

**2013 Mid-Year Report
On the Human Rights Situation in the
Cordillera Region
By the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance-
KARAPATAN
#55 Ferguson Road, Baguio City**

The continuing development aggression against indigenous peoples in the Cordillera Region has been compounded by aggression against development workers and human rights defenders. In the course of asserting right to ancestral land, natural resources and self-determined development, the Cordillera peoples are subjected to various forms of persecution, with a noticeable systematic attack against development workers and human rights defenders.

The systematic persecution against development workers and human rights defenders and use of civilians, especially women and children, in military combat operations are viewed as components of the counter-insurgency program of the Benigno Aquino III administration, named Oplan Bayanihan. It is patterned from the US Counter Insurgency Guide of combining combat/military actions with psychological warfare and civilian action in dealing with insurgencies.

Oplan Bayanihan purports to turn AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) troops into so-called "Peace and Development Teams-PDTs." Towards this end, AFP troops are programmed to conduct civic actions such as medical and dental missions, construction of schools, toilets, clearing pathways and others. But due to violations experienced by community members, they have assigned meanings to the PDT: "P" for "panagtakaw, panagbabbai, panag---inom, ken daduma pay" (stealing, womanizing, liquor drinking, etc.) and "D" for "didigra" (destruction of property, livelihood, etc). Oplan Bayanihan, true to its intent to redefine development, continues to unmask itself from its package of Peace and Development Plan.

This human rights report covering the period of the first 6 months of 2013, the second half of the 3rd year of the Benigno Aquino III regime, provides accounts on incidents of human rights violations of both collective and individual human rights.

**I. Violation of Right to Ancestral
Land, Natural Resources and
Self-determined Development**

Case of Lepanto-GoldFields in Mankayan, Benguet. Lepanto-GoldFields is a Filipino-South African partnership. Together with Nickel Asia, a Filipino-Japanese partnership, the two corporations have overlapping applications covering more than 95,000 hectares in the tri-boundary of Ifugao, Benguet, and the Mountain Province.

Lepanto, one of the oldest mining firms operating in the Cordillera has a mining patent over 5,000 has. in Mankayan, Benguet. It has long been expanding its mining activities to adjacent areas. In January of this year, drilling for exploration started after it forged partnership with GoldFields,. It was met with resistance from wide sections of the indigenous groups residing in the area who claim ancestral land rights over the property. Contentious FPIC (Free Prior and Informed Consent) processes have been on and off for almost one and a half years. The affected indigenous peoples who set up a human barricade for almost a year, claim that Lepanto, in cahoots with the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) is violating both customary practices as well as FPIC processes as defined by Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA). Lepanto, on the one hand, filed criminal charges against 97 residents for violating the Philippine Mining Act.

At the core of the impasse, Lepanto claims to have bought the property from a certain elder in the 1960's for an amount and process unknown to the community. For the indigenous groups who have been in the area since time immemorial, the property forms part of what is now being referred to as collective ancestral territory. The dispute remains unresolved to date. Meanwhile, the residents are facing criminal charges filed against them.

Collapse of Tailings Dam of Philex Mining Company. The Padcal Mine, which Philex has been operating since 1958, is the first underground block cave operation in the Far East. The mine produces copper concentrates containing copper, gold and silver. Majority of the copper concentrates are shipped to Japan. It

is operating in 95 hectares of land in Tuba, Benguet.

In August 2012, its 3rd tailings dam collapsed. Earlier tailings dam 1 and 2, similarly collapsed and were commissioned on several occasions. Due to irreparable danger posed by the collapse, the DENR instructed the company to pay for damages. The Order is a de facto action as Philex can no longer continue its operation because it has no alternate pond to pour its wastes. Operation resumed in recent months despite widespread call for the decommissioning of the tailings dam.

While DENR has identified various violations of Philex with respect to laws on environment and natural resources, what remains unacceptable to affected indigenous peoples is the technical question on having Philex Mining Company exempted from FPIC process and other provisions of IPRA because it was granted mining rights before the IPRA was adopted in 1997. This runs counter to the genuine substance of right of indigenous peoples to their ancestral land and natural resources thereat.

Case of Chevron and QuadRiver (Sta Clara).

Chevron is an American company now exploring geothermal facility over nearly 40,000 hectares in Buguias and Kabayan, Benguet, and Tinoc and Hungduan, Ifugao. Its earlier exploration for similar geothermal energy production in Sadanga, Mountain Province and Tinglayan and Pasil in Kalinga has receded. While direct displacement of the people from the land will probably be minimal, there are other risks associated with geothermal facility such as pollution of air, water, soil, and crops from the toxic amounts of particulated and dissolved minerals that will be spewed by the wastewater disposal and exhaust system of the geothermal power plant.

QuadRiver (Sta Clara) Power Corporation is exploring to install six hydros in Tinoc. These are supposedly run-off-river hydros. But they will divert significant amounts of water from springs and streams that the people of Tinoc depend on for farm irrigation and domestic supply.

There are, as yet, no visible signs of the two companies' presence in the areas. But

QuadRiver (Sta. Clara) and Chevron have been conducting aggressive campaigns in Tinoc to obtain community consent to their projects.

While no outward conflict is seen at this time, in Tinoc, as well as in neighboring Buguias, the NCIP has failed to protect the freedom and the right of the communities to full disclosure of information on energy projects. QuadRiver (Sta. Clara) and Chevron have been able to use some local government officials in securing consent from the community.

PhilCarbon, a private firm engaged in energy from wind, conducted processes of securing FPIC from affected communities of Sagada and Besao to set up a wind farm in the communal boundary of these two municipalities. While the LGU officials of both municipalities are apparently interested in the wind farm, majority of affected residents registered their opposition to the project. Besides the technical and environmental concerns is the resistance of residents on private firms exploiting natural resources.

The technical issues raised on the FPIC processes were: (a) information disclosed were inadequate; (b) there was no FPIC process conducted prior to the feasibility study stage; (c) violation of conduct of community assemblies; (d) "clandestine or surreptitious negotiations with IP individuals... without the knowledge of the council of elders, leaders or majority of members of the community."

II. Violation of Civil and Political Rights

Persecution of Development Workers and Human Rights Defenders

Recent incidents of persecution of development workers and human rights defenders indicate an evident trend of the AFP's dual approach in using development workers in countering insurgency while making attempts to weaken their psychological will by sowing fear and bribery. These incidents are:

Jude Baggo. In November 2012, Jude Baggo, the Secretary-General of the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance (CHRA), was among the 28 human rights defenders and development workers listed in the 86th IB's document entitled

“Municipality of Tinoc, Target Persons.” This two-page document bears the logo of 86th IB and 5th ID and directly identified those in the list as supporters of the New People’s Army (NPA). Mr. Baggo and Mr. William Bugatti, the Ifugao provincial human rights focal person of the CHRA, were both marked as “Utak ng NPA” (Brains of the NPA). Also listed as supporters of NPA are 3 personnel from the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera, Montanosa Research and Development Center and the Ifugao Resources and Development Center. A government employee of the Community Environment and Natural Resource Office (CENRO) was also in the list.

Also, in one text message received, Mr. Baggo was accused of being part of the WACOM Ifugao and that he facilitated one meeting.

Evelyn Bedana, 64 y/o. Ms. Bedana, from the Ilocos Center for Research, Education and Development (ICRED) and Solidarity of Peasants against Exploitation (STOP-EX) experienced intensive surveillance from April to June 2013. By the end of June, a certain Paul approached her offering cash and employment at the Department of Social Welfare and Development and “business partnership” for her to facilitate local peace talks between the government and local NPA units. It is important to note that the government has terminated the national level peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and instead announced to pursue local peace negotiations. The offer to Ms. Bedana is viewed by her co-development workers as a move of the AFP to bribe development workers to seek cooperation in its plan to pursue local peace talks. It is further understood as a form of psychological warfare in dealing with political dissent. It is a form of sowing fear and panic among development workers to weaken their political will in their mission to be in the struggle with the poor, deprived and oppressed.

Rene Boy Abiva and Virgilio Corpuz. Mr. Abiva is a government employee from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD-Cagayan) while Mr. Corpuz is a development worker of KADUAMI-NL in the Cagayan Valley Region. The two have been incarcerated in the Ifugao provincial jail for several counts of murder, incidents which were actually ambushes of NPA against AFP units.

KADUAMI-NL has been subjected to many forms of harassment since 2007, when it was listed in the ‘enemies of the state’ of the AFP’s Trinity of War. Some of its staff experienced various threats, arrests, detentions and are victims of trumped-up charges.

This year, KADUAMI-NL reported two incidents of attempted robbery. In the second attempt, the robbers sprayed tear gas on the person guarding the office. Aside from Virgilio Corpuz’ detention, other KADUAMI development workers also faced harassments from AFP elements like in the case of Willy Kuan, Angelita Bulseco and Isabelo Adviento.

HEADQUARTERS
CHARLES COMPTON BARRI ENGINEERING (INCORPORATED) BAYBAYAN
5TH INFANTRY DIVISION (PROVIDENT), PANGLOSS, AGAO
Ifugao, Mountain Province, Philippines

MUNICIPALITY OF TINOC (Target Persons)

NO.	NAME (VFN)	LOCATION OF HOME	CP NUMBER	ORGANIZATION	REMARKS
1	JANUARY ANDRESO C	Aban, Gumbang, Tineo, Ifugao GC-834676		Farmers organization	BARANGAY MAGSISAY
2	OLAY ARSENIO F	Gumbang, Tineo, Ifugao GC- 834676		Farmers organization	BARANGAY MAGSISAY
3	DONALDO FEDERADO	Wawa ng Mamburao GC- 7933		Farmers organization	Member of NPA member KABUKARAN PANGLOSS SA NPA
4	AYAL ORA LUCILIANO	Pub. Tineo, Ifugao GC- 79083		Farmers organization	Member of NPA member KABUKARAN PANGLOSS SA NPA
5	JONA BERTOMAS AGAS	Pub. Tineo, Ifugao GC- 79083		NPA	Member of NPA member KABUKARAN PANGLOSS SA NPA
6	XUD ALLAN OFRENEN	Tineo, Ifugao GC-830417		Farmers organization	MAGSISAY PANGLOSS SA NPA
7	RECTOR POLITE	Tineo, Ifugao GC-834695		Farmers organization	Member of NPA member KABUKARAN PANGLOSS SA NPA
8	ERASO LIMBAS	Pub. Tineo, Ifugao GC- 79083		Farmers organization	Member of NPA member KABUKARAN PANGLOSS SA NPA
9	AMARON WALING	SO pofikaw Gumbang, Tineo, Ifugao GC-834682		Farmers organization	Member of NPA member KABUKARAN PANGLOSS SA NPA
10	PAZDOTAL MARILANO	Binabayan, Tineo, Ifugao GC-834488		Farmers organization	BARANGAY MAGSISAY MAGSISAY MAGSISAY
11	ASUERO, LEONA	Binabayan, Tineo, Ifugao GC-834488		Farmers organization	BARANGAY MAGSISAY MAGSISAY MAGSISAY
12	TAGAY, JENIDA, MIRASOL	So. Tapanon, P.O.B. Tineo, Ifugao GC-798447		BRAP Secretary ng BRAP	Member of NPA PANGLOSS SA NPA
13	YEMARAY, ABE	Gumbang, Tineo, Ifugao GC-8404783		NAIR, CASH CLERK 1	1. IMBANGAN NG BARIL O MARI GALAM SA AMBESON MAGSISAY PANGLOSS SA NPA
14	DIMARUNG, CATERINE	So. Davao, Binabayan, Tineo, Ifugao		Farmers organization/IFM	Member of NPA PANGLOSS SA NPA
15	DAIRING, LINDAWEN	So. Davao, Binabayan, Tineo, Ifugao		ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER IN CHIEF PROV. AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICE (DEANHO)	Member of NPA BARIL
16	LUTING, ANSELMA	So. Davao, Binabayan, Tineo, Ifugao		Farmers organization/NPA	Member of NPA BARUKAN SA NPA

17	CARRUTU, JIMMY	So. Davao, Binabayan, Tineo, Ifugao		Farmers organization/IFM	SUPPORTER NG NPA
18	GALEWAN, DULAY	So. Davao, Binabayan, Tineo, Ifugao		Farmers organization/IFM	MAGSISAY PANGLOSS SA NPA
19	GUILLUMAN, LITO	So. Davao, Binabayan, Tineo, Ifugao		Farmers organization/IFM	SUPPORTER NG NPA
20	ROLANDO GUINIMAN	Pub. Tineo, Ifugao GC- 79083		MPOC CHAIRMAN	SUPPORTER NG NPA
21	WILLIAM BINAYAT	HAGDAN RESIDENCE, DUSONG, P.OB. SOUTH, LAGUAYE		HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICER	UTAK NG NPA
22	JUDE BAGGO	HAGDAN RESIDENCE, DUSONG, P.OB. SOUTH, LAGUAYE		SEC. GEN. IFM	UTAK NG NPA
23	SANTOS SICHAWA	HAGDAN RESIDENCE, DUSONG, P.OB. SOUTH, LAGUAYE		SEC. GEN. MDEC	UTAK NG NPA
24	SIBERA SUGAO	HAGDAN RESIDENCE, DUSONG, P.OB. SOUTH, LAGUAYE		SEC. GEN. CDOP	UTAK NG NPA
25	MARVIN CANTAS	HAGDAN RESIDENCE, DUSONG, P.OB. SOUTH, LAGUAYE		CDRC OFFICER	UTAK NG NPA
26	EDWIN BUMALYAG	HAGDAN RESIDENCE, DUSONG, P.OB. SOUTH, LAGUAYE		SEC. GEN. IFM	UTAK NG NPA
27	MORGAN WALING	Gumbang, Tineo, Ifugao		Farmers organization	TUGLARAN NG NPA ANG KANILANG BARAY
28	PHO DANGDEV	Gumbang, Tineo, Ifugao		Farmers organization	TUGLARAN NG NPA ANG KANILANG BARAY

Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC) development workers Blessy Jane Eslao and Neil Jake Simeon were harassed on June 25 by the 17th IB in Asiblangan, Kalinga. The soldiers asked for their IDs, cellphone numbers and home addresses. The soldiers also got their photos while a certain Sgt. Jessica De la Paz interrogated them, undermining the integrity of CDPC and insinuating that Ms. Eslao, Mr. Simeon and their colleagues were in Kalinga for a different purpose and not because of community research and project implementation.

Unabated and Systematic Use of Children in Countering Insurgency

Through the years, there has been an observable trend of utilization of children in counter-insurgency through the following forms: (a) short term encampment in schools and other children's facilities by AFP troops especially during military combat operations; (b) permanent detachments close to school facilities; (c) use of children as guides, sources of information on both activities and whereabouts of New People's Army (NPA), National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and open legal organizations; (d) use of children of revolutionaries to track, harass or "win over" their parents; (e) hasty labeling of children victims of human rights violations as child soldiers of NPAs.

The incidents monitored were:

- a. In the graduation ceremony of the child of a member of the revolutionary Cordillera Peoples Democratic Front, the entire family was intimidated by a suspected group of military intelligence closely stalking and tailgating them for days - in school, in malls, and in their residence.
- b. Two girls (13 and 17 y/o) were subjected to near death when bombs exploded around 40 meters away from where they were gathering edible snails during a military combat operation in barangay Lat-ey, Malibcong, Abra on May 31, 2013. The bombing was part of an aerial support of the AFP to a pursuit operation against the NPAs. Fortunate to have escaped death or physical injury, these two children who were subjected to

undue alarm and fear, if unattended can suffer from long term psychological distress.

The almost permanent and occasional encampment in schools endangers children, apart from exposing them to various vices of soldiers such as watching pornographic shows, gambling, marijuana, smoking, drinking liquor and others.

To make matters worse, the statement released by the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Deles in response to the incident insinuated that the two minors were "child soldiers". This was from a statement of Malibcong Mayor Benito Bacuyag that if there were children casualties in the incident, they might be "child soldiers".

Further, there are no effective mechanism of complaint and access to justice especially designed for children victims of human rights violations.

AFP Virtual Encampment in Residential Areas

Encampment within communities as a form of human shield remains to be the practice of the AFP. In effect, the encampment within residential areas endangers civilians in their own homes and villages.

In sitio Bantugo, Lacub, Abra, the 41st Infantry Battalion headed by Lt. Elmer Totoy uses the municipal police station as a military detachment. The military detachment is situated near a birthing clinic/municipal health clinic, the Poblacion Lacub Elementary School and is at the center of a cluster of residential houses. On the first week of April, residents complained of the soldiers' indiscriminate firing during the night. Residents were afraid that stray bullets might hit their houses and injure or kill people.

Earlier this year, on February 20, two farmers who were gathering firewood were shot at three times by soldiers who were at the grounds between the detachment and the birthing clinic. The farmers were across the river from the soldiers. The victims recalled that the soldiers were clearly aiming at them, with one almost getting hit at the right side of the body and both

of them almost getting shot at the head had they not scampered to safety.

Another 41st IB detachment is situated in Mataragan, Abra which is also close to a school.

In Mountain Province detachments of 54th IB are located near the schools and/or residential areas in Guinaang, Bontoc; Kin-iway, Besao; Butigue, Paracelis; Kadaclan, Barlig; and Poblacion, Sadanga. At

Lake Danum, a known tourist site, 136 CAFGU members intended to conduct a special training in counter-insurgency. They started setting-up camp, cutting trees and clearing the area but the Mayor requested them to leave because training in a tourist site is not welcome in the community.

Torture

In Lagangilang, Abra, charcoal-maker Maymar Alcantara was tortured by elements of the 41st IB while he was gathering firewood. He was accused of being a member of the NPA. Three soldiers in camouflage uniform, without nameplates and with their faces covered assaulted him on January 29 in Barangay Cayapa, Lagangilang while he was gathering firewood. They kicked him, restrained his hands and then punched him repeatedly on his face. They took off his shirt and with a knife, one of the soldiers carved an x mark on both sides of his chest. They stopped inflicting physical harm on him only after they saw his voter's identification card when they searched his pockets. He was subjected to surveillance for almost a week after the incident even after he reported the case to the barangay officials.

Aerial strikes/Bombings

On May 31, 2013, the 503rd Brigade, through air strikes, indiscriminately bombed Malibcong, Abra in their combat operations almost hurting two minors (13 years old and 17 years old, both females) as mentioned above.

Two bombs were dropped near Barangay Duldulao.

A bomb was dropped near Barangay Lat-ey, sitio Alligang but did not explode thus sparing the residents of probable death or injury. Just

the same, the bomb subjected the residents to grave danger. In rules of war, the AFP is obliged to clear the area of unexploded ordnance.

In the same barangay, a bomb was dropped and had exploded approximately 40 meters from where the two minors were and 120 meters away from the ricefield of Mr. Rommel Teneza who was tilling his land at that time. This was also 170 meters from the micro-hydroelectric power plant, the community's main source of power.

Arrest and Detention of Revolutionary Political Dissenters and Hors de Combat

Kennedy Bangibang. Mr. Bangibang of the Cordillere Peoples Democratic Front (CPDF) is a consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines on Cordillera affairs. He was apprehended on February 23, 2013 and is now facing multiple charges of murder. He is now in the Kalinga provincial jail.

Grayson Naogsan. Mr. Naogsan, son of the spokesperson of the CPDF has been incarcerated in the Ifugao provincial jail since November 2012. He is facing multiple murder and rebellion charges in Ifugao, Mountain Province and Abra. He has long been inactive from revolutionary involvement due to medical reasons and by all indications should be granted an hors d combat status, a right protected under the Geneva conventions.

Jovencio Baluga. Mr. Baluga is a former member of the NPA's militia. After years of inactive service he was issued a warrant of arrest for murder charges. He is now incarcerated in the provincial jail of Kalinga. He was arrested when he went to "clear" his name at the Balbalan Municipal Police Station.

While the 3 were detained under different circumstances, what is common is that they were incarcerated on acts pertaining to combat actions of parties involved in the civil war (National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines).

Reinforcing the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA)

Another form of redefining development approaches as part of Oplan Bayanihan is the government's continuing reinforcement of the CPLA, accordingly, as a "socio-economic" force.

During the administration of Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, members of the CPLA were integrated into the AFP, despite the call to disband the group in light of their heinous human rights record. More than 200 members of the CPLA were formally integrated into the AFP. New members continue to be recruited under three competing leadership.

Under the current administration of Benigno Aquino III, the CPLA has been further strengthened by awarding them multimillion pesos for socio-economic projects under the program "Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan – PAMANA." Under the pretext of transforming the CPLA as socio-economic force, this act by the President serves to consolidate this paramilitary group in the region. In fact, strengthening the CPLA has a nation-wide implication. President Aquino legitimized the use of paramilitary groups in counter-insurgency and as hired security forces/goons in the entire country. This move compliments the Executive Order of allowing mining firms to utilize paramilitary forces to beef up their security.

It is public knowledge that the CPLA serves as hired goons, most notable of fake ancestral land claimants in Baguio City. A leader of the CPLA publicly disclosed their involvement in the Carino property in Baguio City wrongly granted by the NCIP to the Paus¹. The same leader disclosed the involvement of the CPLA in the extortion of what they call 'revolutionary taxes.'

Tolerating Notoriety of the 86th IB Special Force 5th ID

According to the AFP's website, "the 86th Infantry Battalion of the 5th ID, named *Highlander*, was organized on February 2010 to fill in the lack of troops in the different infantry divisions of the AFP." It is composed of integrees of the CPLA and officers and men of

the Philippine contingent in the UN Peace Keeping Force in Israel and Syria. Its permanent unit is the 5th ID in Gamu, Isabela, the AFP unit operating in Northern Luzon. The 86thIB was first deployed in the entire province of Ifugao and parts of Nueva Vizcaya.

In its almost 3-year operations, the 86th IB has been implicated in the extrajudicial killings of Elmer Valdez of Sta. Lucia, Ilocos Sur and couple Vic and Rosario Valenzuela of Echague, Isabela.

CPLA integree and officer of the 86th IB Capt. Danilo Lalin remains a suspect in the rape of 'Isabel', a 16 year-old high school student from Mankayan, Benguet. Isabel suffered from dissociative amnesia and is now under temporary custody and rehabilitation.



Trumped-up charges of murder and frustrated murder were also filed against student-leader Mildred Salang-ey by the 86th IB but the complaint did not prosper due to the absence of probable cause. While not incarcerated, Mildred suffered dislocation from her studies, apart from the psychological impact of an impending arrest and detention. Her sister suffered psychological disorder in the aftermath of the incident.

It can be recalled that in July 2012, a case of torture and various incidents of divestment and destruction of properties by the 86th IB was documented in Tinoc and Asipulo, Ifugao.

While there are no documented incidents of human rights violations associated with the 86th IB for this report period, the silence of President Aquino on these fully documented and reported practices of notoriety is sending a message that these grave misconducts constitute legitimate part of the AFP's combat actions.

I. People's Response

Oplan Bayanihan's real character has endangered the lives and security of civilians working in neglected villages in the region where social services are elusive. Its deceptive nature was not able to hide the real targets of the Oplan, those who were tagged as critiques due to political beliefs but whose contributions to community development cannot be undermined by mere name-calling. It is irresponsible and condemnable for a state that abandons the people's rights to basic services and infrastructures to even have the nerve to tag those who bring these services to the marginalized sectors and communities as its 'enemies'.

Indigenous peoples facing development aggression have known that military and para-military groups are now serving the corporations as de-facto defense and security force further legitimizing attacks against defenders of ancestral lands, natural resources and human rights. The historical struggle for land and life persists amid intensifying repression of a state that values investments and monetary benefits more than the land and resources that nurture generations and indigenous culture.

The human rights situation in the region, with unmasked Oplan Bayanihan, transforms the military's real plan from deception to direct assaults against unarmed civilians from all political inclinations. Be it ordinary indigenous peoples, farmers, residents, workers, housewives, children, community officials, development workers, human rights workers-nobody is saved from the vicious political vilification perpetrated by a desperate and crumbling government who doesn't have anything to be proud of but an 'image'. The image of peace and development now bared is only used as propaganda capital of those banking in rhetorical democracy amid impunity.

This impunity was evident in the April 2013 report of the Benguet Regional Trial Court regarding the case of Desaparecido's James Balao stating that; "the investigative reports yielded zero results and inconclusive findings." After 5 years of investigation, the court is disappointed by the investigation conducted and being conducted by the AFP and PNP thus

called for parallel investigations from the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and the Commission on Human Rights (CHR).

Amid impunity, freedom loving people and advocates of human rights are called to take concrete actions to help victims of human rights violations in their assertion of rights and the pursuit for justice. Together with the victims we should muster the strength to make the violators of human rights accountable. We should demand for the dismantling of military troops and pull-out of detachments of those proven violators who continue to sow fear and terror in the communities.

Though intimidated, harassed and traumatized – the community people, development workers and human rights workers are one in saying;

We will persevere with the struggle for self-determined and human rights-based development.

We will continue to resist development aggression!

We will continue to demand:

Stop using children and children facilities in countering insurgency!

Stop using residential areas for military purposes!

End the use of aerial strikes in combat operations!

Dismantle the 86th IB and the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army!

Respect the right to political dissent!

Prosecute the perpetrators of human rights violations!

We will persist in defending human rights! We will persist in resisting OPLAN BAYANIHAN!

