



CORDILLERA PEOPLES ALLIANCE

For the Defense of the Ancestral Domain and for Self Determination

8 August 2013

CPA Statement on the Occasion of the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples

With the rest of the country's indigenous peoples, the Cordillera Peoples Alliance reaffirms and reiterates the Indigenous Peoples Agenda to the Aquino government, officially submitted to Malacanang at the start of the term of Pres. Benigno Aquino III. We call on government to recognise and uphold the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), and the recent Alta Outcome Document resulting from the historic Alta Conference in the ancestral lands of the indigenous Saami in Norway.

We are enraged and disappointed at the worsened oppression of indigenous peoples three years into the Aquino presidency. 35 extrajudicial killings of indigenous leaders and activists have already taken place, including 5 women and 4 children at a nationwide scale. We condemn the political vilification of our IP human rights defenders, advocates and development workers has intensified, on top of the continuing militarization in interior communities, especially in areas where there are large mining projects and applications are, and where community opposition against such, is strong. Our right to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) remains manipulated and violated, resulting to the further plunder and exploitation of our ancestral lands and remaining resources. Government must respect our inherent right to FPIC as a principle and as a process. Nothing that concerns us can be decided on without us.

We demand Philippine government to respond and address the urgent issues outlined and discussed in the Indigenous Peoples Agenda, clustered into the following themes: 1) lands, territories, development; 2) human rights, militarization and the peace process; 3) conflicting laws, the NCIP, titling, FPIC; and social services, disaster risk reduction and climate change impact to indigenous peoples. Nowhere in the President's fourth State of the Nation Address (SONA) are these urgent issues to be found.

The Philippine government is a signatory to the UNDRIP, hence, it must take the lead in realising its purpose. Unless it is implemented, it will not be meaningful to us, and yet we lobbied UN for a long period so that indigenous peoples rights are substantially recognised and upheld by States.

Lastly, we strongly urge the Philippine government to support to the Indigenous Peoples Agenda to the UN General Assembly High Level Plenary Meeting or the World Council of Indigenous Peoples in 2014.

Reference:

AB Anongos
Secretary General