

Elections in the Philippines: an appeal for Solidarity by RPMM (Philippines)

Tuesday 15 May 2007, by [RPM-M](#) (Date first published: 9 May 2007).

This appeal was written before the election day, but remain urgently valid: election day is followed by a long period during which votes have to be “protected” from being stolen and sold to other parties.

Dear comrades,

The Philippine legislative elections take place on May 14. The RPMM, in spite of not having legal status, believes that it is necessary to participate in these elections. We do this by supporting a party list which defends a programme that will advance our struggle for a peaceful and developed Mindanao.

As of now, the presence of this party list in the national parliament is having a significant positive political impact on the struggle of the tri-people in Mindanao.

However, as we approach the election date we are confronted with a number of problems:

The Lumad and Moro areas, especially in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), are the areas where the rightists really plan to do the kind of massive cheating that we experienced in the past. And as we know, it is also in these areas where a significant part of our electoral base is found. Added to this is a situation where the rightists as well as the warlords of the administration are successfully avoiding having electoral contests by simply making sure that there will be no opponents to their candidates. To make this possible they have either bought or threatened those who had filed their candidacy.

The OPLAN MERCURY RISING has been put into effect to make sure that the chosen candidates of the administration in the senatorial and congressional contests will win through massive cheating. The main bodies responsible for the plan are the military and the Commission on Elections (COMELEC). It has already been exposed by concerned military and political leaders but this has had no effect.

In fact a massive deployment of troops can already be seen in the target areas. This Oplan Mercury Rising will be implemented mainly in the ARMM areas.

Moreover, the Arroyo government attacks left party lists by harassing their volunteers in the field; other electoral manoeuvres are:

- new party lists backed by the Arroyo government have been formed;
- traditional politicians have also formed their own party lists and attack left party lists;
- the Maoist groups attack our camps and our electoral campaign work

Faced with these attacks the only weapon we have is the presence of people's organizations all over Mindanao to safeguard our votes.

The RPMM backed party list is now up in the opinion polls. However, we have not only to win votes, we also have to protect them. Since time immemorial elections in the Philippines have been dominated by guns, goons, and gold.

Our electoral base is broad and will guarantee us winning seats, but that will not do away with election fraud and vote buying.

Since we launched the electoral campaign in March, it has really drained our financial resources. We are now in urgent need of financial resources for the final stages of the campaign. We need to mobilize forces for canvassing and voting until the end of the electoral process. Most crucially, we need more financial resources to protect our votes in various ways and thus to ensure that the party list we support will get the seats in parliament.

Four days from the end of the campaign our finances are exhausted. That is why we are launching an emergency SOS financial appeal for solidarity. Any contribution you can make will greatly help us in our objectives, so we are appealing to your solidarity. Success in this election will really push forward the expansion and consolidation of the work of our party. Given the urgency of this SOS appeal, because the election is just days away if you are prepared to definitely commit a sum of money we can transfer from our bank here in anticipation of receiving it.

Thanks and on behalf of the Party,

X.

RPMM

For solidarity:

You can send an message through ESSF email address using the "write us" button in the left column of the home page. It will be forwarded.