

**12th Session of the UNPFII**  
**Intervention on Item 8:**  
**On the Philippine National Commission on Indigenous Peoples**  
**By: Fr. Rex Reyes Jr.**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and good morning to you esteemed indigenous peoples from around the world gathered here.

This is a joint statement of the Stop the Killing of Indigenous Peoples Network in the Philippines, the National Alliance of Indigenous Organizations in the Philippines, the Cordillera People's Alliance and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines. We recognize the UNDRIP as a milestone in the protracted struggle of the indigenous peoples for the recognition and respect of their human rights. We take heart on the positive calls it makes to the states especially the provisions urging states to provide the mechanisms that ensure that indigenous people's rights are observed and protected. We also take note of the positive response of states.

In the Philippines, we have such a mechanism which is called the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples or NCIP for brevity. The NCIP is supposed to see to the implementation of UNDRIP especially provisions in Articles 8, 10, 15 and 46 among others. Instead, the NCIP has been silent on the violation of human rights to indigenous peoples brought about ~~the~~ massive resource extraction. It remains silent on a Philippine Mining Bill that places the interest of indigenous people at the back seat in the name of foreign investment and development. It remains silent on the extrajudicial killings of indigenous peoples 35 cases of which are documented under the current president. It remains silent on the harassment of indigenous human rights workers like Jude Baggo, conducted by the state's security forces. It remains silent on the state's anti-insurgency policy that undermines human rights and civil liberties. At a dialogue between an indigenous group and the head of the NCIP, the NCIP head told her audience that if they had no land titles, they had nothing to talk about. This Incident is a clear violation of Indigenous Peoples' rights to land and territories

Mr. Chair, the NCIP has so far failed its mandate as a mechanism for the spirit of UNDRIP. It has become a tool for deception, systematic land grabbing and human rights violation leading to further Marginalization of Indigenous Peoples.

We respectfully submit the following recommendations to the 12th Session of the UNPFII:

1. To urge the Philippine government to create an independent body to review and evaluate the performance of the NCIP, including the Office of the Southern Cultural Communities in Mindanao, as well as other Philippine statutes on the rights of indigenous peoples. In this regard, the active participation of indigenous people must be requisite;

2. To urge the Philippine government to Scrap Operation Plan Bayanihan; investigate the numerous cases of human rights violations done on indigenous peoples; prosecute those responsible in compliance with international laws, protocols and agreements it has signed; and withdraw military forces in indigenous peoples territories.

3. To support the call of the indigenous peoples for the repeal of the Mining Act of 1995 in favor of a people's mining bill currently filed in the Philippine Congress;

Thank you, Mr. Chair