

December 13, 2011
Press Release

First NL Mining & Human Rights Summit Opens with Rallying Call for Env'l Defense, Support for HB 4315

BAGUIO CITY— Over 400 community representatives from the provinces of the Cordillera, Cagayan Valley, Ilocos regions and the province of Pangasinan, including environment and human rights advocates gathered in this City for the first Northern Luzon Mining and Human Rights Summit, dubbed Amianan Salakniban.

Rallying calls to defend patrimony, end mining plunder, scrap the Philippine Mining Act of 1995 and support for House Bill 4315 or the People's Mining Bill reverberated in the Quirino Hall, Teachers Camp, as regional delegates stood to be recognized.

Keynote speaker Hon. Teddy Casino of BAYAN MUNA Partylist and Chairman of the House Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship Development congratulated the summit organizers and delegates for the timely event, given the urgency of the situation in Northern Luzon on the matter of mining plunder and human rights violations. Casino discussed BAYAN MUNA and his Committee's achievements to date, in relation to people's struggles versus large and destructive mining, such as on-site and congressional hearings. He also discussed salient points from HB 4315, of which he is the main author.

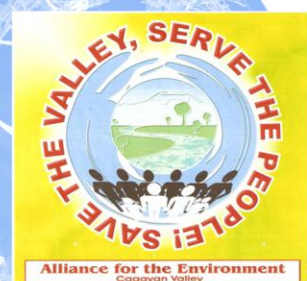
Following the keynote address were situationers on the National and International Developments on Mining in the Context of Globalization by Ms. Rosario Bella Guzman of IBON Databank Foundation, and the Northern Luzon Situationer on Mining, Human Rights and Disaster Response, by Ms. Roxanne B. Veridiano, RDC-KADUAMI Executive Director. These two inputs helped deepen their understanding and analysis of the mining situation in their communities, and the current policies of the Aquino administration that continues to allow mining plunder in the country, especially in indigenous territories.

Guzman discussed global mining trends and implications to the Philippine mining industry, and debunked the myths of corporate mining social responsibility thru case presentations and analyzed data on supposed investments and revenues from the mining industry.

Veridiano meanwhile shared that the Colossal Mining Corp. currently holds the largest control of over 14,000 hectares of Exploration Applications for magnetite offshore mining in 14 municipalities within Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur and Pangasinan. The race for copper, gold and silver in the Cordillera is dominated by Philex Mining, with one mining lease and a Mineral Sharing Production agreement covering over 8,000 hectares in Tuba and Itogon in Benguet province. Cordillera Exploration, Lepanto Consolidated and Itogon Suyoc Resources follow suit. In Cagayan Valley, there are currently 2 Financial and Technical Assistance Agreements (FTAAs) and 6 Exploration Permits (EPs) covering at least 37,000 hectares in Nueva Vizcaya and Quirino provinces.

To give life and faces to the above discussions, community representatives from the three regions and province of Pangasinan shared chronicles of their struggle to defend the environment, their livelihood sources and their very lives, from large mines.

Towards the end of the day, two presentations under the theme Alternatives and Development for the People were discussed by Renato Reyes, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan Secretary General, and Benedict Solang of the Center for Development Programs in the Cordillera (CDPC).



The first day of the summit ended with the launching of *No Black, No Blue, No Green*—a video documentary on 14 offshore magnetite mining produced by RDC KADUAMI.

Panel presentations on December 14 are on the Writ of Kalikasan, the People's Mining Bill; on Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), Small-Scale Mining, and on Vilification and the Oplan Bayanihan.

After workshops on continuing advocacy plans and resolutions, the book *William 'Billy' Claver: Towards Implementation of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Law (Selected Speeches and Statements)* will be launched at around 7PM. #

Announcement to Media:

Media interviews with Cong. Teddy Baguilat start at 11 AM tomorrow, December 14.

A march-rally on the commemoration of International Human Rights Day takes place on December 15.

