UBB2)

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