



ASIA INDIGENOUS PEOPLES PACT FOUNDATION

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Chiang Mai, Thailand
10 March 2018

Philippines: End the Abuse of Power and Violence to Human Rights Defenders

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact's Call to Repeal the Petition Declaring the former Secretary-General of AIPP, Joan Carling, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Corpuz-Tauli, and other indigenous leaders and human rights defenders as Terrorists and Outlaws

On 21 February 2018, the Department of Justice filed a petition to the Regional Trial Court of the National Capital Region in Manila City declaring around 600 individuals, many of them human rights defenders and political activists, as “terrorists and outlawed organisations, associations and/or group of persons.”¹

Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP), a regional organisation of 48 indigenous peoples organisations and movements in 14 countries in Asia, strongly condemns these accusations of the Philippine government to the former Secretary-General of AIPP, Joan Carling, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Corpuz-Tauli, and many other indigenous leaders and human rights defenders. Other indigenous leaders and human rights defenders included in the list are Windel Bolinget, Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) chairperson, Joanna Cariño, SANDUGO co-chairperson, Jose Molintas, former member of the UN Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (EMRIP), Beverly Longid, global coordinator of the International Indigenous Peoples Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL), Datu Mandayhon of the Talaandig people, Datu Mampadayag of the Banwaon people, and leaders of Pigyayungan, Loloy Adie and Mamerto Guaynon.²

Both Carling, who was also a former member of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and currently the co-convenor of the Indigenous Peoples Major Group (IPMG) of the Sustainable Development and the UN SRRIP Corpuz-Tauli³ have denounced this false and fabricated accusation. Corpuz-Tauli called the allegations, “baseless, malicious and irresponsible.” And Carling, in her statement, noted that the petition, “not only pose a risk to my security, but is also an affront to the exercise of the fundamental rights and freedoms associated with democratic governance, and to the human rights obligations of the Philippine government.”⁴

The petition is alarming as the declaration of the groups and individuals as terrorists enables the government to monitor them more closely, track finances and curb access to resources, among other measures.⁵ The Philippine government has been continuously called out by the international community regarding the impunity of the police and the military from extrajudicial executions and ongoing attacks against voices who are critical of the current Government, including human rights defenders.

We stand in solidarity with all those indigenous leaders, human rights defenders, and political activists being criminalised for challenging the horrific abuse of human rights violations and related abuses of the Philippine government.

We reiterate our commitment to be in solidarity to challenge any form of repressions, injustices, and false accusations, among others.

Gam Shimray
Secretary – General
Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact

¹ See link for the petition: <http://bit.ly/2Fpel18>

² See link for statement regarding the indigenous Lumad: <http://bit.ly/2Hlz6N1>

³ See statement of Corpuz-Tauli: <http://bit.ly/2oWXwF8>

⁴ See statement of Carling: <http://bit.ly/2tvj6Gh>

⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-rebels/philippines-seeks-terrorist-tag-for-600-alleged-communist-guerrillas-idUSKCN1GK0DO>