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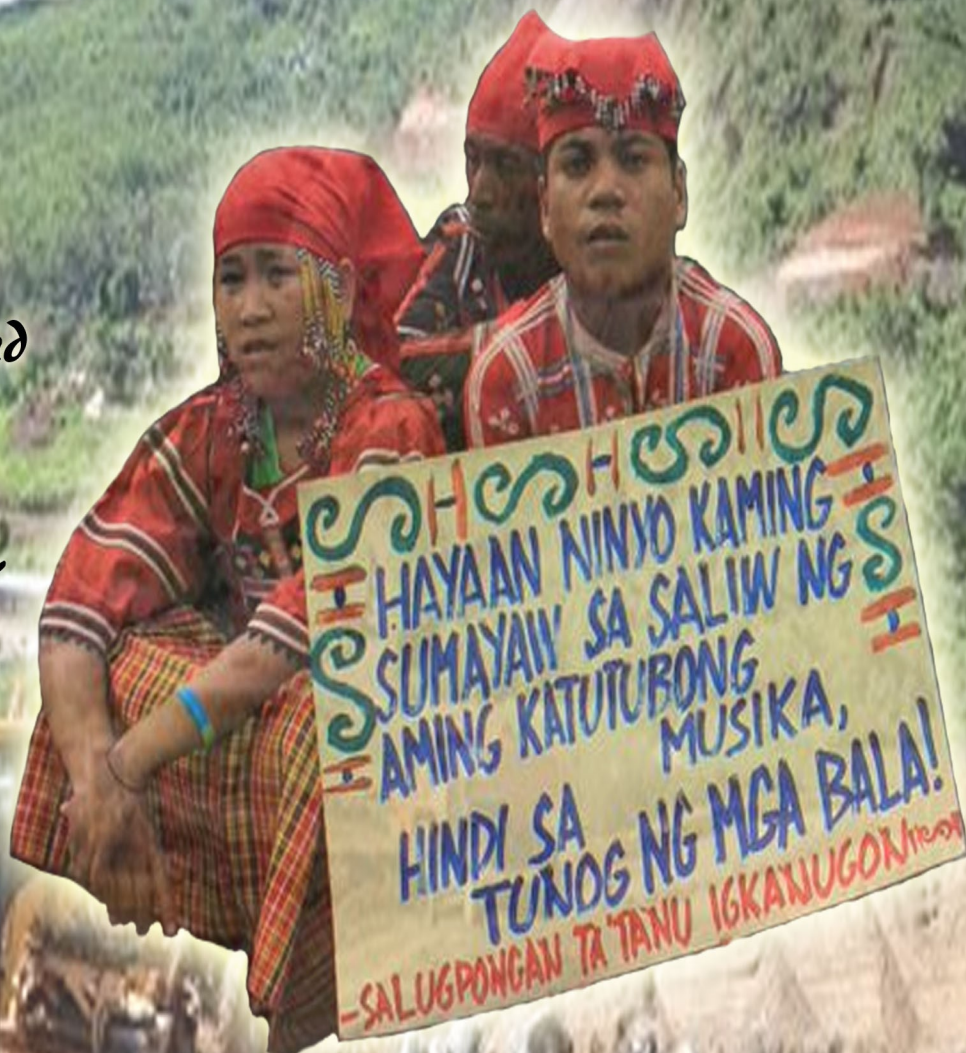
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## HUMAN RIGHTS WEEK CELEBRATION GUIDE 2015

*"Today's Spirituality:*

*Churches are Called  
to  
Defend  
Human Rights"*



# STOP



# KILLINGS



# Words of Greetings and Encouragement



This year's HR Week theme is: ***"Today's Spirituality: Churches are Called to Defend Human Rights"***.

We, in the UCCP, believe that we cannot divorce our concern for the spirit from the concern of the body. We believe in holistic ministry that addresses itself to the total person in community. Couple this with our belief that all persons are created in the image of God and therefore, all people are clothed with human dignity and are with certain inalienable rights that must be respected, protected and defended. This is the reason why Human Rights work is very important to us – so important that it is one on the Principles we stand on in our Declaration of Principles.

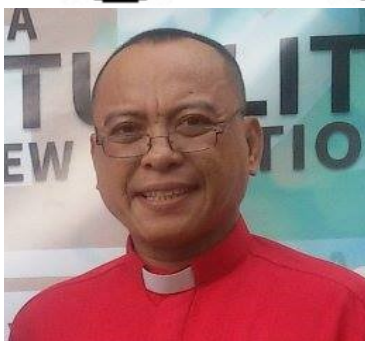
I enjoin and encourage everyone to take time to reflect and deepen our awareness of this important ministry as you use the HR Guide for this year. Discuss them in your Bible Study groups, in your Sunday School and in your own personal devotion.

Let us remember that God so loved the world that Jesus, the Son, had to be incarnated to our world. Jesus said, "As the Father sent me, so send I you." And so, the Church must also incarnate God's love to the world by loving human beings created in God's image.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "RNOMarigza". The signature is stylized, with the first letters of the first and last names being prominent.

**Bishop Reuel Norman O. Marigza**  
*General Secretary*  
*United Church of Christ in the Philippines*



## FOREWORD

***“When will Justice, Peace and Human Rights advocacy ends?”***

This was my question when my close relative, the late Dionie Caranzo Baris, challenged me to work after his term as Human Rights Violations Case Researcher/Documentor of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) Eastern Samar Chapter. ***“When there’s no longer human rights violations happening in our land,”*** was his logical and sincere reply. It was way back the year 1988.

Since then until today, reliable facts and figures suffice to prove that there is no significant change in terms of upholding and protecting human rights in all its aspects especially for the vast majority of citizens in this benighted country, the Philippines,

The prevailing situation of the Philippine society nowadays is becoming even worst from the perspective of the prophetic eyes of the Church of the entire biblical faith. It is characterized by the objective realities of the `worsening hunger and poverty among the majority of Filipinos, the increasing rate of the twin unemployment and under-employment, the lack of genuine land reform program, the price hike of prime commodities and services, the rampant violations against people’s political and civil rights as well as cultural, social and economic rights, widespread corruption in the state’s bureaucracy, plundering the natural resources through large-scale logging and mining resulting into mass enforced displacement of the Indigenous People from their ancestral lands, and selling/plundering our national patrimony and territorial integrity. These are, among others, the major causes of the on-going social unrest in our country today.

It is in such context that, as a matter of challenge and obedience to God’s mission, the UCCP considered an essential programmatic thrust that emanates from its faith affirmations and articulation for ***“Committed and dedicated prophetic witness of the Church as a collective response to the need to bring wholeness of life for all of God’s creation,”*** (Thrust # 5).

Admittedly, many from among our church constituents are not much abreast and comfortable with this kind of prophetic witness or ministry. Still a lot even expressed speaking and doing against it.


To help our church’s Judicatories, Organizations and Institutions (JOIs) be capable, empowered and have passion to engage in this kind of **prophetic spirituality**, we once again exerted efforts, by God’s grace, to produce this **UCCP Human Rights Week Celebration Guide 2015** with the **Theme: “Today’s Spirituality: Churches are Called to Defend Human Rights.”** A resource-material which basically contains Liturgies, Bible Study, Sermon, Biblico-Theological Reflection, Testimonies of JPHR Advocates and/or Defenders, Updates on UCCP JPHR Program, Pastoral and Press Statements on JPHR related Issues and Concerns, among others.

We are very much thankful to different writers we choose from different judicatories and institutions of our church who contributed **Liturgy:** Rev. Dr. Ferdinand A. Anno **Bible Study:** Rev. Dr. Jeaneth H. Faller and Rev. Revelation Velunta; **Biblico-Theological Reflection:** Bishop Jessie Suarez and Rev. Joseph Agpaoa; **Sermon:** Bishop Jaime Moriles and, **Testimonies:** Pastor Francisco Bunoan, Jr., Rev. Irma M. Balaba and Bro. Nelson T. Salvador. Equally heartfelt thanks goes to Bishop Reuel Norman O. Marigza, Mr. Jesse Emmanuel Bacon II and Rev. Rannie B. Mercado for **editorial;** Bro. Leandro Karlo Suarez for **layout;** and, Bro. Arfel Saranillo and Bro. Jophet T. Domingo for **technical support;** To Rev. Mario E. Latido and Sis. Melinda Grace Aoanan for **critiquing and constructive comments and advices.**

Hoping for a collective and meaningful Human Rights Week Celebration, All for God's Glory and Honor!

Thank you and wishing you all the best in this Yuletide season and beyond.

Very Truly in Christ,

  
**Rev. Jerome C. Baris**  
*National Coordinator*  
*Justice, Peace and Human Rights Program*



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# **BIBLE STUDY GUIDES**





# Human Rights Bible Study Guide

December 2015

Prepared by *Rev. Dr. Jeaneth Harris-Faller*

## I. Song

## II. Some Questions to start with (No need to answer just reflect)

- How many brothers/sisters/siblings do you have?*
- What makes you angry with your brother/sister/sibling?*
- How do you manage your anger?*

## III. Text : Genesis 4:1-16 (if possible dramatize it)

4Adam<sup>[a]</sup> made love to his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain.<sup>[b]</sup> She said, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth<sup>[c]</sup> a man." <sup>2</sup> Later she gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. <sup>3</sup> In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the LORD. <sup>4</sup> And Abel also brought an offering—fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup> but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast. <sup>6</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Why is your face downcast? <sup>7</sup> If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it." <sup>8</sup> Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field."<sup>[d]</sup> While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. "Am I my brother's keeper?"<sup>[e]</sup> <sup>10</sup> The LORD said, "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. <sup>11</sup> Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup> When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."<sup>[f]</sup> <sup>13</sup> Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is more than I can bear. <sup>14</sup> Today you are driving me from the land, and I will be hidden from your presence; I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me."<sup>[g]</sup> <sup>15</sup> But the LORD said to him, "Not so<sup>[h]</sup>; anyone who kills Cain will suffer vengeance seven times over." Then the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one who found him would kill him. <sup>16</sup> So Cain went out from the LORD's presence and lived in the land of Nod,<sup>[i]</sup> east of Eden.

## IV. The Text in Its Context

In the first three chapters of Genesis, we see: the wonder and power of our Creator God as he spoke the universe into being; the design and order of his good and abundant creation; the place and purpose of human beings within God's plans and purposes; the beauty and significance of human relationships; the corruption of God's perfect world; the personal, interpersonal, and cosmic consequences of sin; and the justice and mercy of God in responding to these things. The first eleven chapters of Genesis established the basic plotlines for the story of the Bible and, indeed, of the whole world. At this point, however, we will focus on Genesis 4:1-16, dealing with the familiar story of Cain and Abel. This story shows us how the sin and Adam and Eve had progressed.

In Genesis chapter 4, we can see that after they were mercifully banished from the Garden of Eden, and before they could do any more damage, Adam and Eve found themselves residing somewhere to the east of that place, never to return again. And then after this sad event, we are led now to the birth of the first child. Most likely this birth had been welcomed delightfully by Adam and Eve. However, it did not take long for us to savor the birth of Cain because that after the birth of Cain the second child is also born and is named Abel.

Right away we are introduced as to the occupation and the characters of the two sons! Abel was a keeper of sheep and that Cain was a worker of the ground. Sheep-tending and farming were occupations that are legitimate. Farming was the occupation of Adam and his son Cain, and was instituted directly by God. Sheep-tending was equally valuable. And both of these lines of work, notably, were expressions of the cultural mandate they had been given to manage God's creation on his behalf.

We can say that both Abel and Cain are believers of God. This belief is shown when they both come to worship this God through bringing their respective offering. This is one of the stories where we are not given all the details. So we don't know if this was the very first time that Cain and Abel had made offerings to the Lord. We don't know if Adam had been making them for some time, and now the two sons were taking on that responsibility as well. We don't even know why they were making these particular offerings, or how they even knew to make them in the first place. We don't know any of those things with certainty.

What we know based on the text is that as the brothers Cain and Abel brought their different offerings, we are told that the Lord accepted Abel's offering but not Cain's offering which made Cain very angry. Verse 5b

## V. The Text in Our Context (The Three Questions of God)

### 1. "WHY ARE YOU ANGRY? Verse 6

The rejection of Cain's offering led us to have a glimpse of who Cain is. And in the story Cain is portrayed to us the likeness of a wicked man, who desires to be esteemed. A man who is deceitful not sincere in his coming before God and pretentious. A person who is not only ready to complain against God but will also break forth into fury when he does not get what he believes he deserves than what other deserves.

However, in this event God remains to be cool and accepting. God seems to be not upset by Cain's anger. Here is something I think we have to take seriously in the story.

This part of the story is where we can ask ourselves. **How do we respond to a sovereign God? How do we choose to live in a world that does not always work like we think it should? How do we deal with the brother or sister, whom God has accepted?**

The sovereign God, gently prods Cain with questions, as a Father or mother would question a son. "Why are you angry?" "Why are you depressed?" There is no hostility in the questions. I suspect God knew why Cain was angry. Here is the sovereign God prodding Cain to confront his anger. And to confront the cause of his anger.

Although Cain responded so badly in this situation, God comes to him quite graciously and mercifully, challenging him personally and offering him an opportunity for repentance, for change. You see, while his act of worship on this occasion was not an acceptable thing, it was not, apparently, a fatal sin. God did not inflict any great punishment upon Cain for what he had done. Instead, God told Cain that if he did well in the future, he would be accepted. The phrase "doing well" probably refers to future acts of sacrifice. God clearly offered Cain a chance for repentance, a chance to turn back from his anger before it took hold of him.

We can say that the problem was not with Abel. The problem was never with Abel. The problem was with Cain's pride and arrogance. The only thing Abel was guilty of was being honest, faithful and generous to God who gave him everything. And Cain resented him for it, and it spawned within him a deep, sinful dislike for his brother. Abel has done nothing against Cain, but



the end result is a **murderous, jealous, envious, prideful, self-righteous hatred** aimed directly at him.

### Questions for Discussion

(just choose one or two of the questions and let them discuss by diad, triad or group of five)

- a. *What makes us angry with another person?*
- b. *Are we violating the right of the person when we become angry with him/her for no apparent reason?*
- c. *When do we say it is my right to be angry with you?*
- d. *Or when can we say that our anger is justifiable*

**Lesson: Spirituality is being able to handle or control our anger. It is also our ability to use our anger to protect life rather than destroy it. Like being angry to those in power who made the life of the poor people miserable.**

### 2. "WHERE IS YOUR BROTHER ABEL?" Verse 9

**Am I my brother's keeper was the response of Cain.** As I mentioned above God clearly offered Cain a chance for repentance, a chance to turn back from his anger before it took hold of him. However, what did Cain do instead? He let his anger controls him. And we see how this anger progressed. In Eve's case (Genesis 2) when God confronted her she realized she was wrong thus she sinned against God. In Cain's case, he turned deaf to what God told him, instead, Cain talked to Abel and said "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

We see God again re-entering in the story, just as he did with Adam and Eve, coming once again in search of his sinful and rebellious creatures. And in this encounter we also see, just as we did before, the justice of God, the mercy of God amidst that justice, and the sad, evasive, deceitful response of one of his creatures toward him.

God comes then to Cain, asking a question which I believe God already knows the answer. However, God did this to provide chance for Cain to come clean and own up to his sin. This is the same thing God had done with Adam and Eve in Genesis 3. And like them, Cain's response to this opportunity is less than encouraging. To God's question, "Where is Abel your brother?" Cain quite disrespectfully replies to God, "I do not know, am I my brother's keeper?" — as if to say, "I don't know why you're asking me these things. I don't recall receiving any instructions to look after Abel."

Cain did not only give an unsatisfactory response but a "rebellious" answer. And he completely lied to God, and never once admitted that he had done anything wrong. Instead, he engaged in diversionary tactics, he played games with God to get him off the subject.

Of course, God was not swayed or moved by these ridiculous response on Cain's behalf, and showed once again that nothing can be hidden from him. Even the silent victim of a capital crime has an advocate to speak for him — his own blood.

**When we start treating the person not our brother or sister but instead as our competitor or enemy, we refused to take care of them. When we refused to take care of them we lost our connection with them. When we lost our connection with them we deny their being. When we deny their being we also deny the mercy and the justice they deserved. When we denied them mercy and justice, we denied them life.**

### Questions for Discussion

***(prepare pentil pens and coupons bond and let the participants choose one of the questions and write their answer (only one word/phrase/sentence please) afterwards let them show it to the whole group without talking)***

- a. *Do you agree on how Cain answer God?*
- b. *When one becomes a brother/a sister?*
- c. *What happened when we stopped treating the person or persons as our brother/s sister/s/ kin/s?*
- d. *What kind of just punishment we deserved when we commit an unjust act/s to our brother/sister, or when we wronged our brother/sister?*

***Lesson: Spirituality is being able to accept and respect and above all love our brothers, sisters, or neighbors especially those whom we are in conflict.***

### 3. "WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?" V.10 b

God confronted Cain, asking him what he had done, but knowing all along exactly what had transpired, God pronounced judgment upon Cain for Abel's murder. God knows at this time that justice must be served. So, Cain received a curse which is totally different from what his parents received. With Adam the ground was cursed so that it resisted his efforts to produce good crops, but he himself was not cursed. However, with Cain the situation was worse, since he himself was cursed. And "the ground" itself was called also as a temporary executor of God's judgment upon Cain. The ground that Cain had poisoned and defiled with his brother's blood would now "render judgment" by refusing to produce anything worthwhile for its polluter Cain.

Furthermore, Cain was cursed to be a wanderer and a nomad for the rest of his life. As a wanderer he has to move about to find the food he could not grow himself. As a wanderer Cain felt a real sense of unease and nervousness about what might happen to him in the future as more people came along. He would never feel safe anywhere. The judgment on Cain was severe and permanent.

Let us be reminded that God did not punish Cain right away instead God offered a question and an opportunity for Cain to respond, to make some sort of admission of his guilt. It means that God's is still ready to show mercy to Cain in the midst of his unrepentant heart. This God's mercy is in fact shown once more when he puts a mark on the forehead of Cain. A mark which will be a sign that he is set apart. A sign that will caution those who will bother him to leave him alone and not harm him. This was an example of God's mercy toward the unjust and undeserving — a mercy that continues to be shown every single moment of every single day.

### Questions for Reflection

***(divide the group into two and let them choose two of the questions for their discussion)***

- a. *With what Cain's did do you think/feel he still deserves God's mercy?*
- b. *What have we done to our brothers/ sisters or neighbors?"*
- c. *What should be done when unjust acts are committed against our brothers/sisters?*

***Lesson: Spirituality is being able to do something so that mercy and justice will reign.***

### Conclusion

The account of Cain and Abel shows us the beginnings of two great lines of humanity: at the same it shows us the pattern of conflict between humanities in the Scripture: We see this between Noah and his sons, Ishmael and Isaac, Jacob and Esau, Israel and the other nations around her like Israel and Egypt and others.

Then we see this pattern in the New Testament, the life of Christ with the scribes and Pharisees who resented Jesus as surely as Cain resented Abel, and they conspired together to "rise up and kill him. This conflict goes on and on, the ultimate source of so many of the struggles and problems that Paul faced in the churches he planted in the New Testament. False teachers and wolves in sheep's clothing were running around all over the place, creating all kinds of difficulties for him.

In the church this Cain and Abel conflict still present externally and internally. So do we follow in the footsteps of Cain, or we reverse that response and choose a better way?

The message is still the same: **we should love one another**, and we have no **right to take the life of others (brother, sister, neighbor and it is the church's job, as the true worshipers of God, to reverse the action of Cain.** And we do this by loving one another. That's the proof. That's the mark that will show which of the two humanities we belong to.

**Guide Questions for more group discussions**

- a. How can we practice spirituality when we are angry?
- b. What happened when we refuse to recognize the person as our brother/sister/ neighbors?
- c. As a church what have we done so that conflict among people (family, church people, community) will be stopped?
- d. As a church what have we done to those in power who continue to violate peoples' rights? Do we just forgive them like what God did to Cain?

**Song “ Wont You Let me Be Your Servant? HFJ 286**

**Prayer**

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**SOURCES:**

<sup>1</sup>Genesis 4 Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary, [www.christnotes.org](http://www.christnotes.org) › Bible Commentary accessed 17 October 2105.

<sup>2</sup>Genesis 4 Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary, [www.christnotes.org](http://www.christnotes.org) › Bible Commentary accessed 17 October 2105.

<sup>3</sup>Abraham Kuruvilla, Genesis: A Theological Commentary for Preachers, (Eugene, Oregon: [Wipf and Stock Publishers](#), 2014), 75-83





## BE THERE. BE HOPE. BE UCCP

*"Today's Spirituality: Churches are Called to Defend Human Rights"*

*Luke 10: 25-37*

*By Revelation Enriquez Velunta*

*Union Theological Seminary, Philippines*

*International Human Rights Day 2015*

The world needs soup. Unfortunately, millions of people cannot even have or afford a decent cup of hot soup. Many in this country are so poor they gargle water for breakfast, take hot water for lunch, and force themselves to sleep at night in place of supper. *Mas emphatic sa Tagalog: Marami tayong kababayan na mumog ang agahan, nilagang tubig ang tanghalian, at tulong ang hapunan.*

*Kailangan ng mundo ang sopas. Kailangan ng Pilipinas ng sopas.* When Esau, in the Genesis text above, came to his brother, he was close to death. And he asked for soup. For billions of dispossessed people who struggle against death forces everyday, God's Shalom is actually a hot bowl of soup.

When loved ones among the dispossessed all over this country are sick, we try our best to give them soup. When our sisters' and brothers' homes and livelihood are destroyed by flash floods, our relief operations bring soup. When we offer feeding programs to our malnourished grade school children, we bring them soup. When our churches and church-related institutions welcome the homeless and street-children into our "soup kitchens," guess what we offer them?

The United States of America has resources to feed 40 billion people. That figure is six times the current population of the world, yet, according to UNICEF 25,000 children—5 years old or younger—die each day due to poverty. UNICEF estimates that it will only take 6 billion dollars annually to make sure that every one on earth receives basic education. It will take 9 billion dollars each year to make sure that everyone gets safe water and sanitation. 12 billion dollars a year would ensure that all women will receive reproductive health services, while 13 billion will ensure that each human being will receive basic health care. Yet, we know that half of the world's population survive on 2 dollars or less than 100 pesos a day. Many in this world—**especially that larger part of the world that calls itself Christian**—apparently does not prioritize or find important to allocate funds, services or resources to provide the "soup" for food, education, and basic health care.

Consider these figures: The United States spends 8 billion dollars each year on cosmetics. Europe spends 11 billion a year on ice cream. The US and Europe spend 12 billion annually on perfume and 17 billion a year on pet food. Japan spends 35 billion annually on business entertainment. Europeans spend 50 billion a year on cigarettes and 105 billion on alcoholic drinks. And, most unfortunate of all, the world spends 780 billion each year on weapons of mass destruction, on the most effective and efficient implements to kill people.

And to bring these figures closer to home: Filipinos spend 7 billion pesos a year on whitening soap. *Pitong bilyong piso taon-taon ang ginagastos natin para sa sabong pampaputi.*

In the Feeding of the 5000, found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Jesus seeing the hungry multitudes, tells his disciples, tells us—who love to call ourselves his disciples—to give them something to eat. And what do the disciples do? They tell Jesus, “Send the crowd away” and “Are we going to spend our own money to feed them?” and “Six months wages worth of bread would not be enough to feed them.” It has been 2000 years. Many of us are still coming up with excuses. In John’s version of the story, a young child offers what he had, five loaves and two fish, in response to Jesus’ challenge.

**Today, the multitudes are still hungry, millions are suffering, and many of us are still making up excuses.**

### **The World Needs “Innkeepers!”**

The challenge for us, the UCCP, today is more than just echoing the response of the young child with the five loaves and two fish and following the example of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37). Contrary to what George Bush said in inaugurating the War on Terror, the real world is not divided among those “who are for us” and “those who are against us.” The real world is not made up of “Good Samaritans” and “Bad Priests, Levites, and Robbers.” The real world is not divided between “Greedy Jacobs” and “Starving Esaus.” Our world is not made up of “Selfless Children with bread and fish to share” and “Selfish Adults who Did Not Want to Share.”

The real world is made up of flesh-and-blood priests and levites who, for reasons we can only try to fathom, chose not to stop to help a fellow Jew, so close to death. I do not believe for a second that they made their choice so easily. Most of us have been through this road before. We made the hard choice not to help, not to do something and we have had to live with the pain of our choices. The real world is also made up of people, like the wounded Jew, who find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. And like them, we’ve asked the same question over and over and over: “Why do good people suffer?” And the more poignant one: “Why is there too much suffering in the world?” The real world is also made up of Samaritans who are ready, willing, and able to help anyone who needs help. Yes, many of us have gone through this road too. We even call our churches and multi-purpose cooperatives, Good Samaritan. And yet, we ask ourselves will we be willing to help if we arrived on the scene earlier? While the crime was being committed, while the assault was being perpetrated, while the bandits and robbers were still there?

The real world, my friends, is also made up of bandits and robbers. **The word is lestes in Greek.** It’s the same word used to describe zealots, rebels, and freedom fighters. The lestes were made up mostly of dispossessed farmers and runaway slaves. The American Occupation Forces in the Philippines called Macario Sakay and his forces, bandits and robbers. We called them Katipuneros and heroes of the revolution.

And, lastly, and, I think, more importantly, the real world is made up of innkeepers, those who are dedicated to alleviate human suffering—whether caused by war, conflict, or natural disaster—with open minds and hearts to all people. Yes, to all people—priests, Levites, Jews, Samaritans, bandits, freedom fighters, but especially to those who are the least among the least, those whose only hope is God. Welcoming the complete stranger, the wounded, the least, and, yes, our Lumad sisters and brothers, and offering sanctuary, safe haven, relief.

And like the innkeeper along that “bloody way” connecting Jericho to Jerusalem who was there and, thus, served as hope, the UCCP today—without fanfare, without advertising, and without much appreciation—is there and, thus, serves as hope. To All People. Welcoming the complete stranger, the wounded, the least, and offering sanctuary, safe haven, relief.

I believe that all of us share the hope that one day that “bloody way” connecting Jerusalem to Jericho—here in our beloved country, in Palestine, in many places where communities are struggling for land, for liberty, for dignity, for abundant life for all—becomes a safe highway for everyone, that soon all the world will be able to eat three square meals a day and not just soup.

And that the day is coming when all swords are beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks!

I think the challenge is really for all of us. Whenever and wherever there is suffering---TO BE THERE. TO BE HOPE. TO BE UCCP.

**Questions for Self or Group Reflection:**

1. What are the concrete ways you can offer a ministry of presence (“to be there”) to people?
2. Which particular communities in crises need to be assured that faith is greater than fear, that love is stronger than indifference, and that life will always conquer death (“to be hope”)?
3. Yahweh took the side of the slaves, Jesus preached the Gospel to the poor, and the UCCP always takes the side of those who need God the most. What are the ways you and/or your congregation has taken sides?

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**SOURCES:**

<sup>1</sup>Statistics available from Anup Shah, [Poverty Facts and Stats](#), GlobalIssues.org.



# **BIBLICO- THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS**



## IN DEFENSE OF THE RIGHTS OF THE VICTIMS AND THE POOR

Proverbs 31: 8-9

By **Bishop Emeritus Jessie S. Suarez**

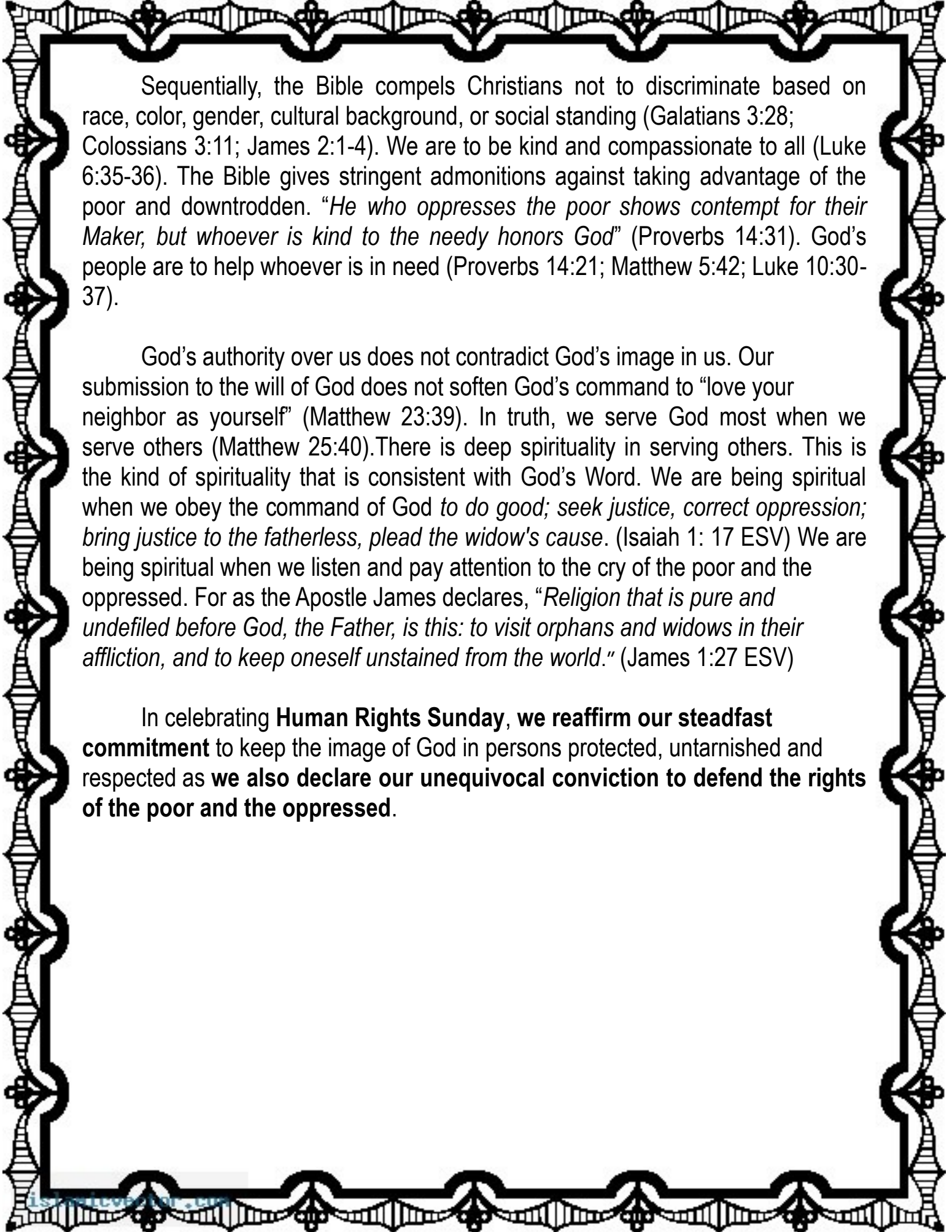
Any honest study of the Bible must confess that person, as God's special creation, has been blessed with certain "human rights." Any honest and truthful student of the Bible will be inspired by biblical principles such as fairness and justice, compassion and benevolence. As "all persons are created equal, God endowed them with certain unalienable Rights." The Bible declares that man is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). Because of this, every person possesses a value of dignity and was given dominion over the rest of creation (Genesis 1:26).

The image of God in person means that any attempt to smudge person's integrity is a sinful act. Killing persons is a most atrocious sin. *"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man"* (Genesis 9:6). The Mosaic Law is replete with examples of how God expects everyone to be treated humanely and justly.

The UCCP's active engagement in human rights advocacy ministry is rooted in its commitment to the call of the Scriptures: ***"He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"*** (Micah 6: 8 ESV)

Detached from realities of injustice and violence that happen around us, our spirituality as Christians cannot be relevant. The recent killings and harassments of Lumads in Mindanao clearly paint us a ghastly picture of violence where fundamental rights of persons are grossly violated and life's inviolability utterly desecrated.

In keeping with the tenets of Christian faith, the Church is called to defend the victims of violence and acts of aggression, *"Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy."* (Proverbs 31 8-9 ESV).



Sequentially, the Bible compels Christians not to discriminate based on race, color, gender, cultural background, or social standing (Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11; James 2:1-4). We are to be kind and compassionate to all (Luke 6:35-36). The Bible gives stringent admonitions against taking advantage of the poor and downtrodden. *"He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God"* (Proverbs 14:31). God's people are to help whoever is in need (Proverbs 14:21; Matthew 5:42; Luke 10:30-37).

God's authority over us does not contradict God's image in us. Our submission to the will of God does not soften God's command to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 23:39). In truth, we serve God most when we serve others (Matthew 25:40). There is deep spirituality in serving others. This is the kind of spirituality that is consistent with God's Word. We are being spiritual when we obey the command of God *to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, plead the widow's cause.* (Isaiah 1: 17 ESV) We are being spiritual when we listen and pay attention to the cry of the poor and the oppressed. For as the Apostle James declares, *"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world."* (James 1:27 ESV)

In celebrating **Human Rights Sunday**, we reaffirm our **steadfast commitment** to keep the image of God in persons protected, untarnished and respected as **we also declare our unequivocal conviction to defend the rights of the poor and the oppressed.**





# Spirituality for Human Rights: An Earthly Spirituality

*Biblical text: Genesis 2: 4b-22*  
*(Some Biblico-Geo-Theological Insights)*

*By: Rev. Joseph G. Agpaoa*  
*Program Coordinator,*  
*North Luzon Jurisdiction*

## **I – My social location**

I am a certified *Probinsyano*. I was born and grew up in a farming community in Cagayan province. My parents are farmers. It is because of this that at an early age I was already exposed to rice and corn farming. In fact, farming is my first love.

I served as Local Church pastor from 1991-1992 and then from 1995 to 2006. Majority of the members in those local churches I served, except for one Local Church, were farmers. In addition to my having come from a family of farmers, it is through my close engagement with them that I was challenged to join them in their numerous advocacies. While serving in the local church, I was also involved in efforts at organizing the farmers from 1997 up to 2002.

It is from this social location that I will share some reflections on Human Rights and spirituality using the land as my theological metaphor. In addition to my involvement in farmers organizing, my farming and my pastoral experiences are three main factors that shaped my theological understanding of Human Rights and spirituality.

## **II – Understanding Human Rights through the land**

The first part of our text portrays a picture of universal drought (V. 4b-5). The earth was already there but there was no vegetation yet because of terrible dryness. That time, nobody will till the earth yet. In that situation, God made the earth more alive to become productive. "[A] stream had risen from the earth and water the whole face of the ground." (v. 6) Then, out of the earth, God created Adam to till the earth and to keep it. (v. 7-8, 15)

First and foremost, a very important relationship has to be emphasized here - the relationship between humans and the earth. As already stated, God created human from the earth purposely to till the earth and to keep it. Interestingly, *Adam* and *Adama* are two Hebrew words for humanity and for the earth, respectively. Humanity indeed is from the earth.<sup>[1]</sup> Obviously, there was no human without the earth and the reason for human existence is for the earth. Human is nothing if separated from the earth. The humanness of human can only be understood and realized through the earth.

As agricultural country, majority of the Philippine population are farmers living in the rural areas – mainly small farmers doing subsistence farming. This includes the more than 14 million Indigenous Peoples (IPs) living in the different areas of the country.

Land<sup>[2]</sup> is so basic to the farmers. It is through the land that they get their food. It is through the land that they could earn money to support and sustain the needs of their families. The energy, fertility and nutrients of the land are the breath of the land itself that gives life. It is through the land that the farmers receive and experience the bountiful blessings of God.

More than their economic needs, the farmers are forming communities through the land – communities of rice farmers, of corn farmers, of vegetable farmers of pineapple farmers, etc. Through the land, they also learn the values and morals of life. Right relationships and proper way of living that they ought to have and even their needed wisdom can be discerned through the land. Proper time or the so called “*tamang panahon*” has been set for them by God through the land.

Indeed, the wholeness of life of the farmers is from the land. Their being human could only be realized and understood through the land. Their rights as human beings are rooted in the land. Truly, land is life.

In Cagayan Valley, the region where I came from, land monopoly is still one of the main issues of the farmers until now. Huge areas of lands are still controlled by a few – the families of either national or local politicians, or big businessmen. This is essentially the same in other regions of the country. Despite the Agrarian Reform programs of past and present administrations, still seven of every 10 farmers in the Philippines remain landless up to today.<sup>[3]</sup>

Another painful thing that has befallen many farmers is community displacement due to the large-scale mining operations of foreign or local corporations. Mainly, the victims are the IP farmers. Of course, big mining companies are not only displacing the people from their land. They are also destroying the land. And through the Philippine Mining Act of 1995, these destructive mining activities are made legal. These are being facilitated and protected by the State in the name of “development”. Building mega dams and other “development projects” of big corporations, mostly in the lands of the IPs is another reason for displacement of many communities accompanied by environmental destruction.

To control and destroy the land and to uproot the farmers from their land is to abuse the farmers’ basic Human Rights – their right to life. This would mean destroying their communities. This would mean destroying their way of living. This would mean diluting their morals, values and wisdom. Controlling and destroying the land and uprooting the people from their land are Human Rights violations.

Because of landlordism, community displacements and environmental destructions, farmers’ movement in Cagayan Valley became active starting in the middle of 1990s. Farmers organized themselves by barangays, by municipalities, then by provinces. Later, they formed the Danggayán Dagiti Mannalón iti Cagayan Valley (DAGAMI-CV) - an alliance of farmers’ organizations in the region. Their issues and concerns were projected not only in the whole region but even in Congress and in Malacanang through petition signings, dialogues, media hopping, lobbying, mass actions and many other creative forms. Unfortunately, instead of giving attention to their concerns, the State authorities labeled the DAGAMI-CV as a communist front. As an enemy of the State, violence was employed to suppress them by all means.

From 2002 to 2014, eight DAGAMI leaders and farmer organizers were assassinated allegedly by the elements of the Philippine Armed Forces. Expectedly, State authorities just deny this. One of the victims was a UCCP church worker in the person of Pastor Madonna Castillo. Others were charged with criminal offenses that are not bailable. While some have already been acquitted, 10 are still behind bars until now. Other alliance leaders and organizers are continuously harassed and intimidated in various forms including their respective families.

Just recently, 76 People's Organization leaders and organizers in the region, some are IPs, were charged with criminal cases filed by the personnel of the Philippine Army. [4] Most of these charges are non-bailable. Four of these 76 have already been arrested and incarcerated.

Incidents like these are not only happening in Cagayan Valley but even in other regions of the country. Few months ago, we heard what happened to our Lumad brothers and sisters in Mindanao. In defending their land and protecting the environment; in asserting their right to life; they were militarized and uprooted from their land. What is more lamenting is that some of their leaders were brutally killed. Others are continuously harassed. As I am writing this article, thousands of them are still in the different evacuation centers. Like in Cagayan valley and in other regions, no perpetrators are held accountable yet.

One thing is clear: the rights of our people are being violated systemically through landlordism, displacements, environment destructions and some other forms. When they defend their life and assert their land-rooted rights, the more that they are suppressed. We are living indeed in these critical times.

### **III - Human Rights and the empire**

Secondly, our text also tells us that in the garden, there is only one rule: *"You may freely eat every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."* (V. 2: 16a-17). Obviously, this first rule in the history of humanity is in relation with the environment – the tree. It is a rule concerning consumption and life preservation. We all know that Adam and Eve violated the rule. Evidently, they wanted to set their own rule of consumption and life preservation. They wanted to set their own rule based on their selfish desire, their desire to be like God (Gen 3: 4-6).<sup>[5]</sup>

Today, like Adam and Eve, big corporations have set their own rule of consumption and life preservation contrary to the rule set by God. Instead of following the rule set by God through nature (the tree), they set their own based on their desire to be like God – a rule motivated by their desire to become the most powerful in the world. And that power is being defined by unlimited profit. This gives these corporations no satisfaction. In the name of that desire for power, they systematically transformed the world into one market by imposing the doctrines of globalization and they culturally justified it through the ideology of consumerism. And they did it! Thus, they are now the empire of this age.



In the Philippines, some of the manifestations and results of this profit-oriented rule are landlordism, environmental destructions and community displacements. And these are being preserved and facilitated by the apparatuses of the State. Thus, cases of Human Rights violations should be viewed from a wider perspective. It is true that mostly these are being committed directly by the elements of the State. But beyond the State's forces is a powerful corporate empire imposing a profit-oriented rule of consumption and life preservation.

#### **IV – Spirituality for Human Rights: an earthly spirituality**

Thirdly, part of the responsibility of the people of God like us in the UCCP, so much so in this present context of critical times, is to protect and promote Human Rights: *"In accordance with the biblical understanding that all persons are created in the image of God, the Church affirms and upholds the inviolability of the rights of persons as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other agreements on human rights ..."*<sup>[6]</sup> And to be a Human Rights advocate is to develop a kind of spirituality that would amplify God's spirituality. But what is God's spirituality?

Christian tradition claims that the Spirit is the empowering presence of God in the world. The terms "*ruah*" in Hebrew and "*pneuma*" in Greek both refer to the Spirit which metaphorically is described in the Bible as wind, breath, fire, etc. The Spirit of God is at work in creation (Gen. 1: 1-2). The Spirit is the power of God to create - the power of God to give life. The Spirit is the life-giving breath of God (Gen. 2:7).<sup>[7]</sup>

Our text shows to us the spirituality of the creator God. After creating man from the earth, God created others from the same - every tree in the garden of Eden in the east "that is pleasant to the sight and good for food"; even the "tree of life in the midst of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (v. 9); also "every animal of the field and every bird of the air" (v. 19a). Of course, later God created woman out of one of the ribs of Adam (v. 22).

God is at work through the earth. God created humans, trees, animals and other creation from the earth. In the second creation story, creations are interrelated through their earth connection. Clearly, God's creative power is at work through the process of the earth. This is God spirituality.

Our spirituality as God's faithful believers must be the amplification of God's spirituality. This would mean then that we need to live out a kind of spirituality that would affirm that God's creative power is at work through the process of the earth. To control and destroy the land and to uproot the farmers from their land is contrary to the spirituality of God. A ministry that would address the issues of land monopoly, a ministry of protecting the land, and a ministry of helping and empowering the uprooted people are amplifications of God's spirituality. Ministries like these are concrete manifestations of our spirituality. Through these ministries, we are participating in the promotion and protection of Human Rights. Through these ministries, we are participating in "de-empiring" the empire.

Moreover, the spirituality that we should live out in these critical times is one that is not in conformity with the spirituality of the empire. It should be a kind of spirituality that would challenge the culture of consumerism. It is a kind of spirituality that would empower the people to assert their rights as humans. It should be a kind of spirituality that is earthly.

## V – Farmers' Vision, our vision

Human Rights is indeed earthly rooted. It is through the land that humans can be truly human. It is by protecting the land that the rights of our people are protected. It is by affirming and preserving the God-defined earth-human relationship that the rights of our people are being affirmed and preserved.

Farmers' vision of peace and justice is not separated from the land. In fact their vision can only be understood in the context of the land. Their vision is to experience the abundance of life from God through the land. And this can only be realized when they are freed from the control of the landlords; when their land are freed from the control of giant mining companies; when the uprooted farmers are back to their land; when their destroyed land be restored; when they can freely exercise their right to till and keep the land. Truly, the farmers' vision of peace and justice can only be realized if their land-rooted rights are respected and protected; when the empire will be "de-empired."

Like the farmers, every human is created by God from the land. All are "people of the land." Thus, the farmers' vision of peace and justice is not only for them but for all. Their vision is a shared vision. It is our collective vision.

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### SOURCES:

<sup>1</sup>Brigitte Kahl, "Fratricide and Ecocide: Rereading Genesis 2-4" in *Earth Habitat*, Dieter Hessel, Larry Rasmussen, eds., (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 54, 55

<sup>2</sup>Land and earth are used interchangeably in this paper. When I say land, I am not only referring to the ground but even the other creatures within it like the trees, rivers, mountains, forests, waters, stones and many more.

<sup>3</sup>Data from Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, <http://kilusangmagbubukid.weebly.com/>, Accessed, October 14, 2015

<sup>4</sup>"Statements: Drop the charges vs the Cagayan 76", Northern Dispatch Weekly, <http://www.nordis.net/2015/10/statements-drop-the-charges-vs-the-cagayan-76>, Accessed: October 20, 2015

<sup>5</sup>Brigitte Kahl, op. cit., 56, 57

<sup>6</sup>Amended Constitution and By-Laws of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, Art. II, part of Sec. 11

<sup>7</sup>Denis Edwards, *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*, (New York: Orbis Books, 2008), 27, 28, 120

# LITURGICAL GUIDE





# A LITURGICAL GUIDE FOR THE OBSERVANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS SUNDAY

*Prepared by*

**Ferdinand A. Anno**

*Center for the Arts, Liturgy and Music  
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*(The text and form of the service below follow our traditional denominational service [i.e., congregation-friendly] but with limited suggestion on prayers and musical accompaniments/responses/affirmations. The pastor, the liturgist, an elder, or representative of the worship committee may introduce the theme of worship and the concept around the observance of Human Rights Sunday in our liturgical calendar – including glimpses of the human rights situation in our country)*

## THE HOUSEHOLD WORSHIPS GOD

### Greetings:

Leader: The peace of God is with you  
People: AND ALSO WITH YOU  
Leader: Let us worship God

### Lighting of the Paschal Candle

*(Here, 'Christ, Be Our Light' can be played softly on piano/organ, and/or hummed by the choir until the acolyte or the leader starts the responsive praying)*

Leader/acolyte: As we come to observe the day when the community of nations affirmed and celebrated the sanctity of human life, we raise our voices in prayer

People: **Christ, be our light. Shine through the darkness.**

Leader/acolyte: When petro-dollars, geopolitics, profit and power dehumanize millions of human lives: children, women, indigenous peoples, and a mass of humanity

People: **We cry out in God's name!**

Leader/acolyte: When the church passes by – indifferent and unaffected by the cries of victims on the roadside

People: **We cry out in God's name!**

Leader/Acolyte: When the rights of the powerless are being violated with impunity in the name of national security and development and the cries and sobs of victim communities are drowned by the terror of our silence and inaction

People: We cry out in Christ's name!

All: **Christ, be our light. Shine in your church gathered today!**

### Hymn of Approach

*Christ, Be Our Light*

Words and Music by Bernadette Farrell, England

From *Common Ground*, Edinburgh: St. Andrew Press, 1998, Hymn No. 21

*Longing for light, we wait in darkness.*

*Longing for truth, we turn to you.*

*Make us your own, your holy people,*

*Light for the world to see.*

**Gospel Reading**

*Mark 2: 23-28, Mark3: 1-5/ Luke 4: 18-21*

**Homily**

**THE HOUSEHOLD RESPONDS TO THE WORD**

**Affirmation of Faith**

*(Read responsibly)*

Leader: We are human beings  
In God's image we were created  
Children: From the ground we were fashioned  
Women: With God's breath we came into being  
Men: In God's hands we were formed

Liturgist: We were fashioned not in the image of idols  
Men: fashioned not in the image of the mammon-god  
Women: fashioned not in the image of our conquerors  
Children: In the image of God we were created

Leader: In Jesus Christ, we saw who we are  
Men: doing justice  
Women: loving mercy  
Children: walking humbly with God

Leader: In the Holy Spirit, we celebrate who we can be  
Children: tillers of God's garden  
Women: servants of the poor and afflicted  
Men: Builders of a new reality

Leader: With the Body of Christ  
Children: we sing the songs of justice  
Men: we shout the calls for peace  
Women: we dance our vision of wholeness

Leader: With the truth of the Word of God  
Men: we say no to human rights violations  
Women: we say no to systemic and institutional violence  
Children: we say yes to the full life

**The Church at Prayer**

**God of Life, Lead Us to Act**

*(A prayer penned by Bishop Reuel Norman Marigza, March 2013)*

God of life, lead us to justice and peace;  
you are the very Source of our very lives  
you created us in your own image  
with dignity and worth  
you gave meaning and purpose for life  
without you we cannot achieve  
full justice and peace.  
God of life,  
lead us from injustice and un-peace.  
to justice and peace;  
lead us to see injustice in Asia and in this world  
of people against people

of people against nature  
of structures and systems  
that dehumanize and ravage creation  
lead us to realize that there can never  
be peace where injustice exists.

God of life,  
lead us to do justice and peace;  
you chose to call out a people  
to witness and manifest your will,  
awaken us to the truth;  
that we are to work together with you  
to bring about justice and peace;  
that we are not just to pray  
but also advocate and do  
and work for total salvation  
which you worked out ahead  
for humanity  
and for the world.

#### The Offertory

Unto our God whom we image,  
**We give our lives in service.**  
Unto our God who said 'the human is not made for Sabbath',  
**We commit to a Sabbath celebrated in the service of the poor and afflicted.**  
In praise and thanksgiving to God and God's abundant mercies,  
**We commit to the ministry of promoting the sanctity of human life.**  
With the offering of our lives –  
**are our prayers for the full and abundant life for all!**

#### Doxology

*Praise God the source of life and birth  
Praise God the Word who came to earth  
Praise God the Spirit, Holy Flame  
All honor, glory to God's name.  
AMEN.*

#### THE HOUSEHOLD IS COMMISSIONED TO PROMOTE THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

#### The Act of Commissioning

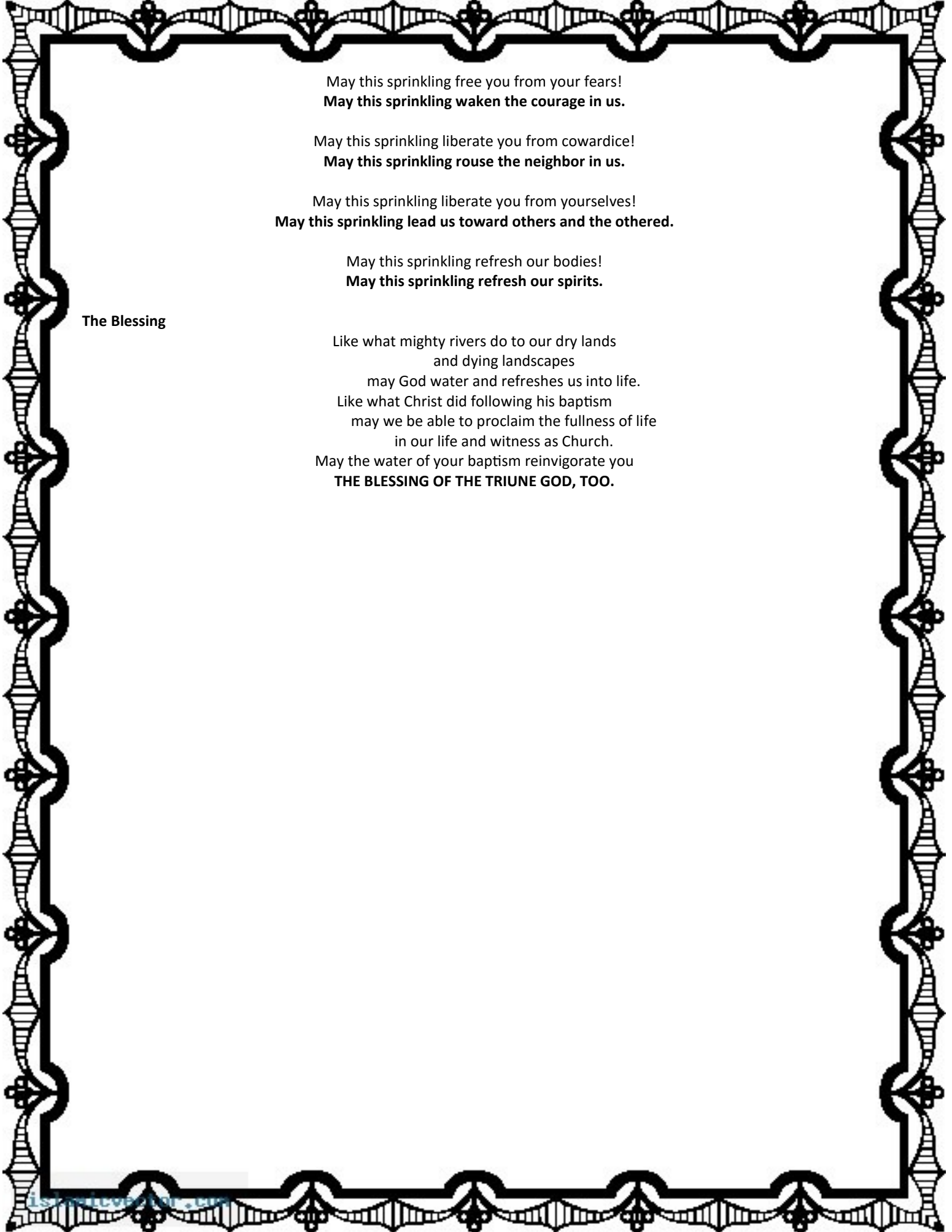
*Suggestions: We can try to be more creative by calling on the congregation to turn their bodies toward facing the exit door of the church in sync with the recessional movement. If the recessional is done with the singing of a hymn, the pastor and worship leaders recess through the aisle from the singing of the penultimate stanza. The congregation then turns around pew by pew as the pastor and the leaders pass through until everyone is facing the exit door[ i.e., the world] where the pastor and elders or assisting worship leaders perform the act of blessing.*

*A basin of water and a bundle of reeds may be prepared. Using an indigenous Cordilleran 'wasiwas' rite, the pastor and church elders facing the people, may sprinkle the people [at once a reminder of our baptism] with water with these words:*

May this sprinkling heal you of your blindness  
**May this sprinkling allow us to see again.**

May this sprinkling release you from your bondage!  
**May this sprinkling kindle free our spirits.**





May this sprinkling free you from your fears!  
**May this sprinkling waken the courage in us.**

May this sprinkling liberate you from cowardice!  
**May this sprinkling rouse the neighbor in us.**

May this sprinkling liberate you from yourselves!  
**May this sprinkling lead us toward others and the othered.**

May this sprinkling refresh our bodies!  
**May this sprinkling refresh our spirits.**

**The Blessing**

Like what mighty rivers do to our dry lands  
and dying landscapes  
may God water and refreshes us into life.  
Like what Christ did following his baptism  
may we be able to proclaim the fullness of life  
in our life and witness as Church.  
May the water of your baptism reinvigorate you  
**THE BLESSING OF THE TRIUNE GOD, TOO.**

# **SERMON GUIDE**



# HUMAN RIGHTS CELEBRATION

## SERMON

*Text: Genesis 4:1-9*

*By Bishop Jaime R. Moriles*

One day an American guest was introduced to me at the office who was engaged in many rehabilitation projects across the globe. He brought with him a small gadget for the purpose of demonstration how a dirty water can be transformed into a potable one.

Since there was no dirty water in the office he excused himself and brought some dirty stuff he got beside the hospital premises- soil and other elements in the drainage- and mixed them with tap water in a container. He mounted the gadget at the lip of the container to filter the dirt and later poured the content out into a drinking glass- now crystal clear without any traces of dirt. He drank the water to demonstrate that it was safe and he gave me the other half so that I can personally prove it myself. Because I don't want to embarrass him, against my will, I drank the water. I was fine, though.


As we celebrate Human Rights in our Local Churches this season, I believe it is best for us to reflect upon the importance of water in our personal and collective life. Many in our world today don't have access to a safe and potable water to drink. Cases of diarrhea due to bacteria like echolai, salmonella and other water-borne diseases that led to death are globally alarming. That's why on November 28, 2002 the United Nations Committee on Economic, Cultural, and Social Rights declared that water is not just an economic commodity but access to it is a basic human right.

We want to honor God. But how can we honor God when 4,500 children die every day due to lack of safe drinking water? Our inability, therefore, to stem this seemingly irreversible rise of water-borne illnesses that led to deaths dishonors God. That is why it is urgent today more than ever to give special attention to water as a basic human right. We should celebrate Human Rights in our Local Churches this season bearing in mind that civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights actually draw life and strength from this more fundamental rights of all, WATER. By giving special significance to water as a basic human right, we can actually reverse the rising tide of human disaster by protecting earth's resources, particularly water, and thereby honor God.

Water is arguably an issue to begin with. But more telling than water is the issue of man's inability to take care of God's creation. In fact, man's irresponsible treatment over nature that foreshadows alarming environmental disasters is almost second nature to his loathsome attitude toward his fellow brother or sister. Our text in Genesis chapter 4 describes this predicament. In verse 9 God said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" Cain answered, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?"

Lying (or to put it differently, curtailment of the freedom of information- now a pending bill before Congress), trump-up charges, extra-judicial killing or summary execution are hideous acts prefigured by this biblical narrative. What Cain did to his brother, Abel, and the former's alibi to God's inquest are almost perfunctory that it is not difficult to imagine that if one is capable of doing the same- trampling human life by killing and lying before God- the picture would be complete chaos and disaster. The latter gives semblance to what is happening to our country today. Thousands of Lumads, for example, are migrating en masse from the hinterlands of Davao del Norte, Compostela Valley, Bukidnon, Surigao del Sur, to the city out of fear for their lives as wealthy and well-armed businessmen engaged in large scale mining are encroaching their ancestral domain. As they stood to defend their land, they were harassed, threatened, terrorized and murdered. Years ago, Jimmy Liguyon, a Lumad, Chairperson of the Church Council of UCCP Bukidnon, was shot and killed in front of his wife and child for refusing to sign a waiver allowing a mining corporation to operate in their community. This dastardly act or Cain-like murderous character must not be seen in isolation for the latest migration of Lumads that culminated in a long march from Mindanao to Manila dubbed as "Manilakbayan" was out of anger and frustration after the murder of another Lumad brother, Emerito Samarca, Executive Director of the Alternative Center for Agricultural Livelihood and Development (ALCADEV) and other victims. The Lumads were demonized for teaching their children to love and defend their land. Unfortunately, these





killings were perpetrated by fellow Lumads who were organized by state agents to defend the interest of big mining corporations extracting rich mineral resources for huge profits within Indigenous communities. Worse, the public were made to believe that it was a tribal conflict. Terrorized, they left their community for refuge and safety. This is the story behind UCCP Haran's decision to welcome and receive them inside Haran's property.

Human rights violations today have already taken a different form. They are now largely associated with economic activity under the auspices of big mining corporations. The sad fact is that there have not been significant changes since the first murder was committed. Like Cain, the spirit of greed, competition and taking advantage of the weaker species (living and nonliving) still gained the upperhand that systematically pillage our God-given resources and wreak havoc on human life. This pervasiveness of evildoings is just like in the days of Jonah when the Lord declared that thousands of people cannot even tell their right hand from their left. In our context, there is lying, betrayal of public trust, corruption, killing, disappearance, torture, abuse of authority, injustice and plunder of our natural resources. Against this background, the Genesis narrative is telling us, directly, that we are our brother's keeper and indirectly, as earth keeper. The former is reminding us to defend and uphold the sanctity of human life and the latter, calls us to observe reverence for everything God has created.

First: *Let us defend and uphold the sanctity of human life.* This call is a very needful one for we have been silent witnesses to the extra-judicial killings and disappearances perpetrated not only against Lumads, journalists, labor leaders and activists but against Church people who are in solidarity with the unjustly treated. We have pursued our cause to this in 2011 after we filed a case against former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo on the assassination of UCCP Church Worker Rev. Edison Lapuz and several others including those who were victims of arbitrary detention, torture, harassment and summary execution. We want to hold people accountable for their actions especially those that desecrate and abuse human life.

Our situation today has not changed much. It even worsened. It can be likened to the city of Jerusalem who was once a beautiful, populated and peaceful city, as described in the book of Lamentations, but was devoured by foreign aggressors, killing everyone who resisted and taking away their properties. This is how the book describes the horrible condition of the city of Jerusalem. In chapter 1 it says, "How lonely sits the city that was full of people! How like a widow has she become, she that was great among the nations! She that was a princess among the cities has become a vassal. She weeps bitterly in the night, tears on her cheeks; among all her lovers she has none to comfort her; all her friends have dealt treacherously with her, they have become her enemies. Judah has gone into exile because of affliction and hard servitude; she dwells now among the nations but finds no resting place; her pursuers have all overtaken her in the midst of her distress. The enemy has stretched out his hands over all her precious things; yea, she has seen the nations invade her sanctuary, those whom thou didst forbid to enter thy congregation. All her people groan as they search for bread; they trade their treasures for food to revive their strength. 'Look, O Lord, and behold, for I am despised.' 'Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow which was brought upon me, which the Lord inflicted on the day of his fierce anger.'"

Our situation today reflects the outrage and insult against a people described in the book of Lamentations. Today, people weep bitterly in the night because millions of them go to bed hungry. People today traded their honor and reputation for food to revive their strength and yet they found themselves exploited and constantly placed in a grossly disadvantageous situation. People today are working hard to earn a living and yet they found themselves betrayed by an oppressive and unjust working conditions. People today are making other people rich through the labor and services they rendered and yet they don't even have a place to lie down and rest. If they stand for truth they are annihilated. Everyday they are anxious and afraid. There's no one to comfort them; they became exiles in their own land by serving powerful masters in the guise of national development. Their adversaries have stretched out their hands to take all precious things they can get from the people and worse, they even invaded their sanctuary like what happened at Haran UCCP. The powerful would even find a way to desecrate God's holy place as in the ancient temple of Jerusalem. And ultimately, people groan in travail as they are apprehended, interrogated, brought somewhere and nowhere to be found or summarily executed. In this similar vein Prophet Jeremiah says in the book of Lamentations, " 'Look, O Lord, and behold, for I am despised.' 'Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow which was brought upon me...' " In our own context, we are challenged by these words of Prophet Jeremiah. He is saying to us, "Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Look and see if there is any sorrow like my sorrow which was brought upon me..."

Second: *Let us observe reverence for everything God has created.* Article 2 section 12 of the UCCP Constitution recognized this need when it declares, "As steward of God's creation, the United Church of Christ in the Philippines shall protect, promote and enhance the ecological balance and the integrity of creation." That's why our sub-theme for this quadrennium echoes this principle toward a spirituality for a new creation against the nagging reality of worsening ecological mess, death and destruction. This is not a spirituality that is indifferent to the world. On the contrary, it is a spirituality that reechoes God's love for the world. We know this in our Sunday School. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him shall not perish but have everlasting life." But the world that God so loved that was once a beauty to behold is now ravaged by the rapacity of big foreign capitalists in their quest for huge profits. In extracting minerals, for example, businessmen employed open pit excavation which is a terribly destructive form of mining aimed to obtain the lowest possible cost with a view of maximizing profits. Open pit mining levels mountains and soil is removed in successive layers at different elevations that one may liken its footprint as a vast and gigantic sunken garden. The introduction of this economic activity has drastically increased the extent of forest denudation that is often the cause of flooding and landslides.

Then, there's the issue of climate change. Gallup Polls in their 2007 and 2008 surveys conducted in 127 countries reveal that more than a third of the world's population has never heard of global warming. But somehow, I overheard one comment that says, that we should be mindful of our environment today because there is already "Global *warning*." But the sad fact is that richer countries who are knowledgeable about climate change are the ones greatly contributing to the alarming increase of carbon emission- the source of heat that depletes ozone layer through large-scale industries coming from them like US and China. And poorer countries who have lesser role in this ecological mess are innocent victims of the rich countries' excesses that transformed the character and intensity of natural calamities like typhoon Yolanda. Scientists labeled the strength of typhoon Yolanda as the "new normal." These destructive changes of weather patterns and intensity must have saddened God for God intends that the earth will be filled with life-giving guarantees rather than destruction.

On November 13, 2013 while I was walking inside a shopping mall in Cebu, I suddenly lost my appetite and was emotionally dismayed by what I saw around. I did not like to see the happy faces of the shoppers and the people walking around and wondered why I was feeling that way. I even questioned myself why I was actually there in the first place. But I had to be there because I need to buy some things: small radio, batteries and flashlights. I took seriously my feelings and ask myself what was happening and it slowly dawned on me that I had to accept the fact that our house in Ormoc City, our ancestral house where I grew up and endured several typhoons for many years, now, was destroyed and no longer habitable after typhoon Yolanda battered Eastern Visayas. This was in fact the situation to almost all of the houses that I saw when I passed by Kananga and Ormoc before I headed to Cebu to oversee the Churches there in the West Visayas Jurisdictional Area during that time. On that day, at the shopping mall in Cebu, the unbelievable destruction brought about by typhoon Yolanda took a toll on me. That was the reason for my feelings. I lost my nerve; my appetite; my joy. I was deeply sad.

But there is still hope. The life-giving promise of our Lord has never failed to astonish us. We will continually be a recipient to God's healing grace and provision; recipient to nature's extravagance and goodness: land, food, air, water that we continue to receive and enjoy. But nature's kindness must be reciprocated. Nature is kind if we are kind enough to them. Nature would fill us with good things if only we *observe reverence for them*. Let us, therefore, be responsible stewards of God's creation for God will hold us accountable to them like we are accountable to our fellow brothers and sisters. Put it differently, while we are our brother's and sister's keeper, we are also called to be earth keeper.

# TESTIMONIES





# A Campaign Tour for Peace and Human Rights

*A Report to the UCCP JPHR Program  
Thru the Office of the Bishop  
North Luzon Jurisdiction  
By Nelson John Salvador*

## **Intro:**

I would want to first take the opportunity to personally thank the UCCP for the help it extended to the IPT team of the Cordillera Region. The trip could not have been materialized had it not for your full and unconditional support. Mabuhay!

The campaign tour is part of the Justice for Delle, Justice for Lacub campaign that the UCCP launched 11 November 2014, at the National Offices, 877 EDSA, Quezon City. In retrospect, Engr. Fidela "Delle" Salvador was brutally tortured and murdered by the 41<sup>st</sup> IB, Philippine Army last September 6, 2014. She was accused of being a member of the New People's Army, and was killed in an encounter. But the report of the autopsy conducted by the NBI CAR-Baguio, and the evaluation by Dr. Jerome Bailen of the autopsy report, pictures and other materials available, showed that all her wounds are non-encounter and were torture wounds. This supports the belief of the family that she was taken alive, brutally tortured and summarily executed by the state forces.

## **Seeking Justice**

Seeking justice in this present system can be likened to looking for a needle in a haystack. The family, together with the families of other victims in Lacub, Abra have tried to get through to different forums in our quest. We have gone to the CHR; the House of Representatives; and the Joint Monitoring Committee for the Comprehensive Agreement for the Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Laws; among others.

Victims are yet again victimized by the present justice system. In the case of Delle, there is no effort done by the justice department to investigate despite strong evidence of torture and summary execution.

The Congressional inquiry also yielded nothing as the only hearing conducted by the committee on Human Rights was done to hear the lies and alibis of the Philippine Army and disregard the side of the complainants. The military refused to submit the operational report despite having sworn under oath to submit it to the House of Representatives' Committee on Human Rights.

Seeking justice is traversing a lonely road. Legal remedies have yet to be exhausted. But it seems that it will be difficult to get to the bottom of it. This makes us resort to taking other forms of seeking justice.

## **The HR Campaign Tour**

Bringing the truth in other forums so as to expose the present travesty of justice is an activity we are intent on maximizing. A campaign tour to North America was conducted from June 19 through July 31, 2015. This was designed to take to Canada and the USA the real Human Rights and Peace situation in the Philippines, clearly bringing to the forefront the ongoing Civil War in the country. For as long as the war is not properly acknowledged; for as long as the armed struggle in the country is being labeled as 'insurgency'; peace can never be realized; Human rights violations will continue unabated.

Many of our compatriots abroad do not properly view these HRV's as it is not viewed in the context of the ongoing Civil War in the Philippines. Through the sharing we did, however, they have come to realize some points — it is now easier for them to be drawn into discussions of the root causes of their being temporarily separated from their families so that they could earn for them; they now ask questions, such as: why are there no job opportunities back home? Why is poverty continuing to exist despite touted economic progress in the country?

People of other nationalities have also expressed solidarity in the struggles the Filipino people are fighting.

#### Some realizations

1. That sharing the sad reality of war in the country can be appreciated if contextualized properly. The sharing we had in North America showed that people could understand better the real reasons of the armed conflict when talked about by people like us, the families of victims of state fascism, though it is hard and emotionally draining;
2. That the imperialist plunders of the Third World, like the Philippines, especially in Mining and other natural resources, need to be popularized among the citizens of these imperialist nations;
3. That there are problems in the Third World also present in the First World nations. Glaring among these are:
  - a. Oppression of the Indigenous Peoples through Economic, Political and Cultural means. I was disheartened to know about Residential Schools once used as a tool for the Cultural genocide of the First Nations People in Canada. It is doubly disheartening to know that the churches were conscious participants to such form of genocide by the colonizing powers. What oppressive tenacity these imperialists have, because of greed for profit, using the name of God!
  - b. The imperialist plunders of the natural resources of the subject nations and people in the name of profit. The greed destroys the sacredness, the beauty of God's creation.
  - c. The land of the Indigenous communities/peoples in Canada also hold the natural resources (Logs, minerals, rivers and the resources in it) that are targets of big mining and logging operations, among others. Any resistance is being systematically quashed by the State.

#### The International Peoples' Tribunal (IPT)

At the behest of victims of human rights violations and other crimes committed under the Presidency of Benigno S. Aquino III, the International Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines (ICHRP), the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), the National Lawyers Guild, and IBON International, have come together to convene the International Peoples Tribunal on Crimes against the Filipino People by the President Benigno S. Aquino and the US Government as represented by President Barack Obama (IPT 2015).

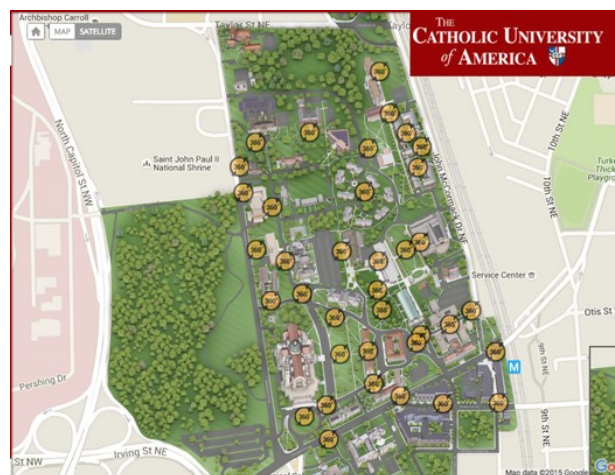
This tribunal aims to expose the ongoing violations of the Filipino people's rights and hold those responsible accountable before the international community, exercise moral suasion and help generate further political pressure on the governments of the Philippines and the US to end impunity in the country.

#### The Venue

Washington, DC, hosted the International People's Tribunal. It was held at the Catholic University of America (CUA).

It started on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July and held hearings for two days at the Gowan Hall of the University. About 200 activists from the Philippines, Canada, and the US were in attendance. We were joined by our friends from the Solidarity groups in the US.

The verdict was handed down by the Jurors in the afternoon of July 18, 2015.



The Jurors was lead by **Atty. Azadeh N. Shahshahani**, who is a prominent human rights attorney and advocate based in Atlanta. Joining her in hearing numerous cases were: **Atty. Camilo Pérez-Bustillo**, a U.S and Colombian Citizen who is a Research Associate affiliated with FLACSO (*Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales*, Latin American Social Sciences Institute) in Guatemala; and **Reverend Malcolm Damon**, a founding member of the Economic Justice Network (EJN), which was formed in 1997 in Zimbabwe to serve the Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa on economic justice issues. Also joining her were **Reverend Molefe Tsele**, an ordained minister with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa who holds a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Political Ethics from the Lutheran School of theology at Chicago (1995) and a

Bachelor of Laws (LLB) Degree from the University of South Africa (2012); **Prof. Pao-yu Ching**, professor emeritus of economics at Marygrove College, Detroit, Michigan, United States, born in Beijing, China and grew up in Taiwan, and received a Ph.D in economics from Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania; and **Reverend Michael Yoshii**, who has served as pastor of the Buena Vista United Methodist Church in Alameda, California since 1988. Buena Vista UMC was founded as an outreach ministry in 1898 to the Japanese immigrant community and now serves a pan-Asian and multicultural population in the Bay region.

Presented by the panel of prosecutors led by Atty. Ramsey Clark were cases that were grouped into three categories, namely: 1) Gross and systematic violations of civil and political rights; 2) Gross and systematic violations of economic, social and cultural rights; and 3) Gross and systematic violations of the rights of the people to national self-determination and liberation.

**Gross and systematic violations of civil and political rights** were presented through 16 cases of gross violation of human rights ranging from harassments, torture, forced disappearances to extra-judicial killings. Miss Marie Hilao presented the ever-growing list of Human Rights Violations as documented by KARAPATAN. This was supported by victims' testimonies that includes the killing of Romeo Capalla of Iloilo; the case of Bandam Dumanglay, a lumad youth whose family members were shot by the military; the case of Melissa Roxas, a health worker from Los Angeles that was abducted by the Philippine Military who was physically and mentally tortured; and the Lacub, Abra case constituting gross violations of human rights and International Humanitarian Law, that includes the brutal killing of combatants, including Arnold Jaramillo, and civilians, including the torture and extra-judicial killing of Engr. Fidela 'Delle' Salvador. In all these cases, the systematic and deliberate methods of how these violations were committed were clearly presented.

**Gross and systematic violations of economic, social and cultural rights** was presented through expert witness like Jose Africa of IBON who clearly described how systematic the denial of the Filipinos' basic economic rights are through laws, policies and programs imposed on the Filipino people. Some of the highlights of his testimony are:

- 66 million (out of 100 million) Filipinos are poor. They live on just Php125 (US\$2.80) or less per day. They are the Filipino farmers, fisherfolk, workers, small scale traders, vendors, domestic workers and other informal sector workers
- 4.3 million Filipinos are unemployed and 7.9 million are underemployed
- 44% of the workers are non-regular or agency-hired workers, 63% do not even have written contracts; 40% employed Filipinos work part-time with very low pay and no benefits
- The average daily basic pay of millions of Filipino workers nationwide increased by less than Php5 (Php4.50) or just 1.7% between 2005 and 2014
- there are 10.2 million overseas Filipinos in 2013
- 4,508 overseas Filipino workers were deployed every day because only 2,800 jobs were generated at home
- 7 of 10 peasants are still landless
- a third of landowners own or control more than 80% of agricultural land
- the wealth of the 10 richest Filipinos has more than tripled under the Defendant Aquino administration from Php630 billion in 2010 to Php2.2 trillion in 2015 (250% increase)
- the net income of the country's some 260 listed firms on the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) rose from Php438 billion in 2010 to Php583 billion in 2014 (33% increase)

Mr. Africa also showed the Tribunal the percentage of US firms' economic interests in the Philippines, which according to him, were the reasons why Defendant US government allegedly pushed for privatization of economic activities they are involved in. The data he shared showed that:

- US firms account for 45% (US\$466 million) of the Philippines electric power systems imports
- US firms account for 25% (US\$635 million) of aerospace imports including for airport projects
- US firms account for 24% (US\$92 million) of medical equipment imports
- US firms account for 10% (US\$40 million) of water equipment and services imports
- US firms account for 26% (US\$394 million) of information technology imports, aside from 31% of foreign equity in BPOs.



Other particular cases presented were 1) that of the Hacienda Luisita continuing violations of the farmers rights (by Rafael Mariano); 2) the case of the systematic oppressive public utility systems such as high electric bills, syndicated water bill increases, and MRT woes as presented by Bayan Muna Party List Representative Neri Colmenares; 3) the case of deliberate abandonment of the victims of Yolanda and others. These cases clearly presented the liability of BS Aquino government.

**Gross and systematic violations of the rights of the people to national self-determination and liberation** were presented through cases that includes the unconstitutional EDCA that Aquino entered with the US government. Miss Liza Maza presented the case in Manila as she was prevented from boarding her plane to Washington DC. Dante Simbulan was an expert witness on the US Counter Insurgency Program and its instruments and inhumane aspects. He related how these are being used in the Philippines through Oplan Bayanihan; Fr. Louie Jalandoni, clearly presented how people's effort to self-determination and liberation is systematically being curtailed by the US-Aquino regime.

### **The Verdict**

The International People's Tribunal found the defendants, President Aquino and the US government through President Barack Obama guilty as charged. To quote the verdict:

*"In view of all the foregoing, We, the JURY hereby renders judgment finding Defendant Government of Republic of the Philippines, Defendant President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III and Defendant Government of the United States of America, represented by President Barack Hussein Obama II, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, World Trade Organization, multinational corporations and foreign banks doing business in the Philippines,*

- 1. GUILTY of gross human rights violations involving the civil and political rights of the Filipino People, for committing extrajudicial killings, disappearances, massacres, torture, arbitrary arrests and detentions as well as other vicious, brutal and systematic abuses and attacks on the basic democratic rights of the people;*
- 2. GUILTY of gross and systematic violations of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights of the Filipino people through the imposition of neo-liberal "free market" globalization to exploit the people; transgression of their economic sovereignty and plunder of their national patrimony and economy; and attacks on the people's livelihoods and the destruction of the environment; and*
- 3. GUILTY of gross and systematic violations of the rights of the people to national self-determination and liberation through the imposition of the US war of terror and US military intervention; as well as the perpetration of crimes against humanity and war crimes; misrepresentations of the people's right to national liberation and self-determination as "terrorism" and the baseless "terrorist" listing of individuals, organizations and other entities by the US and other governments.*

*The Tribunal seriously condemns the continued efforts of the Defendants to abandon the peace process and address the roots of the conflict in the Philippines in order to achieve a just and lasting peace.*

*Furthermore, considering the serious violations of international law by the Defendants, the Tribunal is of the opinion that said violations be brought before international bodies both to battle the Defendants in all possible arena and at the same time push these international bodies to proscribe the illegal acts of the Defendants and strike a blow against impunity.*

*We venture to add that the Tribunal recommends, as part of Our Verdict, that the Filipino people forge stronger international solidarity relations with the peoples whose rights are being trampled by the Defendant US government, and together struggle for liberation from the yoke of US imperialism.*

*We also encourage the peoples of the world to seek redress, to pursue justice, and to transform this oppressive, exploitative and repressive global state of affairs exemplified by the experience and plight of the Filipino people, to challenge the international "rule of law", and to construct a global order founded on full respect for the rights of all peoples, everywhere."*

### **Lobbying**

While the IPT was ongoing, there were teams who went on Lobbying with the Tom Lantos Commission on Human Rights of the US Congress and the Philippine Desk of the State Department. At the US Congress, a panel was selected to brief the legislative staff of the commission on what we have to tell them. After which some asked questions. Mr. T. Kumar of the Amnesty International was deeply concerned why the US as having an special relationship with the Philippines is not doing anything to urge the Philippine government to respect human rights. At the Philippine Desk of the State Department, we tried to convey by telling them our stories that what they have reported about the HR situation in the Philippines is lacking.

**In conclusion**, the International Peoples' Tribunal, the Lobbying, and the campaign tour have provided venues of which we can educate fellow Filipinos and friends in solidarity of the real peace and human rights situation in our country. It has not been an easy task, as emotions, pain, frustrations, and disappointments come along with it. But in doing it, I also felt comforted with the reactions we received, with the verdict the jurors gave and with the support compatriots and friends in solidarity have showered us with. At the end of it all, this presents itself as a solid form of justice.

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### **SOURCES:**

<sup>1</sup>*Residential schools were government-sponsored religious schools established to assimilate Aboriginal children into Euro-Canadian culture. It was proven later as a tool of cultural genocide. Many of these residential schools committed grave abuses to the children.*

# The Cost of Pursuing Peace based on Justice and in Defending the Rights of the Vulnerable



Reaffirming NCCP's resolve towards a just and inclusive community, the council transcends from the confines of the council's fold and reaches out to the other faiths and traditions. It has existing partnerships with the Indigenous Peoples' organizations and Muslims as it engages programs and activities which affect these sectors. Thus, my engagement to the plight and concerns of the indigenous peoples in the Cordillera region and the Lumads of Mindanao is anchored on the the NCCP's Interfaith ministry and on the vision and mission-goals and objectives of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. I also represent the NCCP to the Scrap the Mining Act of 1995 Network in its various activities and campaign. It is in this context that I was sent by the NCCP to represent the council to the Interfaith Mercy Mission which was held on August 29-31, 2014 in Barangay Gupitan, Kapalong, Davao del Norte. That

was my only engagement with the Lumad in Davao which I think be the reason why I was implicated in the case for "violation of article 267 (Kidnapping and Serious Illegal Detention) of the Revised Penal Code and Republic Act 10364 or the 'Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012' with my picture in the rogue gallery attached in the complaint with my name on letter (i) in the second shortlist of the annexes.

However, after I knew that I was implicated in the case, few days after I attended the dialogue at the Commission on Human Rights regarding the trumped up charges, three men went to the Pastor's House to look for me in four different occasions. These, I believe are series of surveillance and harassment.

On August 3, 2015 at 9 o'clock in the morning a man who identified himself as Ricky from Tondo entered the compound of the UCCP Faith Bible Church at 37 Magnolia Street, Roxas District, Quezon City to look for me. He was confronted by the caretaker and told him that the Pastor is not around but he insisted to see the pastor and he told the caretaker that he is a victim of demolition from Tondo and he was looking for a UCCP church to help him to give him food and clothing. He told the caretaker that I knew him and that they we are friends. He did not leave the compound until the caretaker gave him a kilo of rice.

On August 5, 2015 (Wednesday) at 9:30 in the evening after the Midweek prayer meeting while we had our dinner at the parsonage, somebody knocked the door and when my daughter opened the door, she saw a man wearing a jacket outside the door looking for me. The man was confronted by the caretaker of the church with my daughter. The man introduced himself as Edward Bernardo from #152 Brgy. Bantug, Cabaldon, Nueva Ecija as reflected on the police blotter that he presented. He claimed to be a victim of robbery on his way to Manila from Nueva Ecija. He said he was dropped in Pasig City and there he went to the police station to blotter the incident. He added, he was looking for a UCCP church to help him as he lost all his belongings. He claimed himself as a UCCP member and he said that while he was looking for a UCCP Church he was referred to UCCP Faith Bible Church where Pastor Irma is currently assigned. He told the caretaker that he will not ask anything from the Pastor but only to see me and to ask me to pray for him for his safety. He was so insistent to see the me to the point that he sat on the floor outside the door. It took almost 20 minutes for them to convince him to leave and just be back on Sunday as the pastor is only part time in the church.

On August 9, 2015 (Sunday) at about 10:15 in the morning, when the worship service started, a man in his early 30's, wearing a wind breaker jacket with a lean body stature was at the door of the church. He was approached by the church caretaker and invited him to get inside the church but he refused. He was asking for the comfort room and he went inside the CR for almost 5 minutes and then he went back to the front door of the church. I saw him standing at the door observing the choir and he left when I was about to end my sermon.



The stall vendor in front of the church informed me that the man who went to the church on that Sunday asked her on the schedule of the church services and he said that he was from Marikina. The tenant also on the first door informed the pastor that the same man was looking for the woman pastor.

And on August 10 at 10 o'clock in the morning, the same man identified himself as Ricky went back while Pastor Irma was in the office. He was approached by the caretaker and he was looking again for me. When the caretaker told him that she will accompany him to the barangay office so that the barangay officials could help him as I was not around to help him, he refused and hurriedly left. Recently, there are still about three incidents of the same nature, men looking for me to pray for them and even told the care taker that he will give his number so I can text him.

These series of incidents have caused apprehension not only to me and my daughter but also to the church people I am serving as they are so concerned about my security. However, I am resolved that they cannot stop me from defending and advocating for justice and peace and to promote and defend the rights of the vulnerable sectors in our society to whom we are called to serve. In the same manner, as the church begins to take side of the oppressed, she then begins to echo the voice of prophets like Micah who considers the victims as "my people." She begins to take up the work for their empowerment to struggle for justice in their situation. She becomes the prophetic voice calling for the dawn of justice and transformation in the basic structures of the society. This call is greater than my fears and apprehensions. Jesus gave his life fighting the system that manipulates and sidelines people. His presence made visible the kingdom of God around us, bringing peace to some and conflict to others. To follow in his footsteps requires a certain loss of life for us, as well.

*(Rev. Irma M. Balaba is an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. She is currently serving at the National Council of Churches in the Philippines as Assistant Program Secretary on Christian Unity and Ecumenical Relations at the same time the Administrative Pastor of the UCCP Faith Bible Church in Roxas District, Quezon City. Presently, she is also actively engaged in the anti-human trafficking campaign as part of the Secretariat of the Philippine Interfaith Movement Against Human Trafficking(PIMAHT) spearheaded by the Catholic Bishop's Conference (CBCP), Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC) and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP).*

# Testimony ni Ptr. Francisco Bunoan Jr. Hinggil sa gawaing Karapatang Pantao



**Kailangang ka sa pagtatanggol ng karapatang pantao!**

Ang pagiging mananampalataya kay Yahweh ay kakambal ng pagiging taga pangtanggol ng karapatang pantao!

Mula sa banal na kasulatan (Gen 1:26) bilang God's stewards of this creation, mandato ng ating pananampalataya ang masigla at aktibong paglahok para sa pagtatanggol hindi lamang sa karapatang pangtao kundi para sa buong kapaligiran.

Sa konstitusyon ng ating Iglesia malinaw na ang gawaing Human Rights ay bahagi at dapat nilalahukan ng bawat mananampalataya, lalo na ang mga trabahadores ng Iglesia.

*"In accordance with the biblical understanding that all persons are created in the image of God, the Church affirms and upholds the inviolability of the rights of persons as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other agreements on human rights...." (UCCP Constitution, Art. II, Sec.11).*

*Our Theme: "Today's Spirituality: Churches are Called to Defend Human Rights".*  
*Hinihikayat din ang lahat ng Iglesia locales at lahat ng mga membro ng Iglesia na lumahok sa pagtatanggol sa karapatan pangtao at ito ay bahagi ng ating spirituality.*

*Ngunit hindi ganoon kadali ang magpalahok sa mga mananampalataya at mga trabahadores ng Iglesia sa gawaing HR. Historically kung sa ating Iglesia, minsan ay napakainit na usapin ito sa ating mga lokal na Iglesia, komperensiya, hurisdiction at pati na sa pambansang opisina. Ito ay dumaan sa masalimuot na tunggalian bago niyakap ang ministryong ito na hanggang sa ngayon, usapin pa rin sa ilan.*

*Ang naalala ko, ako man ay andap sa gawaing HR noong una. Kasi ang tingin ko noon ay hindi Gawain ng Iglesia ang mga ito. Noong nasa seminaryo ako 1982 onwards dito ko nasalubong ang usapin HR. Dumaan ako ng mahabang proseso bago niyakap ang gawaing ito. Salamat sa mga progresibong professors sa seminaryo at ang summer exposure program ng seminary malaki ang naitulong nila sa akin sa pagyakap sa ministryong ito. Ito rin yong panahon ng kasagsagan ng anti-fascist/dictatorship campaign sa buong bansa dahil sa pagdami ng mga Human Rights Violations (HRVs). May mga nag-aalangan ngunit madami naman madaling namulat dahil sa mga kaganapan lalo na ang mga Kristiano na naghahanap ng tunay na kalayaan, kapayapaan at hustisya.*

*Naging isa ako sa mga tumugon para sa HR work natin noon, hindi lamang sa aming komperensiya kundi pati sa ecumenical group. Si Bp Juan Marigza ay aktibong HR defender at naging chairperson ng ating North Luzon Human Rights Organization(NLHRO, 1985 onwards)*

*ito ang nagtatahi ng HR work dito sa North Luzon. Madaming kaming trabahadores ng Iglesia mula sa ibat ibang denominasyon na napalahok sa gawaing ito. Madaming naitayo na provincial HR formation na naging aktibo sa HR campaigns. Dito ako nasanay at napanday sa gawaing HR.*

*Sa paglahok sa gawaing ito madami akong naranasan at natutunan. At dahil hindi pa mahigpit at pagkakaisa ng mga lidars ng ating Iglesia, hati ang pagtingin sa mga lumalahok sa ganito gawain. Sa mga aktibo, sila ay binabansagan na mga "activist", "leftist" and "communist". Malakas ang red tagging at black propaganda noon lalo na kung ang mga liderato ng komperensya ay hindi natin kaisa sa gawaing ito. Noong umpisa nakakailang dahil iilan lang kami sa komperensya at mas maboboka at impluwensyado ang mga kontra HR work. Salamat sa ecumenical movement sa rehiyon at probinsya dahil ito ang naging daluyan ng pagkilos na hindi kayang sagkaan ng mga reaksyonaryong liderato ng ating Iglesia.*

*Hindi rin madali ang pagtataguyod nito. Dahil ang reaksyon ay hindi lamang sa loob ng Iglesia kundi lalo sa hanay ng naghaharing uri at ang AFP na kasangkapan nila sa paghahasik ng lagim sa hanay ng mga HR defenders. Nandyan ang surbelans sa bahay na tinitirhan, opisina at pagbuntot sa mga pinupuntahan. Meron sasakayan sa tapat ng bahay o opisina na 8 to 12 na oras na kunwari sira, meron din nagsasamba sa ating parokya na nagpapakilala na membro na afp ngunit halata na hindi membro dahil hindi niya alam ang daloy ng pagsamba at ang mga kanta natin , meron din kunwari magpapabinyag o magpapakasal ngunit iba ang pinagtatanong, nandiyan din yong paghingi ng mga pangalan ng membros sa isang local na Iglesia, pangkuha ng pangalan at cellphone # ng mga trahadores sa isang komperensya at marami pang pamamaraan ng harassment.*

*Naging masigla ang paglahok natin sa gawaing HR, mula sa seminars at trainings, sa paglahok sa mga rallies, fact findings, quick reaction team, panghahaloghog sa mga kampo military para sa mga nawawalang membro ng Iglesia, church-military dialogue, retrival of the body of the dead, atbp. Uminit ang mata ng military sa atin. Mula sa simpleng surbelans, harassment hanggat nakasuhan ako noong taong 2000 sa kasong murder. Ako daw ang bumaril kay Condrado Balweg bagamat ayon sa balita, inamin na ng NPA na sila ang nagparusa kay Balweg dahil sa kasalanan niya sa rebolusyon at sa sambayan.*

*Taong 2007 noong ako'y nahuli sa Baguio City kasama ang bunso kung kapatid. Walang warrant of arrest na iniharap, hindi nila tiyak kung sino sa aming ng aking kapatid ang hinahanap nila. Basta kung sino daw ang "jun" sa amin, siya ang may problema. Nang dumating kami sa Camp Dangwa at hinahanap ko ang warrant of arrest ko, 2 warrant of arrests ang ipinakita sa akin, isang original at isang amended kung saan may mga naidagdag na ngalan ng mga tao mula sa original na kopya.*

*Tumagal ako sa kulungan ng anim na buwan. Sa pagtakbo ng mga hearings may 2 magkapatid na testigo at nagturo sa akin na ako daw ang bumaril kay Balweg. Sa tingin ko bayaran kung hindi man tuwirang kasapakat ng military sa ganitong Gawain. Paano mangyayari yaon? Meron kaming family reunion yong araw na yan, na kung saan napakalayo ang lugar naming sa lugar kung saan pinatay si Balweg, halos 24 oras ang byahe mula sa amin. At sa New Year na yon nandoon kaming buong pamilya, nagsamba sa ating local na Iglesia.*



*Habang nasa kulungan ako, pinanindigan ko ang aking pagiging pastor at HR defender. Mayroon kaming bible study group sa loob ng kulungan, midweek prayer meetings at ilang counselling sa mga kasama kung bilanggo na ngangailangan (mag-asawa at 2 pang` individual). Meron din kaming ilang fellowship services sa ilang birthday celebration at meron din kaming isinagawang sending off service sa 3 convicted inmates ng patungo sa National Bilibid Prison na kung saan na appreciate ng mga membro ng pamilya at kapwa mga bilanggo ang ginawa namin. May offering at mga habilin sa mga hahayo. Maganda ang naging epekto sa kabuuan. Ok naman daw pala ang maging HR advocate!*

*Ang isang signipikante na karanasan ko sa loob ng kulungan ay ang pagpapatuloy sa ating pagmumulat at pagpapapkilos sa mga kapwang api. Sa loob ng 6 na buwan na pagkakakulong ko nakapagpapirma tayo ng tatlong petitions na umaabot sa 70% to 80% ng kabuuang bilanggo ang pumipirma. (104 kaming lahat na bilanggo sa Bangued Provincial Jail) Natatandaan ko pa ang mga isyu na itinaguyod namin at ang mga dokumentong nito ay itinago ng warden at noong ako ay lalaya na, ipinakita sa akin yong file at ang sabi ng warden, "Pastor paano ang mga inumpisahan mo dito?"*

- 1. Sa mga isyu sa unang petition ay hinggil sa pagtataas ng budget meal ng bawat bilanggo. Mula P15/tao/day to P35/tao/day dahil nalaman namin na 5 years ago pa dapat na naipatupad ito; ganoon din sa pagbabawal na magluto ng dagdag na pagkain sa loob ng bilangguan kaya ang demand ay payagang magluto ang mga bilanggo sa loob dahil bitin talaga ang nakalaang budget; at dahil walang ilaw at electric fan sa loob ng selda at sobra ng init lalo na at summer. Hiningi na payagang maglagay ng ilaw na kahit may oras ng pagbubukas at pagpatay at 2 electric fans sa bawat selda. Ang tanda ko ay may 86/104 na pumirma dito at ipinagkaloob ng bagong warden ang mga kahilingang ito.*
- 2. Ang sumunod na isyu, ay ang araw-araw at regular na paglabas ng mga bilanggo sa selda upang mag-exercises/maglaro ng basketball, pingpong atbp, para sa kalusugan; pagbabawal sa pambubogbog sa mga nagkakasalang bilanggo (may pagmaltrato kasi sa isang bilanggo na nakatakas ngunit nahuli muli nila.) at pagbabalik sa karapatan ng conjugal visit. Mga 78/104 ang pumirma dito at ipinagkaloob din ang mga ito.*
- 3. Pangatlong laban ay Income Generating Project (IGP) para sa mga bilanggo. Pagpayag na taniman ang likod ng bilangguan ng mga gulay (1/2 ha.); coop store sa loob dahil mahal ang bilihin at lantern making(dahil parating na noon ang pasko) ito ay in-coordination sa program ng Roman Catholic Church. Sa diocese ng Bangued magmula ang puhunan at sa kanila din ang marketing ng mga produkto. Mga 74/101 inmates ang pumirma. Pumayag ang warden ngunit may restriction kung saan ang pagawaan ng parol dahil may mga gagamitin na kutsilyo o matatalas. Ito ay naiwanan ko na at hindi ko alam kung ano ang kinahinatnan.*

*Ang mga dokumentong ito ay itinago ng warden at ipinakita sa akin noong paalis na ako. At ang maganda nito, tumingkad ang pagiging pastor at HR advocates kaya may ilan sa mga bilanggo na nagtatanong kung paano mag membro ng HR. Iniwan natin sa kanila ang address at contact # ng ating opis sa Bangued, Abra.(ARHA)*

*Nitong huli kung karanasan ay hindi hiwalay sa karanasan ng sambayanang mananampalataya. Nasampahan ako ng 5 gawa-gawang kaso, 3 frustrated murders at 2 attempted murders na ang piyansa nito ay umabot ng P840,000.00. Kasama daw ako sa pag raid sa kampo ng 81<sup>st</sup> IBPA, sa Bugbuga, Sta. Cruz, Ilocos Sur na kung saan sa panahong yaon ay ang layo ko sa lugar na pinangyarihan. Maliban nito nasa konsultasyon ako sa isang mayor sa Cordillera para sa Gawain natin ang isang research sa hanay ng mga magsasaka. Ganoon din na paano ako nakita at nakilala na ang oras ng labanan ay 8pm ayon sa ulat ng militar.*

*Mabigat ang makasuhan ng mga gawa-gawang kaso, nandoon ang pag-aalala ng buong pamilya, kahihiyaan na mapagbintangan ng hindi totoo, epekto sa kalusugan, gastusin, abala at pag-aalala kung ano ang susunod na gawin ng military sa iyo. Ngunit naniniwala ako na "the truth shall set us free", at "I can do all things thru Christ strengthen me!"*

Ang paglapastangan at pagyurak sa karapatan ng mga mananampalataya ay hindi lamang sa ngayon kundi kahit noong panahon ng mga disipulo at naunang mananampalataya. Gaya ng paninindigan ni Esteban sa pananampalataya niya kay Kristo ay hinuli, pinahirapan at pinatay sa pamamagitan ng pagbato sa kanya (mga gawa 7). Kahit ang mga 11/12 na disipulo ni Kristo ay namatay dahil sa kanilang pananampalataya at pagsunod sa mga itinuro ni Kristo. Naparusahan sila dahil sa paninindigan sa tama at katotohanan.

*Bilang mananampalataya at trabahador ng Iglesia, pinapanghawakan ko ang aking pananampalataya, sa gabay ng banal na kasulatan, sa misyon ni Kristo at sa komitment sa misyon ng Iglesia. Na ako ay susunod at kung ang pagsunod sa kanya, buhay man ay ialay kung kinakailangan. Malinaw na ialay niya ang kanyang buhay para sa mga aba niyang kapatid. (mark 8:34b-37) kaya huwag tayong matakot bagkus ipunin natin ang natitirang lakas at tapang upang labanan ang mga principalities and powers sa mundong ito. Kailangang armas natin ang ating sarili," isuot ang baluting mula sa Dios. Sa gayon, makatatagal kayo sa pakikipaglaban pagdating ng masamang araw na iyon, at pagkatapos ng iyong pakikipaglabanay matatag pa rin kayong nakatayo." (eph 6: 10-13).*

Nakikiisa ako sa kasabihan na mahirap ang maging tunay na Kristiano, tunay na trabahador ng Iglesiya at tunay na lingkod ng Panginoon. Ngunit ito ang hamon ng panahon, paano tayo maging tapat sa ating calling at matapang sa paglilingkod sa pinaka-abang kapatid ni Kristo.

Huwag panghinaan ng loob sa mga ganitong pagsubok bagkus panghawakan ang ehemplo ng ating Panginoong Jesu Kristo na inalay ang buhay para sa ating mga aba niyang kapatid. Puriin ang Panginoon!

**A NARRATIVE  
REPORT ON  
JUSTICE, PEACE  
AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
PROGRAM  
OF THE UCCP**



# A NARRATIVE REPORT ON JUSTICE, PEACE AND HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM OF THE UCCP

## Introduction and Context of Mission

The Public Witness of the UCCP's life and work that emanates from its faith affirmation on the God of Shalom has been implemented for several years now through various programmatic expressions of which Justice, Peace and Human Rights is one of them.

This has been so considering that there is no significant change from previous administrations until the current dispensation of President Benigno Simeon Aquino III in terms of addressing the root causes of social injustice resulting from continuous social unrest in this benighted country.

In the four years (2011-2015) of the Aquino regime, gross violations of the people's rights are committed amid the intolerable conditions of poverty and exploitation.

"Such miserable condition of the majority is the result of the government's then and now continuous subservience to idolatrous vision and mission of the false gods of mammon through economic globalization through free-market capitalism that claims power to save the world through the accumulation of undue wealth and prosperity. (Karapatan)

"The economy is characterized by unhampered plunder of the country's land and resources by foreign-owned big business and their local cohorts, the decreasing budget for social services (e.g. health, education and housing, etc.), the Private-Public Partnership (PPP) scheme and the rampant corruption involving public funds (P10B Pork Barrel Scam), among others. The macro-economic statistics on the supposed economic growth under Aquino are utterly deceptive and preposterous for the majority of the Filipinos as they sink deeper into impoverishment." (Karapatan)

Such is the state of socio-political and economic injustice that leads patriotic Filipinos to clamor for genuine change where freedom and peace based on justice reigns. Consequently, it is their vehement opposition to the drive of undue accumulation of wealth and prosperity by the powers-that-be that made them vulnerable to human rights violations by the state and its agents.

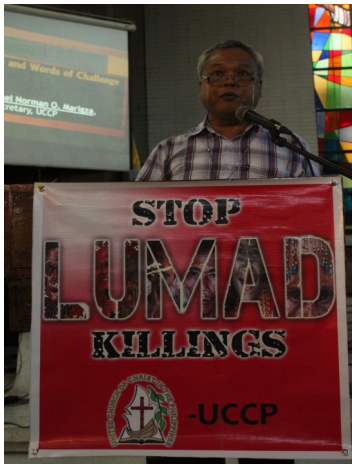
Rampant human rights violations in the Philippines will, undoubtedly, continue to victimize many concerned citizens for social justice as the government intensifies its Counter-Insurgency program dubbed as "Oplan Bayanihan" being implemented by the Aquino regime.

Given this situation, therefore, the UCCP continues to manifest its faith imperative to promote Justice, Peace and Human Rights through various programs and activities that, among others, are highlighted below.

## Programs and Activities (E.Y June 2014 – May 2015)

### A. Advocacy/Campaign/Mobilization – Addresses violations against Civil and Political as well as Cultural, Social and Economic rights of the Filipino people.

1. Supported the Fact-Finding Mission of the SLJ-NESTCON and the on-going court litigation on seeking justice for a 17-year old girl rape victim from UCCP Mabitac, Mabitac, Laguna.
2. Participated in the National Ecumenical & Multi-Sectoral Fact-Finding and Solidarity Mission (FFSM) to Indigenous Peoples communities in four barangays in Quezon, Nueva Viscaya.
3. Participated in the Ecumenical & Multi-Sectoral Mission dubbed as "Defend Balakbakan, Defend Laiya Solidarity Mission" in Balakbakan, Laiya, San Juan, Batangas last August 2014
4. Participated in the Ecumenical and Multi-Sectoral FFSM in Lacub, Abra on Sept. 27-Oct. 1, 2014.
5. Held Forum on Justice for Engr. Delle Salvador, Justice for Lacub, Abra last Sept. 19, 2014 at the Chapel of the UCCP National Offices attended by ecumenical and multi-sectoral partners local and abroad.



6. Held Fora and Training-Orientation on the People's Initiative to Abolish Pork Barrel Sign-up Campaign in some jurisdictions, conferences and local churches since August 2014-January 2015.

7. Continued support to seek justice for victims of trumped-up charges against Bro. Benjie Gomez of Libertad, Zamboanga Del Norte, Sis. Ofelia Inong of Solano, Nueva Viscaya and Ptr.

Francisco Bunoan, Jr. of North Luzon Jurisdiction. To date, cases of the three have been dismissed for no legal basis to stand on.

8. Pastoral Solidarity visit to the victims of grenade bombing in Pikit UCCP, North Cotabato last October 9-10, 2015. That dastardly and despicable act killed 2 and wounded 3 key leaders of Pikit UCCP.

9. Supported the SLJ ministry to women and children who are victims of trafficking.

10. Participated in the national and international ecumenical and multi-sectoral campaign TO SAVE MARY JANE VELOSO from death penalty by the

Indonesian government.

11. Participated in ecumenical and multi-sectoral campaign and mobilization against Hacienda Luisita Massacre and continuous land-grabbing, illegal demolition or displacement of urban poor communities, eviction and land-grabbing in Indigenous Peoples and communities, justice for the victims/survivors of typhoons Sendong, Pablo, Haiyan, Pork Barrel Scam (PDAP & DAP), EDCA, and the Mamasapano incident.

12. Extended financial support to the Philippine delegation of witnesses to the International People's Tribunal (IPT) hearings on rampant human rights violations and violations of International Humanitarian Law by the Philippine State and the United States of America against the Filipino people's civil-political and cultural-social-economic rights resulting in civil war in the Philippines for several decades now. The said IPT hearing was held in Washington DC, USA on July 16-18, 2015.

13. Participated in the ongoing national ecumenical and multi-sectoral advocacy and campaign to #STOPLUMADKILLINGS!. I was present during the July 23 violent incident when more or less 500 policemen, military and paramilitary forced their way by breaking the closed steel gates of the UCCP Haran Peace Center compound. At the height of the fracas, helped negotiate with government agents to observe law and order. Bishop Reuel Norma O. Marigza and myself attended the Press Conference organized by South-East Mindanao Jurisdiction the following day, July 24, to inform the public on the UCCP's position to the act that desecrated the Church and the Lumads perpetrated by state agents no less.

14. Participated in the International Fact-Finding Mission last September 21-23, 2015 sponsored by the multi-sectoral group HUMABOL, a farmer's organization in the province of Bohol, Central Visayas whose officers and members with their economic activities being imperiled through harassment by state agents (military in collaboration with some offices/agencies of the Provincial Government of Bohol).

15. Held two fora on Indigenous People's Crisis under the NCCP Theme that we also adopted, "**Simbahan at Katutubong Mamamayan, Nagkakaisa sa Pagtaguyod ng Kabanalan ng Sanilikha:**" 1) November 11, 2015, 1:00-5:00PM, UCCP Cosmopolitan Church, Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila, attended by Church Workers and Lay People from the Lowland Cavite South Manila Conference; and, 2) November 13, 2015, 1:00-5:00PM, National City United Church, 96 Times Street, West Triangle, Quezon City, attended by Church Workers and Lay People from the United Metropolis Conference and Manila North Conference. Both venues were attended as well by the Area Bishop and Staff of the Middle Luzon Jurisdiction and National Staff at 877 EDSA UCCP National Offices. We also extended financial assistance as support to the over-all campaign on

#STOPLUMADKILLINGS through the MANILAKBAYAN OF MINDANAO 2015, and sponsored a boodle fight communal dinner with Lumad Datus and Babailans on September 11, 2015.





**B. Direct Services to the Families of UCCP Pastors and Lay leaders who were HRVs victims**

1. Facilitated in providing sanctuary to victims of human rights violations from the South Luzon Jurisdictional area that included safe haven, medical and dental service, trauma healing and/or psycho-social intervention. There were eight in June-July 2013 and four in September 2014.
2. Educational support to children of UCCP Pastors and Laymen who were victims of human rights violations. At present, we are still supporting twenty-two pupils/students from elementary, high school and college. Last E.Y. June 2013-May 2014, we extended Educational Support in the amount of P187, 000.00 to 22 children/students to ensure their studies to have decent life in the future. Last December 2014, we extended same amount. There are five selected students at present who are receiving P4,400.00 monthly from the PROK. Five students graduated from college since this program started in 2007. The financial support for this program comes from our UCCP mission partners abroad, namely, the United Evangelical Mission (UEM), United Church in Canada (UCC), United Church of Christ-USA (UCC-USA), General Board Global Ministries-United Methodist Church (GBGM-UMC), Presbyterian Church-USA and the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea (PROK).
3. Extended financial support to the Campaign to SAVE MARYJANE VELOSO from death penalty.
4. Extended moral and financial support to the more or less 700 Lumads/Indigenous People taking refuge at UCCP Haran Peace Center compound in Davao City, Mindanao.

Some surviving children of UCCP Pastors and Lay leaders who were victims of HRVs who are recipients of the on-going Educational Scholarship.

**C. UCCP Legal Suit versus the former President Gloria M. Arroyo**

1. The case had passed through preliminary processes: **from** pre-trial hearings where the Motion to Dismiss the case by the GMA party have been DENIED twice by the Regional Trial Court (RTC) Branch 224 of Quezon City, as well as their Motion for Reconsideration before the Court of Appeals last July 2014 for Mediation and Judicial Dispute Resolution (JDR).
2. The case now in its Pre-Trial proper phase wherein our General Secretary had already testified at the witness stand for direct and cross-examination by counsels of both parties last Feb. 27, 2015 and Emma Lapus, widow of the Rev. Edison Lapuz (EJK victim) have already testified also. The series of court trials have already been set monthly from March until December this year. The last hearing scheduled on October 23, 2015 should have Teodora M. Capulong, wife of the late Noli C. Capulong (EJK victim) at the witness stand for direct and cross-examination. Sadly, the hearings scheduled on August 28 and October 23, this year were unfortunately postponed for varying reasons. But it is hoped that it will push through on November 27. We aim not only to win the case inside the courtroom but put an end the "culture of impunity" in this country.



**D. Capability Building to Church Constituents = Judicatories, Organizations and Institutions (JOIs)**

1. The production and distribution of the UCCP Human Rights Week Celebration Guide 2014 to all local churches, Church Recognized Organizations and Church Institutions and ecumenical mission partners, local and abroad. The suggested resource material contained Bible Studies guides and biblico-theological reflections, sermons, liturgy for Human Rights Sunday, news and updates on the UCCP JPHR programs and activities, UCCP Pastoral statements and press releases related to justice, peace and human rights issues and concerns, glossary on human rights violations, Article III, Bill of Rights of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations. We Consider such resources a significant contribution as we continue to journey together in strengthening our congregational life faith thru study and worship that'll inspire us to manifest our public witness in **"Building Peace Based on Justice: Upholding Human**





*Dignities,*” a kind of spirituality we need so badly to give flesh to our faith profession for these critical times. The preparation for the production of the same resource material for year 2015 is on process, targeting to have it distributed to all Church’s Judicatories, Organizations and Institutions (JOIs), ecumenical and multi-sectoral partners local and abroad by the middle part of November this year.

2. The South Luzon Jurisdiction held two meetings or fellowship among Human Rights lawyers and advocates who are members of the UCCP in the area. Such activity is a process of maximizing the participation of our lay people in the life-work of the church, such as the lawyers, in terms of responding human rights related cases and other legal needs of our church.

3. Give input during the Peace Forum on *“The Role of the Church in Advancing Justice, Peace and Human Rights”* to the North Luzon Ecumenical Group and a Press Conference rightafter held on September 3, 2015 at the UCCP, Candon City; and, attended by leading the Invocation during the 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of Justice for Engr. Fidela “Delle” B. Salvador and Justice for Lacub, Abra campaign held on September 4, 2015 at the University of the Philippines, Baguio City.

4. Facilitated a National Situationer and Biblico-Theological Reflection on the *“The Role of the Church in Advancing Justice, Peace and Human Rights”* during the Joint EVJ-WVJ UCWO Fellowship held at the UCCP University of the Eastern Philippines (UEP), Catarman, Northern Samar last October 20-22, 2015.
5. Presented and Input on the *“Role of the Church in Advancing Justice, Peace and Human Rights”* during the MLJ UCWO Encounter held at the Ecumenical Theological Seminary (ETS), Baguio City on October 26-30, 2015.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Anticipating the rampant and gross human rights violations in different patterns due to the worsening socio-political, and economic injustices in the country nowadays due to development aggression by the worshippers of the gods of mammon, the UCCP remains committed to pursuing peace anchored on justice and abundant life (John 10:10) for the Filipino people. This commitment includes journeying with victims of human right violations and their families as well as with like-minded partners within the Philippines and around the world. In our experience, the Philippine government has shown, time and again, that it has little intention to give justice to the victims of HRVs by holding its perpetrators accountable.

As we have personally witnessed, the likelihood that these violations are state-perpetrated, we are not surprised at the lack of political will on the part of the government entities to improve the human rights situation or end the prevailing climate of impunity in the Philippines. We find strength in the courage of the Filipino people and the encouragement from our partners. Ultimately, our stance for Truth and Justice is a Faith imperative, which we must pursue as a way of life, no matter what the cost, if that is what *“Spirituality For These Critical Times”* really means.

Prepared by:

**REV. JEROME C. BARIS**  
UCCP National Coordinator  
Justice, Peace and Human Rights Program



Pastoral visit by members of the North-West Mindanao Jurisdictional Area Cabinet with JPHR Program National Coordinator Rev. Jerome C. Baris to Political Prisoner with Trumped-up/Criminal Charges, Local Lay Preacher Benjie Gomez at Sindangan District Jail, Zamboanga del Norte.



1-4: Joined the Ecumenical and Multi-sectoral Rally during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Hearing on the Case filed against Retired General Jovito Palparan held in Bulacan RTC Branch 04, Malolos, Bulacan last October 2014 in solidarity with the victims of human rights violations allegedly under the command of Gen. Palparan. 5.

Dialogue with DOJ USEC Baraan at the DOJ Central Office, Padre Faura St, Malate, Manila bringing our collective appeal to expedite judicial prosecution to perpetrators on various cases of HRVs filed before the DOJ such as UCCP Legal Suit vs GMA and Jimmy Liguyon's Case, among others.



The Forum on Justice for Engr. Fidela "Delle" B. Salvador, Justice for the people of Lacub, Abra held Sept. 19, 2014 at the Chapel and front of the UCCP National Offices at 877 EDSA, West Triangle, Quezon City.





Pictures of visit to UCCP Pikit after the horrible grenade bombing that killed 2 and wounded 3 active key leaders of the Local Church last October 8, 2014.



Some surviving children of UCCP Pastors and Lay leaders who were victims of HRVs who are recipients of the on-going Educational Scholarship.





Prayer vigil is being held in front of the Quezon City Hall of Justice simultaneous with every courtroom trial at Quezon City RTC Branch 224 then, now at 226 on the UCCP Legal Suit versus the former President Gloria M. Arroyo (1-3). Atty. Emilio C. Capulong Jr. gives updates on the status of the case (4) while holding the picture of his younger brother Noli Capulong, EJK victim included in the complaint (5).



UCCP Human Rights Lawyers, Church Workers and Advocates during their 2<sup>nd</sup> Fellowship held last November 22, 2014 at the David's Tea House, Calamba City, Laguna, Philippines.

# **UCCP STATEMENTS**



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24 July 2015

### PASTORAL LETTER TO ALL CHURCHES ON THE FORCIBLE ENTRY OF THE PNP AT THE UCCP HARAN

***"We believe that God is at work, to make each person a new being in Christ and the whole world, God's kingdom – in which love, justice and peace prevail. The Kingdom of God is present where faith in Jesus Christ is shared, where healing is given to the sick, where food is given to the hungry, where light is given to the blind, and where liberty is given to the captive and the oppressed."*** – UCCP Statement of Faith

In the early morning of June 23, 2015, PNP elements in full riot gear, along with a paramilitary group named ALAMARA and with fire trucks and military vehicles began massing outside the UCCP Haran Mission House. They were lead by a certain Col. Marvin Pepino.

Without presenting any warrant or court order even when asked point blank about it, they forcibly entered the Church premises by destroying the gate. This happened as Church officials were facilitating a dialogue between the *datus* and the representatives from the DSWD and the NCIP. The DSWD Assistant Director Perlita Demaquiling stated that they were ordered by the Office of the President through the DSWD Secretary to get the women and children in the Haran Mission Compound. The *datus* refused the offer.

Rev. Jerome Baris, JPHR Coordinator from the National Office, suggested that the agencies extend their services in the area. The dialogue has just ended when for unknown reason, a command was given to the PNP to force their way in. Apparently there was no coordination with the local government unit, as the PNP immediately withdrew when Davao Vice-Mayor Paolo Duterte arrived in the scene. The United Church of Christ in the Philippines strongly condemn the illegal and violent conduct of the Police forces along with ALAMARA, a paramilitary group, by using excessive force to break through the premises of HARAN Mission House. We are outraged at this show of excessive force moreso because the PNP did not have any warrant to enter and search the Church facility, a private property.

HARAN Mission House, owned by UCCP, has long been a Peace Sanctuary for the lost, the last and the least of our people. It is a place purposely created to accommodate individuals or communities that were deprived, neglected, exploited, and suppressed with their civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. Our fellow Ata-Manobos sought help and refuge in our Church since 1994, the first of a series of internal displacement due to militarization that happened in the countrysides. Providing them sanctuary in our peace haven is a duty we embrace arising from our own UCCP Declaration of Principles, to wit:

***"In accordance with the biblical understanding that all persons are created in the image of God, the Church affirms and upholds the inviolability of the rights of persons as reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights . . . and those that specifically to refugees, women, youth, children, minority groups and other persons who cannot safeguard their own rights." (Art II Sec 11, UCCP Consti). "The United Church of Christ in the Philippines affirms its historic faith and its pastoral and prophetic witness in the life and culture of the Filipino people. The Church supports the people's aspiration for abundant life and holistic redemption from all forms of bondage, in accordance with the vision of the reign of God (Art II Sec 8, UCCP Consti).***

The UCCP also in its "Peacemaking: Our Ministry" statement noted that "Intensified military operations designed to eliminate insurgents have wrought havoc on the lives of our brothers and sisters in the countrysides . . ."



This is why we have declared our churches and church facilities as sanctuaries and zones of peace.

This is why we are also calling on the resumption of peace talks to address the roots of violence and conflict in our land, which often result in the mass displacement of communities. UCCP Haran Mission House has in the past served as a sanctuary and safe haven for the internal refugees.

We ask our constituency to uphold our peacemaking ministry as “an imperative of the faith we profess. The Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines calls us ‘to participate in the establishment of a meaningful and just social order.’ Hence, the peace we seek should result from our active participation in building structures that promote human development and uphold human dignity” (Peacemaking: Our Ministry, 1986).

We also call on all sectors to denounce the ongoing militarization and human rights violations in Indigenous Peoples community and to strengthen inter-faith and tri-people efforts to build unity, justice and peace.

We continue to implore on our people to pray and work for justice and peace in our land.



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## AND JUSTICE WILL PRODUCE LASTING PEACE!

*(A Pastoral Statement on Lumad Killings)*

The recent wave of violence committed against the Lumads in Mindanao has come to an alarming juncture. Last September 1, 2015, Emerito 'Tatay Emok' Samarca, executive director of the Alternative Learning Center for Agriculture and Development, Inc. (ALCADEV), Dionel Campos, chairperson of MAPASU (Persevering Struggle for Future Manobo Generations), and his cousin Aurelio "Bello" Sinzo were killed while the teachers and students of the school were harassed, and hundreds of individuals displaced in Barangay Diatagon, Lianga, Surigao del Sur. Days before in Barangay Mendis, Pangantucan, Bukidnon, five Lumads were reportedly killed in what the police and military declared was a "legitimate encounter" between state forces and the New People's Army.

We are deeply appalled and dismayed that in the face of all these disquieting violence our national government remains tightlipped and unmoved as if our leaders do not care about the lives of the innocent Lumads in Mindanao. The Scriptures so strongly declare in Exodus 23" 7: ***"Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked."***

We, therefore, call on our authorities to exert all efforts to bring to justice the death of our Lumad brothers that the perpetrators may be held accountable for the crime and that justice may finally be served!

We call as well on our churches, and partners to extend support to the victims including displaced individuals and their families by providing basic necessities such as food, temporary shelter, medical and spiritual support and any other possible help.

Moreso, we call on our authorities to disband and dismantle any and all existing para-military groups like the Alamara and Bagani groups as they are oftentimes linked to violence and harassments of Lumad communities and that the DOJ conduct an impartial investigation and in due course file appropriate cases against the culprits.

Finally, we call on the government to resume peace talks with the National Democratic Front to address the root causes of conflict that would in due course bring about lasting peace throughout the land.

Let us all be guided by the wisdom of the Scriptures:

*"Then justice will dwell in the wilderness. And righteousness will abide in the fertile field. And the work of righteousness will be peace, And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever. Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation, And in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places;..." (Isaiah 32:16-18)*

Issued on September 30, 2015 by UCCP Incumbent Bishops

# **Glossary of HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**



# Glossary of HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Prepared by: Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights 2011

## Introduction

KARAPATAN – is a national alliance composed of organization, groups and individuals active in the promotion, protection and individuals active in promotion, protection, defense and advance of human rights [HR]. It upholds that human beings have the inalienable right to life. Liberty, security of person and pursuit of happiness; and have such fundamental freedoms as those of thought, expression, belief and assembly, as well as from want and fear. It asserts and addresses the full range of rights of individuals and people: civil and political, economic, social and cultural.

KARAPATAN – asserts that the State, as a party to various international HR instruments, has the primary responsibility to uphold and protect human rights. Guided by the national democratic movement's extensive experience and arduous defense of human rights and consistent with the United Nation [UN] systems and mechanisms, karapatan's mandate in monitoring and documentation work focuses mainly on the compliance of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines [GPH] with UN human rights instruments such as the international Covenant On Civil and Political Rights [ICCPR] and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights [ICESCR] among others, and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines [CARHRIHL].

The Karapatan 2011 Glossary of Human Rights Violations [HRVs] serves as a continuing attempt at setting a working reference of HRV definitions based on standards set by International Human Rights Law [IHRL] as specified in various United Nations covenants and other international treaties and conventions. It includes other rights which have been identified and defined in later years as a result of people's struggle not only for human rights but comprehensively for national sovereignty and democracy all over the world.

KARAPATAN's efforts are in line with its objective of developing an accurate, timely, comprehensive and useful system of HRV monitoring and documentation as bases for:

- *Getting justice for the victims of HRV violation and their families*
- *Coming up with regular periodic reports on human rights situation in the Philippines*
- *Calling attention to and campaigning against HR violations; and*
- *Generally reporting to the public on the status of the government's compliance with the international instrument that it signed or acceded to as a state party.*

The Glossary is a companion document to KARAPATAN's Gabay sa Pagsasanay sa awaing Dokumntasyon [Training Guide on Documentation Work].

## Definition of Terms

### **INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW [IHRL] Also commonly referred to as HUMAN RIGHTS [HR]**

A set of international rules and norms established by treaty, convention or customs, on the basis of which individuals and groups can assert and/ or claim certain rights, behavior or benefits from governments. Human rights are inherent entitlements which belong to every person as a consequence of being human. IHRL lays down rules binding governments in their relations with individual, communities and peoples.

## Person in Authority

- a. Any person directly vested with jurisdiction, whether as an individual or as a member of some court or government-owned or controlled corporation, board or commission;
- b. Include a barrio captain and barangay chairman; any person who, by direct provision of the law, by election or by appointment; by competent authority, is charged with the maintenance of public order and the protection and security of life and property, such as a barrio councilman, barrio policemen and barangay leader;
- c. Regular state security forces [military and police].

**Agents of persons in Authority**

- a. Any person who “comes to the aid of persons in authority are agents of person in authority” [Article 152, RPC];
- b. Paramilitary groups, vigilante groups, security services, hired killers, etc

**Civilians**

Are Warmed individuals, with or without political affiliation. However, those individuals who are armed with firearms or bladed weapons for economic/cultural purposes other than political and are not engaged in armed struggle are deemed civilians under this lexicon (e.g. Tribal communities, hunters, or private individuals who own or process guns for leisure or self-protection).

**Combatants**

Armed persons organized in a more or less rigid manner with a definite political goal and engaged in armed struggle/ conflict to pursue the same. For this purpose, regulars of the New People’s Army, Bangsamoro Army and the Armed Forces of the Philippines are considered combatants. These also include those armed and engaged in counter-insurgency operations and controlled, directly or indirectly, by the State, including but not limited to paramilitary units like Civilian Home Defense Force [CHDF], Civilian armed Forces Geographical Units [CAFGU], Barrio Self defense Unit [BSDU], Civilian active Auxilliary [CAA], civilian volunteer organization [CVOs] and other paramilitary units that state security forces will form in the future, included also are private armies and vigilante groups.

**Hors de Combat**

A situation where a combatant is no more in a position or has no more capacity to take part in hostilities or commit any hostile act (Literal translation: out of combat who is wounded injured, sick or surrendered or in no position or capacity anymore to do any hostile act.

**Children**

Every human being below the age of eighteen years [18] unless under the law applicable to the child majority is attained earlier (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child). (Mentally-ill persons- persons who are mentally retarded or whose mental capacity does not exceed that of a child, as can be verified by scientific means.)

**Family**

Basic unit of society which is entitled to protection by the State and society. For statistical purposes, six will be used as the average number of members of a Filipino family.

**Property**

Any physical or intangible entity that is owned by a person or jointly by a group of persons. Important widely recognized types of property include real property [land, structure, personal property [physical possessions belonging to a person], private property [property owned by legal persons or business entities.

**Writ of Habeas Corpus** [English translation: “produce the body”]

A judicial mandate to a prison official ordering that an inmate be brought to the court so it can be determined whether or not that person is imprisoned lawfully and whether or not he should be released from custody. The writ is “the fundamental instrument for safeguarding individual freedom against arbitrary and lawless state action. “Harris v. Nelson, 394 U.S. 286, 290-91 (1969)

**Extrajudicial**

Physical punishment without the permission of a court or legal authority or outside the legal or judicial process.

**Miranda Rights**

The rights to remain silent and to have counsel when placed under custodial investigation or detained and interrogated/investigated in connection with a crime and the right to be informed of such rights at the time when he/she is placed under such custody or detention.

**International Humanitarian Law [IHL]**

A set of international rules and norms, established by treaty, convention or custom which are specifically intended to humanize and govern armed conflicts and solve humanitarian problems arising from such international or non-international armed conflicts. It protects in the main civilian persons and property that are, or maybe, affected by an armed conflict and limits the behavior or acts of the parties to a conflict to use methods and means of warfare of their choice.

### **International armed conflicts**

Wars involving two or more states and wars of liberation, regardless of whether a declaration of war has been made or whether the parties involved recognize that there is a state of war.

### **Non-international armed conflicts**

Those in which government forces are fighting against armed insurgent, or rebel groups are fighting among themselves.

## **VIOLATION OF CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS**

### **Extrajudicial, summary or Arbitrary Killing**

Though different from one another all three types taken together are commonly referred to as extrajudicial killing or EJK adopting the practice of the office of the UN Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary execution.

#### **a. Extrajudicial Killing**

The act of unlawful and deliberate killing carried out without due process of law and outside of the judicial process by state agents or with their complicity, inducement, tolerance or acquiescence.

#### **b. Assassination**, as an example of extrajudicial killing, is characterized by well planned, swift, clandestine or otherwise sudden attack resulting in the instant or subsequent death of the target or victim who is usually a well-known, politically important personage.

#### **c. Summary Execution**

This is a form more commonly known as salvaging which can be characterized through the following:

Against those who have been neutralized or placed under custody and control of state agents; or

Are in no position to make any hostile act against the perpetrator/s

#### **d. Arbitrary Killing**

Indiscriminate execution carried out by state agents with no specific individual target. Examples are deaths due to strafing and random or indiscriminate firing.

#### **e. Massacre**

The wholesale killing of three or more individuals as a specific target usually at a common time and place. It can be due to strafing and random or indiscriminate firing.

As mentioned before, they are all classified as extrajudicial killing or EJK.

### **Frustrated Extrajudicial Killing**

- a. When the perpetrator commences the commission of acts constituting extrajudicial killing with intent to kill but does not complete its full execution due to causes independent of his will. Example, the victims escapes;
- b. When the perpetrator/s completes the act of killing but the victim survives.

### **Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance**

The abduction, arrest and detention or any form of deprivation of liberty by agents of the State or by persons or group acting with the authorization, support or acquiescence of the state, followed by a refusal to acknowledge the deprivation of liberty or concealment of the fate or whereabouts of the victim with the intention of removing him/her from the protection of the law.

The missing person is considered disappeared if his/her whereabouts remain unknown for more than seventy-two [72] hours. For purposes of its HRV statistics, Karapatan report as victims of EID only those who remain missing. Those who are eventually surfaced, which the UN still counts as disappeared, are reported under extra-judicial killing or illegal detention as the case maybe.

### **Enforced Suicide**

A person is driven to commit suicide after having been illegally detained tortured and threatened with death and / or further torture to be committed against his/her person and/ or a member of the immediate family, including rape of wife and daughter/s

### **Abduction or arbitrary/ Illegal Arrest**

Abduction is the act of taking into custody or any form or manner of restraint of a person's liberty such as taking away of a person by state security forces who do not identify themselves as such, and subsequent release within 72 hours.



Arbitrary or illegal arrest is the act of taking custody or any form or manner of restraint of a person's liberty through a defective or without a warrant or arrest even when not in the act of committing a crime nor about to commit or having just committed a crime. It can take the form of "picking up", taking into custody or "inviting" for questioning. It includes the use of a blanket warrant using generic names of John Does to justify or legalize an otherwise questionable arrest. Or the arbitrary arrest is "cured" by subsequent issuance of a warrant.

Arbitrary Arrest also includes the seemingly harmless practice of the police and military of inviting individuals and asking the latter questions in connection with supposed crime or wrongdoing or inquiring about their membership in organization and political affiliation.

The person who is arbitrarily arrested can be subsequently released within 72 hours after undergoing interrogation, being held incommunicado and / or subjected to torture.

The illegal arrest of five or more persons can be termed as illegal arrest.

### **Torture**

The intentional and systematic act of inflicting severe physical;  
Psychological/mental and/ or sexual humiliation, degradation, fear, pain, suffering, injuries, torment or terror against an individual;  
Including the employment of drugs, chemical agents; hypnosis, sleep or food deprivation or other similar methods;  
With the intent to extract information or extrajudicial involuntary confession or as a punishment for an act that such individual is suspected to have committed or for other similar motivations.

### **Rape**

Rape by sexual assault by any person which can be done either by inserting his penis into another person's mouth or anal orifice, or by inserting any instrument or object into the genital or anal orifice of another person, including the fingers, act of lasciviousness, and all form of sexual abuse.  
Committed by public officers, persons in authority or their agents; regular state security forces (military and police). Paramilitary forces (CAFGU and CVO) and their agents (vigilantes, private security guards, hired goons or killers, etc.);  
Against an individual or individuals;  
While the latter is in custody, control, supervision or authority; or  
For the purpose of either extracting information or an involuntary confession, humiliating or degrading such individual who is within their power, dominating or overpowering said individual and for other reason related to the exercise of state power.

### **Sexual Molestation**

Short of rape, a woman's body is forcibly subjected by military and State agents to mashing, kissing and/ or biting as a form of torture, harassment or intimidation. Another example is the detainee being kept handcuffed and blindfolded while being assisted in her toilet needs with her private parts being washed by unknown persons. Men can also be subjected to sexual molestation although cases are much less than those of women.

### **Physical Assault and/ or Injuries**

The act of employing unlawful and/ or unnecessary force and harm  
By mauling, beating, manhandling an individual;  
By public officers, person in authority or their agents; regular state security forces [military and police], paramilitary forces [CAFGU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes, hired goons or killers, etc];  
For the purpose to extract information or an extrajudicial involuntary confession or as a punishment for an act that such individual is suspected to have committed;  
Or simply for the purpose of exercising state power;  
Resulting to the wounding or injuring an individual;  
Physical assault and injuries can be committed during breaking up of a picket, demonstration or similar protest action, demolition, strafing, indiscriminate firing and bombing/shelling/aerial bombardment.

## **Threat, Harassment or Intimidation**

These are done to instill fear or anxiety on a suspect or target individual by threatening his/her person, security officer, privacy, honor, liberty and property or that of his family. Any group organization or community can be targeted. Specific forms include verbal abuse; name-calling; verbal threat of bodily harm or through e-mail, SMS and other IT methods or devices; intimidating words or gestures; taking of one's photo without consent; surveillance; random interrogation, "ethnic or racial profiling" of national minorities.

Recent cases especially targeting human rights defenders include threat or filing of harassment suits and other malicious, nuisance and persecutory legal cases and issuance of spurious arrest warrants; placing an individual's name in a military roster of "enemies of the state" like an Order of Battle or OB; and demonizing through the media, public forum, assemblies and similar venues thus instigating violence against individuals, groups and organizations.

## **Surveillance and other Violations of the Right to Privacy of Communication**

Not anymore limited to intercepting, pilfering and opening of mail matters but also information gathering by tapping telephone, hacking cell phones and the internet and planting electronic listening devices. It also includes stationing overt and covert stalkers.

## **Violation of the Rights of Arrested or Detained Persons**

- a. **Of Miranda Rights**—failure of the arresting unit to read the arrested person his/her Miranda Rights to remain silent and be informed of the fact that anything he / she says can be used against him/ her; the right to have counsel of one's choice; and the right to be informed of such rights in the presence of counsel at the time when placed under custodial investigation or detained and interrogated or investigated in connection with a crime
- b. **Of right to freely communicate** – depriving, delaying, denying, limiting or restraining an individual under arrest and/or detention from talking by landline, mobile telephone, etc, to any of the following; counsel, family, relative, religious leader, doctors counselor and representative/s of human rights organizations for any purpose including but not limited to communicating whereabouts, circumstances of arrest and/or detention, update on his/her condition.
- c. **Of right to counsel** – depriving, delaying, denying, limiting or restraining an individual under arrest and/or detention from exercising his/her immediate right to counsel of his/her choice.
- d. **Right to Visit by Family**  
The act by public officers, persons in authority or their agents [ warden, sheriff]; regular state security forces [military and police], paramilitary forces [CAFGU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes, hired goons, etc.] of depriving, delaying, denying, limiting or restraining an individual under arrest and/ or detention of immediate rights to counsel of his choice.
- e. **Incommunicado**  
The act of depriving or denying an individual of access or use of any form of communication with individuals other than his custodians, whether or not during arrest, custodial investigation/"tactical interrogation" or detention and regardless whether it is a result of solitary confinement or not.
- f. **Solitary Confinement**  
The act of physically isolating a detained person, either for a definite or indefinite period of time, from other detainees or inmates, whether the isolation is in form of further punishment or not. This is also known as "bartolina"
- g. **Right to Presumption of Innocence or Against Public Condemnation/Trial by Publicity**  
The act by public officers, persons in authority or agents [warden, sheriff]; regular state security forces [military and police] and paramilitary forces [CAFGU and CVO] of presenting an arrested person or a person deprived of liberty before the tri-media [print, radio, and television] without his consent and of counsel of his own choice and declaring, portraying or insinuating that such person is guilty of certain crimes and alleged possession of certain materials.
- h. **Inhumane, Cruel and/ or Degrading Treatment or Punishment**  
The act by public officers, persons in authority or their agents; regular state security forces [military and police], paramilitary forces [CAFGU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes, hired goons or killers, etc] which tends to or has the effect of mocking, ridiculing, scoffing, degrading, taunting or dehumanizing an individual or such other similar intention or effect either by way of treatment or punishment.
- i. **Criminalization of Political Offenses or Acts**  
The act, policy and practice by persons in authority, the state through its police, military, investigative, prosecutorial, and judicial arms or agents of arresting, investigating, charging, prosecuting, trying and convincing individuals with common crimes instead of the proper or corresponding political charges with respect to political offenses or acts and/ or agrarian/ labor cases.  
This is otherwise known as the violation of the People vs. Hernandez doctrine [99 Phil 515].
- j. **Unreasonably delayed court proceedings** – a violation of an individual's right to speedy trial which includes delaying tactics by the prosecutor or a judge whose probity is in question, intervention by the military and state agencies

**k. Forced labor or involuntary servitude**

**l. Other forms of coercion**

The act by public officers, persons in authority or their agents, regular state security forces [military and police]; paramilitary forces [CAFGU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes; hired goons or killers, etc] who, by means of violence, harm or intimidation, prevent an individual from doing something not prohibited by law or compel him to do something against his will or out of fear.

Specific forms of coercion include the following:

**a. Use of Civilians in Police and/or Military Operation as Guide and/ or as shield**

The forcible act to compel an individual to participate in any police and/or military activity [patrolling, actual armed engagement, intelligence and “civic” operations and using as a hostage] either as a guide or for the purpose of using such individual as a shield or buffer against any attack directed at state security forces. If as an incident or consequences of hamletting, forcible reconcentration, or forcible displacement, state security forces are shielded or buffered from attack then the violation must be categorized as hamletting, forcible reconcentration or forcible displacement, as the case may be.

**b. Forced Recruitment/Conscription**

The act of forcing an individual to become an intelligence agent, asset, spy or directly recruiting him into the state security forces [including paramilitary groups], whether there is any offer or award of financial or other consideration or none.

**c. Forced Labor/involuntary Servitude**

The act of forcing individual to perform any kind of work against his will

**d. Force/Fake Surrender**

The act of compelling, misrepresenting or forcing individual into surrendering to the authorities or to feign or pretend to be a surrenderee or “rebel returnee”

**VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS TO FREEDOM FROM ASSOCIATION**

Unjustified and unlawful restriction, denial or prohibition to form or be a member of an organization and arbitrarily declaring an organization illegal or terrorist one. This also includes union busting, restriction, denial or prohibition to form or be a member of a union; monitoring, restriction or prohibition on student organization, councils, publication or any collective activity. The restriction, denial or prohibition are tolerated, condoned supported or sanctioned by the government and are keeping with or are consequences of a national policy program

**VIOLATION OF THE RIGHT TO LIBERTY MOVEMENT**

An individual is arbitrarily included in the Bureau of Immigration’s hold order list and is therefore not allowed to leave the country, or is included in the watch list and is either not allowed to leave or is stopped at the airport immigration desk or office for questioning or harassment. Or an individual is not allowed to return to his / her country of origin.

**RESTRICTION ON OR VIOLENT DISPERSAL OF MASS ACTIONS, PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES AND GATHERING**

Unreasonably or arbitrarily restricting, limiting or preventing the free holding of mass actions, public assemblies and gatherings; and / or the violent breaking up or forcible dispersal of such activities, regardless of whether such activities are covered by government permit or not. This is also includes assault and breaking up of picket lines and violations of the right to strike.

**MEDIA REPRESSION**

Various human rights violations are committed against media practitioners and institution in an attempt to silence or punish them. Aside from those already mentioned, below are some examples:

A mass media practitioner or institution is charged with slander, inciting to sedition, libel or burdened with multiple libel suits when found to be too critical of the government and administration’s close associates.

A local radio station or newspaper is temporarily or permanently close down when found too critical of the local ruling elite. Programs are temporarily or permanently stopped

Stations are being burned, equipment being confiscated or destroyed, radio staff being beaten up, interrogated and temporarily detained

Officers of grassroots program sponsors subjected to violence and harassed.

Worse, they become victims of EJK and EID, in which case the violation is classified under EJK or EID.



## **VIOLATION THAT TARGETS COMMUNITIES**

### **a. Illegal Search and Seizure**

The unlawful search conducted by public, person in authority or their agents; regular state security forces [military and police], paramilitary forces [CAGFU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes, hired goons, etc.], of personal property allegedly used or intended to be used for committing a crime when any of the following is present:

### **b. Violation of Domicile**

The act by public officers, persons in authority or their agents; regular state security forces [military and police], paramilitary forces [CAGFU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes, private security guards, hired goons, etc.] of illegally entering any private dwelling of an individual without being authorized by judicial order or against the consent the will or consent of the owner and/ or occupant whether the entry is to search the said dwelling or not.

This violation is being considered as violation not only to an individual but applied to all member of the family.

### **c. “ZONING” or Saturation Drives**

Surprise deployment of a big number of police or military units and encirclement of an urban or rural community that lead to residents especially men being forced to line up on the street. The systematic encirclement of a specific civilian community usually conducted during nighttime where individuals are forced to get out of their houses and are arbitrarily, frisked, and/ or arrested without any arrest or search warrant.

### **d. Illegal Checkpoints**

The arbitrary, random or systematic setting up of fixed or mobile checkpoints in public roads and places and conducting intrusive questioning and physical frisking, actual search and/ or visual searches without any search warrant.

### **e. Forcible Re-concentration**

The act of the public officers, persons in authority or their agents; regular state security forces, paramilitary forces and their agents of forcibly reconcentrating or relocating the residence of a group of individuals or a civilian community against their will and in a place chosen or designated by said officers, authorities, agents or forces for the purpose of giving way to an extensive or otherwise military operations.

In general, a Forced Evacuation or Displacement occurs when a group of individuals are forced or compelled to transfer residence either to another locality which may not be the same as those which the others are transferred to.

### **f. Hamletting**

The act of public officers in authority or their agents; regular state security, paramilitary forces or their agents of enclosing an entire civilian community in the same place or locality and placing its resident, their lives, livelihood and movement [including the imposition of curfew hours and the maintenance of a list of residence per household] under direct and strict military control and against their will.

During hamletting there are instances where individuals are not arrested but their movements are restricted including but not limited to the requirement of ID's to resident of the community. There are also instances where the individuals are confined to their houses and their movements are likewise restricted. In both cases, the violation should additionally be categorized as arbitrary detention

## **Forcible Evacuation and Displacement**

The act by public officers, person in authority or their agents; regular state security forces, paramilitary forces and their agents.

Of forcing a group or individuals or a civilian community;

To leave, against their will, either in an organized way or otherwise, their place of residence and/or livelihood for other place;

## **Food and other Economic Blockades**

The act by public officers, persons in authority or their agents; regular security forces, paramilitary and their agents of restricting, limiting, monitoring and controlling the kind and quantity of food supplies and other household items to be brought by an individual into and out of his place of residence or community as well as restrictions on economic production and activity.

## **DENIAL OF HUMANITARIAN ACCESS**

### **VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE MEDICAL PERSONNEL**

#### **SOME VIOLATIONS SPECIFIC TO CHILDREN**

##### **1. Violation of Children's Rights**

Provisions from UN Convention on Children's Rights and the Philippine Republic Act 7610 which may be categorized as follows

###### **a. Violation of Children's Right to Survival**

- (1) Children orphaned when their parents became victims of extrajudicial killings;
- (2) Occurs when children were forced to be separated from their parents;

- (3) Resulting from the violations enumerated in Violation of the Right to Life and Violation of Other Civil and Political Rights;
- (4) Children victims of food and/or Economic Blockade.
- b. Violation of Children's Right to Protection or Safety by the State or its Agents**
  - (1) Not being given special and due attention in cases of forced evacuation, forced reconcentration etc; also include not being granted the right to rehabilitative care [ Art 39, id];
  - (2) Children being forced to work [Art 32, id];
  - (3) Include violation of rights not to be subjected to torture, cruel treatment, or punishment and deprivation of liberty [ Art. 37]; right to be protected against situation of armed conflict with the law to treatment which promotes his dignity and worth [ Art 40]

In cases where children are direct victims of torture, cruel treatment or punishment and deprivation of liberty, violations will be recorded as torture, cruel treatment or punishment and any form enumerated under illegal Arrest and/ or Detention and violation against children's rights to protection.
- c. Violation of Children's Right to Development**
  - (1) Children who were forced to stop schooling brought about by direct violations to them and/or to their parents and/ or community
  - (2) Children victims of Use of School for Military Purposes and Endangerment of Civilians, Zoning, Hamletting, Destruction and/ or Divestment of Property, Violation of Domicile.
- d. Violation of Children's Participation Rights**
  - (1) Children being persecuted as they exercise their right to express their opinion freely and it to be taken into account in any proceeding affecting him her [Art 12]; Right to freedom of expression, receive and impart information [Art 13]; Right to Freedom of thought, conscience and religion [ Art 14]; Right to freedom of association and of peaceful assembly [Art 15];
  - (2) Children victims of Destruction and/ or Divestment of Property Violation of Domicile, transfer to violation of Children's right to protection or safety

## ON IHL VIOLATIONS

International Human Rights Law applies at all times, whether during peacetime or in situations of armed conflict. On the other hand, International Humanitarian Law intends to "humanize and govern armed conflicts".

Violations of IHL are human rights violations. Some HR violations are categorized as IHL violations when they are committed during military operations or under any other situation of armed conflict:

Arbitrary and frustrated killing due to shelling from mortar and artillery barrage, detonating of bombs, aerial bombardment, spraying from helicopters, landmines

Hamletting, forcible evacuation, re-concentration and displacement of communities

Destruction or divestment of property

Illegal checkpoints, illegal search and "zoning" or saturation drives in rural communities;

Food and economic blockade;

Threat, harassment and intimidation of whole villages;

Physical assault or injuries inflicted on villagers especially suspected rebels and their sympathizers

Inhumane, cruel or degrading treatment;

Forced labor and involuntarily servitude of captured combatants and suspected supporters;

Attacks on, harassment and intimidation of medical and religious personnel

Violations specific to children, and many others

## VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF HORS de COMBAT

Any act committed either intentionally or through negligence which result in the aggravation or prolongation of physical injuries, sickness or suffering; or resulting in the eventual death; or the deliberate act of injuring, maiming, torturing and killing a combatant who is wounded, sick, injured, or has surrendered [hors de combatant] or violation of any other rights under intentional humanitarian law.

## Denial of Medical Attention

The act of denying or preventing immediate and/or adequate first aid medical care or attention;

To a sick wounded or dying person or persons

By public officers, persons in authority or their agents; regular state security forces [military and police], paramilitary forces [CAFGU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes, hired killers, etc];

Thereby aggravating or prolonging such person's death due to such denial;  
Whether such denial is deliberate or not

## **HOSTAGING**

## **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

## **COERCION**

The act by public officers, persons in authority or their agents, regular state security forces [military and police]; paramilitary forces [CAFGU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes; hired goons or killers, etc] who, by means of violence, harm or intimidation, prevent an individual from doing something not prohibited by law or compel him to do something against his will or out of fear.

Specific forms of coercion include the following:

**e. *Use of Civilians in Police and/or Military Operation as Guide and/ or as shield***

The forcible act to compel an individual to participate in any police and/or military activity [patrolling, actual armed engagement, intelligence and "civic" operations and using as a hostage] either as a guide or for the purpose of using such individual as a shield or buffer against any attack directed at state security forces. If as an incident or consequences of hamletting, forcible reconcentration, or forcible displacement, state security forces are shielded or buffered from attack then the violation must be categorized as hamletting, forcible reconcentration or forcible displacement, as the case may be.

**f. *Forced Recruitment/Conscription***

The act of forcing an individual to become an intelligence agent, asset, spy or directly recruiting him into the state security forces [including paramilitary groups], whether there is any offer or award of financial or other consideration or none.

**g. *Forced Labor/involuntary Servitude***

The act of forcing individual to perform any kind of work against his will

**h. *Force/Fake Surrender***

The act of compelling, misrepresenting or forcing individual into surrendering to the authorities or to feign or pretend to be a surrenderee or "rebel returnee"

## **Use of Schools, Medical, Religious and Other Public Places for Military Purposes and Endangerment of Civilians**

The improper use of school, medical, religious, civic and other public places for police or military purposes or operations by regular state security forces, paramilitary and their agents or the endangerment of the lives of civilians by reason of establishing military camps, detachments or outpost within civilian communities or at or near residence.

## **Desecration of Place of Worship or Offending Religious Rites/Practices**

The act by public officers, persons in authority or their agents; regular state security forces, paramilitary and their agents of disrespecting, scoffing, insulting, destroying or desecrating a place of worship or offending religious rites, practices, rituals, assemblies, gathering, or days of commemoration and disregard of religious and cultural sensibilities.

## **WITH REGARDS TO THOSE WHO ARE KILLED IN COMBAT OR WHO DIED IN CAPTIVITY**

**a. *Desecration of Remains***

The act by public officers, persons in authority or their agents, regular state security forces [military and police], paramilitary forces [CAFGU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes, private security guards, hired goons, etc] or the act of scoffing, disrespecting corpse either through mutilating the dead body, parading or leaving unattended the said corpse, presenting before the tri-media [print and television] or through other similar acts.

**b. *Denial of Decent Burial and Refusal to Tender Remains***

The act by public officers, persons in authority or their agents; regular state security forces [military and police], paramilitary forces [CAFGU and CVO] and their agents [vigilantes, private security guards, hired goons, etc] of denying or disallowing the decent and/ or timely burial, of refusing tender of the remains to the family or next of kin or their representatives.

## **References**

Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR]

International Convention on Civil and Political Rights [ICCPR]

Comprehensive Agreement on Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law [CARHRIHL]

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [UN-CRC]

Revised Penal Code of the Philippines



**ARTICLE III, BILL OF RIGHTS  
(1987 PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION)**

- Section 1. No person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor shall any person be denied the equal protection of the laws.
- Section 2. The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures of whatever nature and for any purpose shall be inviolable, and no search warrant or warrant of arrest shall issue except upon probable cause to be determined personally by the judge after examination under oath or affirmation of the complainant and the witnesses he may produce, and particularly describing the place to be searched and the persons or things to be seized.
- Section 3. (1) The privacy of communication and correspondence shall be inviolable except upon lawful order of the court, or when public safety or order requires otherwise, as prescribed by law. (2) Any evidence obtained in violation of this or the preceding section shall be inadmissible for any purpose in any proceeding.
- Section 4. No law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances.
- Section 5. No law shall be made respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. The free exercise and enjoyment of religious profession and worship, without discrimination or preference, shall forever be allowed. No religious test shall be required for the exercise of civil or political rights.
- Section 6. The liberty of abode and of changing the same within the limits prescribed by law shall not be impaired except upon lawful order of the court. Neither shall the right to travel be impaired except in the interest of national security, public safety, or public health, as may be provided by law.
- Section 7. The right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized. Access to official records, and to documents and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to such limitations as may be provided by law.
- Section 8. The right of the people, including those employed in the public and private sectors, to form unions, associations, or societies for purposes not contrary to law shall not be abridged.
- Section 9. Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation.
- Section 10. No law impairing the obligation of contracts shall be passed.
- Section 11. Free access to the courts and quasi-judicial bodies and adequate legal assistance shall not be denied to any person by reason of poverty.
- Section 12. (1) Any person under investigation for the commission of an offense shall have the right to be informed of his right to remain silent and to have competent and independent counsel preferably of his own choice. If the person cannot afford the services of counsel, he must be provided with one. These rights cannot be waived except in writing and in the presence of counsel. (2) No torture, force, violence, threat, intimidation, or any other means which vitiate the free will shall be used against him. Secret detention places, solitary, incommunicado, or other similar forms of detention are prohibited. (3) Any confession or admission obtained in violation of this or Section 17 hereof shall be inadmissible in evidence against him. (4) The law shall provide for penal and civil sanctions for violations of this section as well as compensation to the rehabilitation of victims of torture or similar practices, and their families.
- Section 13. All persons, except those charged with offenses punishable by reclusion perpetua when evidence of guilt is strong, shall, before conviction, be bailable by sufficient sureties, or be released on recognizance as may be provided by law. The right to bail shall not be impaired even when the privilege of the writ of habeas corpus is suspended. Excessive bail shall not be required.
- Section 14. (1) No person shall be held to answer for a criminal offense without due process of law. (2) In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall be presumed innocent until the contrary is proved, and shall enjoy the right to be heard by himself and counsel, to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation against him, to have a speedy, impartial, and public trial, to meet the witnesses face to face, and to have compulsory process to secure the attendance of witnesses and the production of evidence in his behalf. However, after arraignment, trial may proceed notwithstanding the absence of the accused: Provided, that he has been duly notified and his failure to appear is unjustifiable.
- Section 15. The privilege of the writ of habeas corpus shall not be suspended except in cases of invasion or rebellion, when the public safety requires it.
- Section 16. All persons shall have the right to a speedy disposition of their cases before all judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative bodies.
- Section 17. No person shall be compelled to be a witness against himself.
- Section 18. (1) No person shall be detained solely by reason of his political beliefs and aspirations. (2) No involuntary servitude in any form shall exist except as a punishment for a crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted.
- Section 19. (1) Excessive fines shall not be imposed, nor cruel, degrading or inhuman punishment inflicted. Neither shall death penalty be imposed, unless, for compelling reasons involving heinous crimes, the Congress hereafter provides for it. Any death penalty already imposed shall be reduced to reclusion perpetua. (2) The employment of physical, psychological, or

degrading punishment against any prisoner or detainee or the use of substandard or inadequate penal facilities under subhuman conditions shall be dealt with by law.

Section 20. No person shall be imprisoned for debt or non-payment of a poll tax.

Section 21. No person shall be twice put in jeopardy of punishment for the same offense. If an act is punished by a law and an ordinance, conviction or acquittal under either shall constitute a bar to another prosecution for the same act.

Section 22. No ex post facto law or bill of attainder shall be enacted.

## **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**

*Source: United Nation*

### **Preamble**

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

**Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS** as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

### **Article 1.**

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

### **Article 2.**

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

### **Article 3.**

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

### **Article 4.**

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

### **Article 5.**

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

### **Article 6.**

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

**Article 7.**

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

**Article 8.**

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

**Article 9.**

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

**Article 10.**

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

**Article 11.**

- (1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defence.
- (2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

**Article 12.**

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

**Article 13.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.
- (2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

**Article 14.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
- (2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

**Article 15.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

**Article 16.**

- (1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
- (2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
- (3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

**Article 17.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
- (2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

**Article 18.**

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

**Article 19.**

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

**Article 20.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
- (2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

**Article 21.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
- (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.
- (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

**Article 22.**

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

**Article 23.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
- (2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
- (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.
- (4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

**Article 24.**

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

**Article 25.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
- (2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

**Article 26.**

- (1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
- (2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
- (3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

**Article 27.**

- (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

**Article 28.**

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

**Article 29.**

- (1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
- (2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.
- (3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

**Article 30.**

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

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*Adopted from HR Week Celebration Guide of 2008*