

45th Session of the Human Rights Council

Enhanced Interactive Dialogue, Item 2

September 24, 2020

Delivered by: Rev. Kakay Pamaran

Thank you,

My name is Kakay Pamaran. I serve at Union Theological Seminary, Philippines, and am also the co-chair of the South Africa-based organization, GIN-SSOGIE.

Two years ago, our Seminary provided sanctuary to over a hundred Indigenous People fleeing militarization of their communities and ancestral lands in the Philippines. They came to the capital in the hopes of bringing to the fore the violence committed against them.

We welcome the report of the Special Rapporteur and highlight that in spite of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997, the unimaginable violence committed against the Lumad of Mindanao and other indigenous communities in the Philippines continues unabated.

The ecumenical movement will continue to exhaust all possible efforts to support indigenous peoples and their culture, spiritualities, rituals, and faith traditions—ensuring their right to self-determination and their traditional ways of knowing and being. This, for many of us, is an act of faith to the God who is known by many names and an act of repentance for the many historical atrocities committed against them.

Under a political climate that demonizes the struggle of the Indigenous Peoples and defenders, this situation has become worse. Our church workers, Bishops and Pastors continue to be vilified, red-tagged, and killed for their humanitarian work and ministries.

We call upon this council to hold the Philippine Government accountable for the crimes committed against the indigenous peoples and those who stand in solidarity with them.

I thank you.