



36th Regular Session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 6: Universal Periodic Review of the Philippines
Oral Statement Delivered by Ellecer Carlos on behalf of
Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
Friday, 22 September 2017

Mr. President, FORUM-ASIA makes this statement in solidarity with the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA) and Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP). We regret that the Government of the Philippines did not accept 154 of the 257 recommendations it received at its Universal Periodic Review (UPR), particularly those on ending and investigating extrajudicial killings, protecting human rights defenders, and ensuring the right to freedom of expression.

The Philippines has continued to defend its 'war on drugs' but refuses to ensure that practices and policies conform to international human rights standards. It refuses to end and denounce extrajudicial killings. It also fails to ensure independent and impartial investigations, with the view of ensuring accountability for the thousands of cases reported. Furthermore, the Philippines refuses to cooperate with and grant unfettered and unconditional access to the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions.

Since the Philippines' UPR in May, killings in the 'war on drugs' have increased, with over 60 people killed in police operations in the span of two days in August. Disturbingly, the Philippine President publicly encouraged police to continue operations in such magnitude.

The Philippines has also failed to accept recommendations on protecting human rights defenders and journalists, and ensuring a safe and enabling environment for their work. In addition to the high number of killings of human rights defenders, especially indigenous, environmental and land rights defenders, threats have increased with the Philippine President stating that human rights workers should be shot by police. Media reporting on the 'war on drugs' also face intimidation and harassment.

The Philippines further risks backtracking on its international human rights obligations by refusing to accept recommendations to maintain the abolition of the death penalty and to maintain the minimum age of criminal responsibility.

FORUM-ASIA calls upon the Government of the Philippines to fully accept the remaining recommendations it noted and to seek technical assistance if needed. Furthermore, FORUM-ASIA calls upon the Government of the Philippines, in cooperation and consultation with civil society, to publicly set out a comprehensive, measurable and time-bound action plan for the implementation of UPR recommendations that comply with international human rights standards.

Thank you