



# CORDILLERA PEOPLES ALLIANCE

*For the Defense of the Ancestral Domain and for Self Determination*

May 1, 2010

## Results and Highlights of the 26<sup>th</sup> Cordillera Day Celebrations: Resolutely Advance the Politics of Change!

The Cordillera Peoples Alliance and its provincial chapters successfully carried out the 26<sup>th</sup> Cordillera Day celebrations or Cordillera Day 2010 in the Cordillera provinces of Benguet (April 10), Mountain Province (April 17), Kalinga (April 24), Ifugao (April 24)—towards the regional celebration at Melvin Jones, Baguio City on April 25. Abra also held its celebration in Bangued on May 1. At least 5,000 delegates from the Cordillera provinces, nearby provinces of La Union, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte; Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Mindanao and overseas (Taiwan, Cambodia, Thailand, Australia, France, Japan, Canada and Germany) participated in the regional celebration, under the central theme *Advance the Politics of Change!* Provincial mobilizations from the decentralized celebrations far exceed the regional mobilization on April 25. Cordillera Day this year was also celebrated abroad in Hong Kong and Canada (Vancouver and Toronto).

The CPA and this year's Cordillera Day host, the Tongtongan ti Umili (TTU), sincerely thanks all individuals, organizations, advocates and solidarity partners who contributed in many ways, for the success of the regional celebration. We also thank the following organizations and individuals for the written messages of solidarity, which were read in the decentralized and regional celebrations: Dap-ayan ti Bago, Kankanaey ti Aurora Inc. and TAWID Aurora, Kalumbay Lumad Organization (Northern Mindanao); Yilan Kanke Indigenous Development Association (YKIDA, Taiwan), BAYAN Canada, Unrepresented Nations and Peoples' Organization (UNPO, The Netherlands), Artists Project Earth (United Kingdom), Philippine Indigenous Peoples' Links (London), Fr. Rex Reyes, National Secretary General of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), International Movement of Catholic Students Asia Pacific (IMCS), Joris Smeets (Belgium), International Young Christian Students (IYCS), International Work Group on Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA), International Indian Treaty Council (IITC, California, USA), German Filipino Friendship and the Monday Demonstration (Germany), Institution for Ecology and Action Anthropology (Cologne, Germany). In support of Cordillera Day 2010, candidates Loren Legarda, Jejomar Binay and Leandro B. Yangot also gave written messages of solidarity.

Significant outputs include the provincial resolutions on the May 10 elections and the Cordillera Peoples Declaration on the Politics of Change and the May 2010 elections, which contains the basic and urgent issues, needs and concerns of the Cordillera indigenous peoples in relation to ancestral land rights, human rights, right to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), Genuine Regional Autonomy, environment and climate change, basic social services and livelihood, economic progress, including women and children's rights. These Declaration serves as the Cordillera indigenous peoples agenda to political parties and candidates vying for different positions on May 10.





### Opening Ceremonies, KATRIBU Regional Meeting de Avance

The celebration opened with an indigenous ritual and prayer led by Ibaloi elders, followed by a Bendian dance by Ibaloi women elders. Next was the opening cultural presentation by youth and children (ages 3 to 10 years old) of Tanglag, Lubuagan, Kalinga and a militant flag dance and acknowledgement of all delegates present. The children's cultural presentation on the pressing need to continue the defense of the ancestral land and environment drew tears from the elders and CPA pioneers present, apart from the thundering applause from the audience. Welcome remarks were given by TTU Chairperson Geraldine Cacho and City Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr. CPA Advisory Council member Joanna K. Cariño provided the background and rationale of the 26<sup>th</sup> Cordillera Day celebration. The keynote speech was given by former CPA chairperson and now KATRIBU President and First Nominee, Beverly Longid.

Another highlight is the regional Meeting de Avance of KATRIBU Indigenous Peoples Partylist, which the CPA co-founded and is supporting in the May polls. Here, senatorial candidates and indigenous peoples' rights advocates Satur Ocampo and Liza Maza gave messages on the theme and their platform on indigenous peoples' rights. The fifth nominee, who is also a CPA member and local leader from Benguet province, Vergel Aniceto also gave a message on the politics of change and KATRIBU's role in forwarding it. MAKABAYAN National Secretary General Nathaniel Santiago meanwhile provided a framework on the national political situation and challenges. Some local candidates supportive of indigenous peoples rights and with clear track records on good governance and transparency also gave their messages of solidarity.

The cultural presentations, including those from the Kalinga delegation and local artists led by the Dap-ayan ti Kultura iti Kordilyera (DKK) made the opening ceremonies and Meeting de Avance both colorful, cultural and militant.

### Cultural Parade, Cordillera Peoples' Declaration and Cultural Night

The afternoon program kicked off with a cultural parade of all 5,000 delegates along the main thoroughfares of the City. Strong rains and mud did not dampen the spirits of the delegations—in fact, the rains were deemed a blessing to the regional celebration and the regional meeting de avance of KATRIBU. The local band Binhi opened the program proper with original compositions on the politics of change.

Provincial resolutions from the decentralized celebrations on the May 10 elections were presented by their representatives. This was followed by

the Cordillera Peoples Declaration on the Politics of Change and the May 10 Elections presented by the CPA Secretary General. Gongs were played and various traditional dances were presented, with the participation of national and international delegates, who did not mind the rain but stayed on until the later parts of the programme. CPA Chairperson Windel Bolinget meanwhile gave the synthesis and closing of the whole day affair, by citing the gains of Cordillera Day 2010 and the challenges beyond.

Before the cultural night where all delegates prepared songs, poems and dances, the tribute to Cordillera martyrs was carried out in honor of the Cordillera homeland's heroes and martyrs, for their invaluable contribution for the defense of land and life of the Cordillera indigenous peoples. Tributes were also held in the different provincial presentations, and this year, we specifically paid our respects to Ret. Rev. Peter Alanguí of Sagada, Mountain Province and Francis Macliing of Bugnay, Tinglayan, Kalinga. Rev. Alanguí was active in the human rights work of the region, while Francis, the eldest son of Macliing Dulag was also an active member of CPA Kalinga.

Traditional dances from the Cordillera, from the indigenous Aeta of Central Luzon, from the Moro peoples of Mindanao and Taiwan's indigenous peoples were presented during the cultural night, with the enthusiastic participation of other delegations who were very eager to learn such cultures.



## What We Have Gained

It is important to note that the provincial and regional celebrations were successful even with the harassment and red tagging of the military of local organizers and leaders, and the partylists and candidates the CPA and its members support. The Cordillera Day celebrations for the whole month of April until first of May attained its goal of contributing to the overall strengthening of indigenous peoples' capacity to assert and defend their collective and individual human rights.

More specifically, we attained the following humble gains from our 26<sup>th</sup> celebrations:

1. Cordillera Day 2010 provided a venue to raise awareness of the politics of change to advance indigenous peoples' rights and promote fair, peaceful, honest and clean elections on May 10, 2010
2. We have sustained the increased participation of Cordillera indigenous communities in the annual Cordillera Day gathering. If we include the provincial mobilizations from the decentralized celebrations, the total number of individuals mobilized shall be far greater than the regional mobilization of 5,000 last April 25
3. Cordillera Day provided a venue for greater understanding of issues confronting indigenous peoples and the Filipino people, in relation to national and international developments
4. Cordillera Day 2010 also provided a venue to continue fostering solidarity among Cordillera indigenous communities through cultural exchanges and sharing of experiences in their common struggles
5. As shown by the representation of advocates and indigenous groups from other regions and abroad, Cordillera Day also renewed and strengthened solidarity relations of Cordillera indigenous peoples with national and international advocates
6. Lastly, Cordillera Day 2010 also provided an arena to develop Cordillera indigenous peoples capacity in articulating the politics of change to address their issues and longstanding concerns.

Cordillera Day 2010 marks an advancement of the Cordillera indigenous peoples social movement, considering the many challenges—political and logistical—were overcome and dealt with to sustain Cordillera Day for the past 26, and it is only the Cordillera mass movement that has sustained this. Compared to the 2009 celebrations, we were able to culminate this year's provincial celebrations in a regional celebration in the regional urban center of Baguio City. These gains must be built on for the Cordillera mass movement, for the coming Cordillera Day celebrations, such as Cordillera Day 2011.

We are indebted to our solidarity friends and partners for the success of the 26<sup>th</sup> Cordillera Day celebration. For this, the CPA is very grateful—thank you for making Cordillera Day 2010 successful and meaningful! #

ATB Anongos  
Secretary General  
Cordillera Peoples Alliance  
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