

# **PNOY'S 1<sup>ST</sup> YEAR HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD**

## **A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING**

*"Today, the dream starts to become a reality"*

*-Pres. Benigno Simeon Aquino III inaugural speech*

PNoy's rhetoric of change seemed perfect for the people who were aspiring of genuine social change after nine years under a corrupt, puppet and murderous Arroyo regime. His propaganda of change, backed by the US and local landlords and compradors, drew attention to the optimistic public as he used the term "Daang Matuwid" (righteous path) for his governance. Aquino had a high popularity rating at the start of his stint as the 15<sup>th</sup> President, this steadily went down due to his dismal performance.

A year after Aquino's inauguration, the peasants, workers, indigenous peoples, women, youth and children, local businessmen and other sectors remain deep in the quagmire of poverty and hunger.

Instead of genuinely addressing the people's concerns, PNoy renewed State fascism and terrorism by extending Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's murderous Oplan Bantay Laya, resulting to a new wave of killings and other human rights violations. By December, PNoy introduced "Oplan Bayanihan", his new counterinsurgency program, adopted from the 2009 US Counterinsurgency Guide, and accordingly, a paradigm shift of the Armed Forces that will respect "human rights, peace and development".

### **STATE TERROR CONTINUES**

A year of Aquino's presidency, the people's rights continue to be violated by, ironically, the ones using the term "human rights", no other than the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP). From July 2010-June 2011, there are already 45 victims of extrajudicial killings and 4 victims of enforced disappearances.

Northern Luzon, composed of Cordillera, Ilocos and Cagayan Valley Regions, was among the priority areas of Arroyo's OBL 1 and 2. Now with Oplan Bayanihan, peasant and indigenous communities in Northern Luzon are subjected to intensified military operations of the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division of the Philippine Army under Major General Rommel Gomez.

In the Cordillera region, heavy military deployment remains especially in communities that oppose destructive projects such as dams, mines and logging. Military elements belonging to 501<sup>st</sup>, 502<sup>nd</sup> and 503<sup>rd</sup> Brigades, all under 5<sup>th</sup> ID, have committed violations on indigenous peoples' communities. Very recently, according to Cordillera Human Rights Alliance (CHRA), Aquino's OPB has resulted to intensified military operations in indigenous communities. Individual and collective rights such as destruction of properties, bombings, shelling, sexual abuse, illegal searches and seizures, threat/harassment/intimidation, illegal arrests and detention, and military encampment, were the results of these operations.

In the Ilocos region, Ilocos Human Rights Alliance (IHRA) has documented two (2) extrajudicial killings as a result of the strike and commando operations conducted by 503<sup>rd</sup> Brigade, then under Col. Essel Soriano. Nicolas Ramos and Elmer Valdez have been missing for 47 days and 4 days respectively, until their bodies, were found in September last year. Also, the massive military operations of 503<sup>rd</sup> Brigade last September 2010 have led to other violations on individual and

collective rights such in Santa Lucia and its neighbouring towns. The notorious 703<sup>rd</sup> Brigade took over the Ilocos region earlier this year and has been conducting triad operations since then among peasant communities. 703<sup>rd</sup> Brigade was known for its bloody record in Central Luzon under then Gen. Jovito Palparan.

In Cagayan Valley region, communities especially in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela, have also been subjected to intensified military operations under the 5<sup>th</sup> IDPA. Suspected state security agents shot Juli Rosal in Buguey, Cagayan, killing him instantly and indiscriminately fired upon six (6), severely injuring two (2) others. The military and police suspected the group as NPA members. They are Agtas, one of the indigenous peoples in Sierra Madre who frequent the forest and define parts of the range as their territory and ancestral land.

Leaders of progressive organizations and community volunteers in Northern Luzon, have been continuously under attack by PNoy's Oplan Bayanihan. Bonifacio Labasan, chairperson of Danggayan Dagiti Mannalon ti Isabela (DAGAMI) was killed by motorcycle-riding tandem in Isabela last March, trumped up charges have been filed against Mildren Salang-ey, a member of the Mountain Province Youth Alliance (MPYA) by the elements of military, while members of the Community Health Education, Services and Trainings in the Cordillera Region (CHESTCORE) were recently subjected to surveillance and received death threats because of the health services they render to far-flung communities in the Cordillera.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATOR**

PNoy's first year exposed. He has been a wolf in sheep's clothing.

PNoy's dream of change is a nightmare for the people. No genuine change occurred since PNoy sworn into office. He pursued the interests of imperialist countries, big landlord, and compradors. His government, a shaky and compromising one, tolerated graft and corruption among his cronies and within the ranks of the AFP and PNP. He made justice an unreachable dream as he failed to prosecute the crimes of the bloodbath Arroyo regime. Like his predecessor, PNoy's government remained fascist in nature as he launched blatant attacks to communities and the people's movement. His prospects for peace remain dim as he uses the Peace Talks for pacification and capitulation instead of addressing the root causes of armed conflict.

The people will not be deceived. We shall continue to expose and oppose another puppet and anti-people regime, defy his state terror and demand social justice and equity for the victims of human rights violations. We shall remain steadfast in our commitment to fight for people rights until we attain our national democratic aspirations.

**Karapatan ng mamamayan, ipaglaban!  
Ilantad at labanan ang papet, pahirap at inutil na rehimeng US-Aquino!  
Isulong ang pakikibaka para sa kalayaan, karapatan, katarungan at pagbabago!**

**Cordillera Human Rights Alliance, Ilocos Human Rights Alliance,  
KARAPATAN-Cagayan Valley, Hustisya-Northern Luzon**

**June 30, 2011**