

**Human Rights Council
Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Eighth session, 20 – 24 July 2015
United Nations Office, Geneva, Switzerland**

Agenda Item 9: Proposals to be submitted to the Human Rights Council for its consideration and approval

Statement of the KATRIBU Kalipunan ng Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas

Presented by: Pya Macliing Malayao, Secretary General, KATRIBU

Thank you Mister Chair.

Brute forms of extensive militarization, sanctioned by the promulgation of State laws and policies such as the counter-insurgency policy Operation Plan Bayanihan of the Aquino Government, derogates the fundamental non-derogable human rights of indigenous peoples.

Impact of militarization ranges from direct civilian killings to land grabbing, facilitating development onslaught, economic dislocation, and other forms of human rights violations and violations to our collective rights.

State militarize our communities to subdue self-determination movements and to implement extractive industries and other unsustainable development projects that are all resulting in worsening land conflicts and numerous human rights violations. Indigenous territories are being used for military purposes which constitute direct violations of State laws and the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Women, youth and children are not spared, with the countless indigenous women and children who fell victim of rape and other sexual abuses, and even extra-judicial killing by State military members.

We have witnessed a marked increase in deployment of military troops in Mindanao since 2012. Currently, more than 50% of the state military forces are deployed in Mindanao. Since then, human rights violation against the lumad communities have risen to alarming proportions. This has led for the repeated evacuation of indigenous communities to evade the military and to push their demand for the immediate pullout of the military in their communities. From 2011 to 2014, there have been 38 cases of evacuations affecting more than 11,000 individuals, mostly indigenous women and children.

This year, more than 700 lumad sought refuge in Davao City from the Provinces of Davao del Norte and Bukidnon because of the encampment again of their communities and schools since May. For decades now, these communities have also been defending the Pantaron Range, one of the remaining least tapped territories by big businesses and extractive industries. They have been tagged by the government as supporters or communities of the armed revolutionary forces and have been subjected to different forms of atrocities by state forces and the paramilitary groups they have formed as force multipliers for counter-insurgency and as investment defense forces.

Sadly, just this morning, more than 500 policemen illegally, violently, and forcibly entered the sanctuary and evacuation camp to force the evacuees to return to their communities. Some military and paramilitary belonging to the ALAMARA group have also been lingering around the evacuation camp.

This happened after Nancy Catamco, the chair of the House committee on indigenous people of the Philippine Congress, falsely and maliciously accused activists and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines who provided sanctuary to the evacuees, of "kidnapping and detaining" the lumads against their will.

Militarization also targets educational facilities. From 2011-2014, there have been 46 documented cases of attacks against schools and community learning centers serving indigenous communities in Mindanao by State military and paramilitary groups.

Militarization has disturbed the profound relationships of Indigenous peoples with their lands and territories, and military activities are taking place without the Free, Prior and Informed Consent of indigenous communities. This has enormous social and cultural impacts, and also posing threats to the physical integrity, identity and survival of indigenous peoples.

Further exacerbating the problems of militarization within indigenous areas are operations of the government's paramilitary group, and tribal paramilitary groups that are organized by the State military among indigenous peoples. Thirteen cases of extrajudicial killings from July 2010 up to December 2014 are attributed to the operations of paramilitary groups.

We have been raising our concerns on militarization of indigenous communities in different platforms. However, instead of being addressed, the militarization of indigenous communities is worsening. The Outcome Document is even silent on the issues of militarization of indigenous communities, as well as the use of paramilitary groups for so called peace programs of the government and for corporations. We feel that the issue of militarization of indigenous communities must be given further attention in the future work of the EMRIP.

Hence, we appeal and forward the following recommendations:

- 1.) For the Human Rights Council to consider the issue of Militarization in indigenous peoples territories, and policies on Peace, Security and Development for the next study of the EMRIP
- 2.) To look unto the trends of human rights violations by state forces and paramilitary groups which are related to business interests, and the particular concerns on the burden carried by the indigenous women and children, division of indigenous communities, use of paramilitary groups, and bastardization of indigenous culture and political structures

Lastly, we hope for more strength for all the experts for your continued work for the indigenous peoples worldwide.