

LIBERATION

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PEACE TALKS RESUME



By Ed Ladera

Representatives of the incoming Government of the Philippines under President-elect Rodrigo Duterte and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) Negotiating Panel held exploratory talks on June 14-15, 2016 in Oslo, Norway under the facilitation of the Royal Norwegian Government as Third Party Facilitator.

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PEACE TALKS RESUME

Success of peace negotiations requires mass support and mobilisation

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They agreed to resume formal peace talks in the third week of July 2016 in Oslo. These talks shall be conducted in accordance with previously signed agreements. This is a major positive step because the outgoing Aquino administration and his representatives in the peace talks with the NDFP had declared past binding agreements non-acceptable. Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Teresita Deles and GPH Panel Chairperson Alexander Padilla declared the Framework Agreement, The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992 as “a document of perpetual division”. They called the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) “inoperative” and justified the illegal arrest and detention of NDFP Consultants. Padilla told peace advocates that the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL), is an NDFP propaganda document.

The refreshing position of the Duterte team is likewise shown in its readiness to reconstitute the JASIG list of protected participants on the part of the NDFP.

The agenda of the next talks in July includes the Amnesty Proclamation to release all detained political prisoners.

This had been announced by President-elect Duterte soon after he won the elections held on May 9.

Furthermore, the next talks will discuss the accelerated process for negotiations on socio-economic reforms, political and constitutional

reforms, and end of hostilities and disposition of forces.

Both negotiating panels will also discuss the mode of interim ceasefire.

In the Joint Statement of June 15, it is also stated that the GPH Panel will recommend to President Duterte the immediate release of NDFP consultants and other JASIG protected persons to enable them to participate in the peace negotiations. This is expected before the next talks in the third week of July 2016.

Furthermore, the GPH Panel will recommend the immediate release of political prisoners based on humanitarian grounds, referring to the sick, elderly, women and those detained for more than ten years.

Political will, mutual trust and goodwill are very much in the air. President-elect Duterte has appointed NDFP nominees to his Cabinet: Rafael Mariano, former Congressman of Anakpawis (toiling masses) and longtime President of the Philippine Peasant Movement as Secretary of Agrarian Reform; Judy Taguiwalo, scholar, academe and activist as Secretary of Social Welfare and Development; Joel Maglungod, former Congressman and

leader of the Kilusang Mayo Uno (May First Movement), as Undersecretary of the Department of Labor and Employment and Liza Maza of Gabriela as Secretary of the National Anti-Poverty Commission.

President-elect Duterte has a long history, since the 1980s, of cooperating



with the revolutionary mass movement in facilitating releases of political prisoners, receiving prisoners of war in the custody of the New People's Army. He has declared himself as the first Left President and a socialist. He is proud to say that he was a student under Prof. Jose Maria Sison, Founding Chairperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines, with whom he has a very good rapport.

But it is realistic to consider that even with the political will, mutual trust and good will of President-elect Duterte and the NDFP, there are still major forces that are against the cooperation between Duterte and the revolutionary movement. There are the big landlords and big compradors who are against genuine land reform and national industrialization, major points in the program of the NDFP for social and economic reforms. Furthermore, there is the US establishment out to destroy the NPA and the revolutionary movement. And there are influential elements in the Philippine military opposed to change.

Success in the peace negotiations and the cooperation between President Duterte and the NDFP for meaningful reforms and change towards national unity and a just and lasting peace based on social justice will require the mass support and mobilization of the Filipino people. And with that, the strong international solidarity of peoples supporting the Filipino people to achieve genuine democracy and independence and a lasting peace.

On June 29, the Communist Party of the Philippines declared the great expectation for advancing the peace negotiations to address the Filipino people's aspirations for national

freedom, social justice and democratic empowerment. Moreover, it welcomed the declared intention of the Duterte government to immediately release the peace consultants of the NDFP who are among the more than 500 political prisoners unjustly detained by the Aquino regime.

Furthermore, also on June 29, leaders and members of progressive organizations approved a 15-point People's Agenda for Change, divided into five topics: economic development, social policy, peace and human rights, governance and democracy and foreign policy and sovereignty. Duterte graciously granted them an audience in Malacanang immediately after his swearing in.



In the economic field, the People's Agenda urges Duterte to implement national industrialization of strategic industries and reorient the economy towards domestic needs and development.

The social policy recommendations include budget increases for education and health, enactment

of pension hike for Social Security System (SSS) pensioners and improved services for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs).

Proposals to promote peace and human rights zero in on the resumption of peace talks and the cessation of militarization in indigenous communities.

In terms of governance, the People's Agenda backed the government's anti-corruption drive and proposed the abolition of the pork barrel system.

The foreign policy recommendations include the adoption of a truly independent foreign policy and the rejection of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement (EDCA). ■

WAR AND PEACE

Prospects under the Duterte administration and tasks of the Filipino people



By Jose Maria Sison

Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) Founding Chairman Jose Maria Sison, who is also the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) Chief Political Consultant in the GPH-NDFP Peace Negotiations, was recently asked to speak on the prospects under the incoming Duterte Administration before the All Leaders Forum on the GPH-NDFP Peace Talks organized by progressive youth organizations in Manila.

In his speech, Sison used the 12-Point Program of the NDFP to assess the possibilities and posit his views on the tasks of progressive forces in the light of the new situation that has emerged with the election of Rodrigo Duterte, the first presidential candidate in the history of Philippine electoral politics who has openly called himself a "socialist" and the "first Left President of the Philippines." Duterte was a student of Sison in his university days.

We present excerpts from the speech:

First point: Unite the people for the overthrow of the semicolonial and semifeudal system through a people's war and for the completion of the national democratic revolution.

He (Duterte) can easily agree to a radical or substantial change of the semicolonial and semifeudal system...He also says that he is against armed struggle...(but) he is for peace negotiations with the NDFP and is willing to cooperate in realizing basic reforms or major changes.

If he agrees on basic social, economic and political reforms with the NDFP, he must also agree to arousing, organizing and mobilizing the people in support of a government of national unity, peace and development...An interim ceasefire is possible to generate good will and a favorable atmosphere for the release of more than 500 political prisoners and for the acceleration of peace negotiations. But revolutionary vigilance is necessary for defending the patriotic and progressive forces as well as for a Duterte presidency that may come under threats from the US and local reactionaries.

I urge the Filipino youth to continue all their efforts to unite the people for the overthrow of the semicolonial and semifeudal system through a people's war and for the completion of the

national democratic revolution. This task is validated by the lack of any final peace agreement that is satisfactory to the



President Duterte must be credited for having offered the possibility of a coalition government long before winning

elections. And in the process of forming his cabinet, he has generously offered to the Communist Party four cabinet posts concerned with labor, agrarian reform, social welfare and the environment...The progressives are in the minority in Duterte's cabinet. But Duterte's actions before and after the elections have thus far been encouraging to the patriotic mass movement.

The task of the Filipino youth is to help develop and avail of a democratic coalition government in order to advance towards the goal of developing a people's democratic republic. They must support the patriotic and progressive initiatives and measures undertaken in an alliance with an otherwise fully reactionary government. They should continue to help in strengthening the mass movement in the cities and countryside and the organs of political power in the countryside to serve as the strong foundation for a developing coalition government.

Second point: Establish a people's democratic republic and a democratic coalition government.

What is in sight is a kind of coalition government that involves the participation of the Communist Party amidst other patriotic and progressive forces. It is a government of national unity, peace and development. It is a framework within which all the patriotic and progressive forces can grow in strength because a common ground of basic reforms resulting from successful peace negotiations has been laid. And the Communist Party can prove that it best serves the people with its program of action and concrete deeds in this regard.

President Duterte has said time and again that he is against armed struggle and that he is for the existence of only one army in the Philippines. This proposition must undergo the test of what is immediately possible, which is an interim ceasefire in place, and further negotiations on the end of hostilities and redistribution of the armed forces of both sides. There are many possibilities to consider in dealing with two opposing armies that cease to fight each other.

No genuine armed revolutionary movement has ever accepted capitulation and outright dismantling while the opposite remains intact

Third point: Build the people's revolutionary army and the people's defense system.

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and growing. Truce and alliance are the most realizable.

Revolutionary armed units can become guards of the environment and the industries under conditions of peace and development.

Integration of armed forces is permissible as in the experience of the Chinese revolution. Mutual demobilization is also possible if armed units have become redundant due to the existence of peace. The armed personnel of both sides can then opt to take industrial jobs or go back to agriculture and partake of the benefits of genuine land reform.

But if the social, economic and political reforms are serious and deep-going enough, the US and the local reactionary forces are likely to wage armed counterrevolution, be it a coup d'etat or civil war or even an outright war of aggression by US imperialism. Because of such a high probability, there must be provisions for effective people's resistance.

The Filipino youth must support truce and alliance for the purpose of achieving national unity, peace and development and must always be alert and ready to fight armed counterrevolution or foreign aggression or intervention. At the first sign of a serious and imminent threat of violence against the Filipino people, the Filipino youth must rise up to join in their defense. They can do so only if they do not cease to build their mass movement and train for the defense of the people.

Fourth point: Uphold and promote the people's democratic rights.

The entire Filipino people must uphold and promote their democratic rights: political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights against those who oppress and exploit them. The



fundamental rights of the people are spelled out in the Program for a People's Democratic Revolution and the Guide for Establishing the People's Government. The NDFP has also succeeded with the Manila government in making a Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law and has used the International

Bill of Rights and the Geneva Conventions as the point of reference.

President Duterte's avowed focus on the crusade against crime and civil violence and his sense of urgency in implementing his reform platform have the effect of highlighting issues of human rights, especially civil and political rights. His reform platform has aroused and mobilized millions of people in spontaneous ways to support his electoral campaign and initial policies.

This has gigantic potential for mass organizing in a progressive direction or otherwise.

The Filipino youth must be conscious of the fact that they constitute the largest part of the people, they are the most open to fundamental social change and they are the most resolute and militant in demanding and pursuing such change. They must persevere in the struggle to assert, defend and advance the people's democratic rights.

Fifth point: Terminate all unequal relations with the United States and other foreign entities.

The recent statement of President Duterte not to be dependent on the US for national security

is welcome. After the Permanent Court of Arbitration decides in favor of the Philippines in its maritime dispute with China, China will have less reason for encroaching on the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Extended Continental Shelf of the Philippines and the Philippines will be more confident in further developing relations with China and in scrapping the unequal executive agreements with the US, like the Visiting Forces Agreement and the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

The Filipino people must uphold their national sovereignty and independence and the territorial integrity of their country. They must continue to demand the termination of all treaties, agreements and arrangements that involve unequal relations with other countries in the economic, financial, political and military spheres.

Sixth point: Implement genuine agrarian reform, promote agricultural cooperation, raise rural production and employment through the modernization of agriculture and rural industrialization and ensure agricultural sustainability.

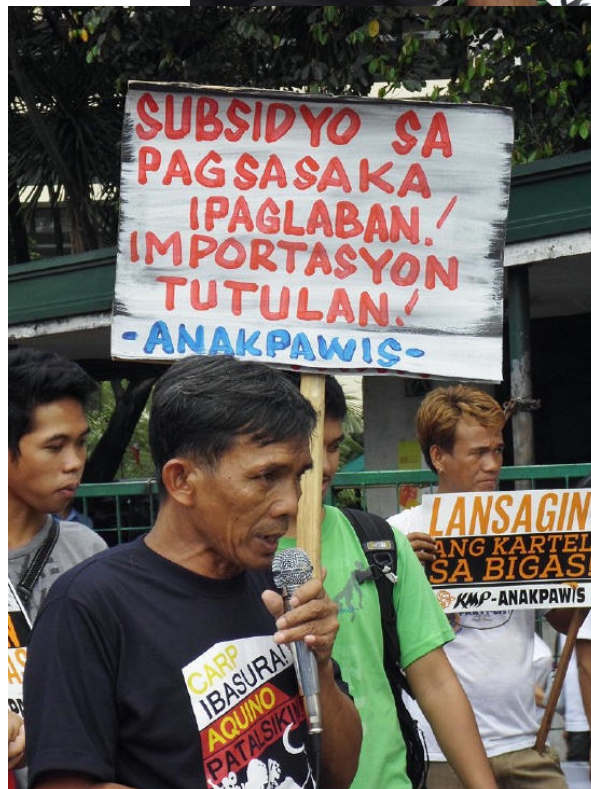
It is fine that President Duterte has appointed the long time peasant leader Rafael Mariano as the Secretary of Agrarian Reform...Ka Paeng now has the responsibility to push a new land reform law to effectively redistribute land to the tillers.

Genuine land reform is the way to the economic, social and political liberation of the landless tillers. It is the main content of the democratic revolution. It is the necessary complement to national industrialization, assuring the people of food self-sufficiency and

industries of major raw materials and enlarged domestic market.

Seventh point: Break the combined dominance of the US and other imperialists, big compradors and landlords over the economy. Carry out national industrialization and build an independent and self-reliant economy.

The combination of the imperialist powers headed by the US and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords have kept the people severely exploited and impoverished, the economy underdeveloped and



the environment ravaged. It is necessary to carry out national industrialization and build an independent and self-reliant economy.

President Duterte has at certain times declared the need for a steel industry and national industrialization and the processing of the mineral ores taken away from the country... So far he has appointed to key economic positions in his cabinet exponents of the neoliberal economic policy. But we look forward to engaging the Duterte government in peace negotiations and in due course persuade it to

adopt the policy of national industrialization firmly and vigorously.

Eighth point: Adopt a comprehensive and progressive social policy.

It is fine that President Duterte has appointed Judy Taguiwalo as the secretary of social welfare and development. We have someone to rely on for providing timely distribution of relief goods and rehabilitation funds and other resources to cope with social and natural disasters. But the way to uplift the people is to develop the economy through national industrialization and land reform. These provide expanding employment and better means of livelihood along major lines of production and in medium and small enterprises.

Ninth point: Promote a national, scientific and pro-people culture.

President Duterte has emphasized the importance and necessity of expanding education as a way for uplifting the children and the youth and ensuring the steady progress of the people. He has announced his intention to rechannel resources to free public education and public health from bureaucratic corruption and from so many useless and yet costly projects and programs.

Even as more resources are intended to benefit education, the Filipino people and youth must demand a national, scientific and pro-people culture...We must use science and technology to hasten economic development. We must ensure that education and culture serve the needs and demands of the people, especially the toiling masses of workers and peasants.

Tenth point: Uphold the rights to self-determination and democracy of the Moro people, Cordillera peoples and other national minorities or indigenous peoples.

The Duterte government proposes to replace the current unitary state with a federal state. It

President Duterte has demonstrated in a number of instances his patriotic position regarding the unjust acts and impositions of foreign powers and has in mind the immediate and long term interests of the Filipino people. The Philippines must have an active, independent and peaceful foreign policy.

believes that federalism is the way to assure the Moro people of regional autonomy and a fair share of the wealth that comes from their own region. Objectors argue that federalism would enhance and embolden centrifugal forces. Whatever is the form of government, the

Filipino people and youth must uphold the rights to self-determination and democracy of the Moro people, the Cordillera peoples and other national minorities or indigenous peoples.

Eleventh point: Advance the revolutionary emancipation of women in all spheres.

While mayor of Davao City, Duterte has recognized and appreciated the role of women in public life, has created facilities for women and children in need and has demonstrated his abhorrence of violence to women. The Filipino people and youth must advance further the emancipation women in all spheres of social endeavor. There is no sphere where they cannot excel like the menfolk if they are recognized equally and enjoy equal opportunities.

Twelfth point: Adopt an active, independent and peaceful foreign policy.

President Duterte has demonstrated in a number of instances his patriotic position regarding the unjust acts and impositions of foreign powers and has in mind the immediate and long term interests of the Filipino people. The Philippines must have an active, independent and peaceful foreign policy.

The Filipino people and youth must demand the adoption and implementation of such policy. We can carry forward such a policy by upholding our national sovereignty and dignity, practising self-reliance in all fields of social endeavor (economic, political and cultural) and aiming for solidarity and cooperation for peace and development against imperialism and all reaction. ■

NO SAFE HAVEN

Migrants and refugees bring the reality of war to Europe



By Emilio Jacinto III

It took the images of drowned children making it to the frontpages of the mainstream European media, to shake European governments and their people about what has been earlier a continuing but silent flow of migrants and refugees fleeing poverty-stricken and war-torn countries particularly from Syria, Iraq and Libya, and other Middle Eastern and African countries.

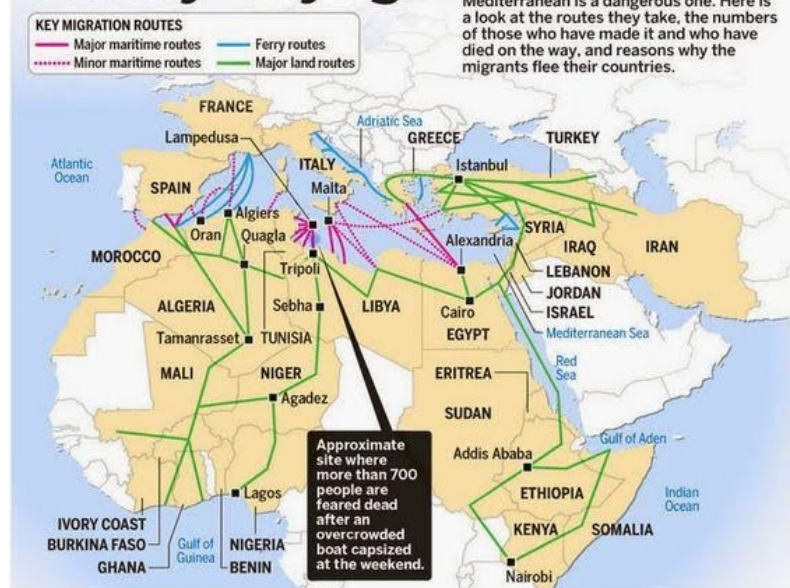
The exodus of migrants and refugees from the Middle East and Africa crossing the Mediterranean Sea in the hope of entering the European continent has long been a continuing reality but has only huggged attention mainly from alternative media and advocate groups.

In the past several decades, European advocate groups have documented and called attention to the more than ten thousand deaths of migrants and refugees attempting to enter the European continent. But as the wars in the Middle East and North Africa intensified because of increased imperialist intervention, so did the surge in migrants and refugees escaping the violence and destruction of their war-torn communities and countries.

Specifically, the imperialist-instigated wars in

Deadly voyage

Packed into rickety vessels by people smugglers, the path desperate migrants take to reach Europe across the Mediterranean is a dangerous one. Here is a look at the routes they take, the numbers of those who have made it and who have died on the way, and reasons why the migrants flee their countries.



Iraq, Libya and Syria have resulted in so much death and destruction such that the number of people escaping by sea in dangerous circumstances has increased dramatically. By 2015, according to European mainstream sources, the number of migrants and refugees trying to reach Europe has reached more than one million. Majority of these refugees come from war-ravaged Syria. Their countless stories of tragedy and despair have been aired in the

refugees. Whereas, western media and have earned the sympathy of many people in the continent – several towns communities and churches even opening themselves up to welcome and adopt the refugees. Whereas, western media have not been too keen to cover the death and destruction on the ground in war-torn countries in the Middle and north Africa, such as in Syria and Libya, the many faces of refugees – men, women, children, babies and elderly, literally flooding the streets in many countries in Europe have forcibly broken the insulation of the European public from knowing the truth on the ground.

The magnitude of their number has rocked the foundations of the EU migration policy and forced governments to react. However, instead of adopting humanitarian measures to provide refuge and safe haven to these refugees, the EU has implemented more stringent measures, such as imposing quotas on the number of refugees to be accepted per country, reinstalling border controls, and restricting the movement of migrants and refugees. Debates in the EU have focused on the financial and economic implications on states taking in these refugees, yet conveniently glossing over the billions of

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euros and dollars from the people's taxes that have been spent and have continued to fund the imperialist-instigated wars in the Middle East and Africa.

Concerned groups, individuals and progressive entities have spoken out and pointed to the culpability of the EU, NATO and the

US for instigating these wars that have caused the influx of refugees, while EU governments, the imperialists and their political agents continue to foment xenophobia, racism, and hatred for Islam to counter and control migrants and refugees seeking refuge in their countries and to try to hide their accountability in the death and destruction that their wars have brought about.

Indeed, the surge of migrants and refugees into Europe has removed the smokescreen that has kept the European public from seeing and understanding the tragedy of the imperialist-instigated wars going on in the Middle East and Africa. No amount of spreading hate, racism and intolerance for these migrants and refugees intended to divert attention can derail the just call of all freedom-loving and democratic citizens to put a stop to all imperialist interventions and wars of aggression. ■





OVERWEENING ARROGANCE

US imperialism, allies think they have the right to topple any sovereign government

By Bagani Dong-Ilay

"We came, we saw, he died." This was Hillary Clinton grotesquely commenting on the summary execution of Libyan President Muammar Qaddafi by Islamic terrorists armed and financed by the US. It sums up the overweening arrogance of this superpower that thinks it has the right to topple any sovereign government that does not do its bidding and to trample upon all the universally accepted norms of international conduct being the "sole indispensable country in the world" that it is and before which everyone must bow to its imperial will.

After overthrowing Qaddafi, the US proceeded to use its mercenary Islamist terror groups to effect "regime change" in Syria. ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) and various Al Qaeda affiliates that have been armed and financed by the US, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey became the new battering ram to overthrow Assad. But the arrogant superpower has found in the Assad government a more formidable adversary. With the support of Russia, Iran and Hezbollah, the Syrian government has so far succeeded in frustrating the US. Russia had learned its lesson from its abstaining vote at the UN Security Council that gave the US a free hand to bomb Libya and cause the overthrow of the Qaddafi

government.

Before Russia entered the war in support of the Assad government, ISIL and other Al Qaeda affiliated groups were capturing territory after territory. After Russia entered the fray, the terrorists' territorial gains have been rolled back and the terror groups have been put on the defensive with reports of mass defections and demoralization among their ranks.

Alarmed by these developments, the US sued for a ceasefire in a bid to save its mercenaries from destruction. It took advantage of Russia's call for diplomacy and a political solution to the conflict by pretending to accept Russia's proposal. To lend some credence to its openness to negotiations, the US toned down its "Assad must go" rhetoric. US State Secretary John Kerry then put forward the notion of a ceasefire with so-called "moderate rebels" to pave the way for negotiations.

At first, Russia rejected the distinction between "moderate rebels" and "extremist rebels". Eventually, Russia agreed provided the US used its influence to force the so-called moderate terrorists to dissociate themselves from Jabhat Al Nusra and other Al Qaeda affiliated groups.

The debate about "moderate terrorists" reached ridiculous proportions and inadvertently

exposed the outlandish lies that the US with the help of the western mainstream media like CNN, Fox News, NBC, etc. had been foisting on the international public.

Upon the request of the White House, the US Congress had appropriated in 2014 half a billion dollars to train an initial 5,400 so-called moderate Syrian rebels for the dual objectives of fighting ISIL and overthrowing Assad.

In a hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Christine Wormuth testified that there were at that time 120 fighters in a program that was supposed to train 5,400 fighters in the first 12 months. In the same Senate hearing, General Lloyd Austin, the commander of the US Central Command in charge of fighting ISIL, was forced to admit that out of the first 54 US-trained "moderate" rebels that had graduated from the program only "four or five" remained in the fight against ISIS.

In any case, the US used the ceasefire to allow the so-called moderate rebels to launch military actions against Syrian government forces together with Jabhat Al Nusra and other Al Qaeda affiliated groups who were not covered by the ceasefire. Confronted by Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov about this, Kerry could only sheepishly answer that it was extremely difficult to extricate their favorite "moderate" rebels from Al Nusra and Al Qaeda in the "complex situation" on the ground.

One such "moderate" terrorist group being coddled by the US is the Jaysh al-Islam which has admitted using chemical weapons against Kurds in Aleppo. They are engaged in ISIS-style execution of their victims in front of video cameras. They consider the Al Qaeda affiliate, Jabhat Al Nusra as their "brothers". They recently attacked a UN humanitarian convoy delivering aid to refugees. But lo and behold! This group has a delegation in the UN-sponsored Geneva peace talks on Syria!

The failure of US efforts to overthrow Assad has created some divisions among government agencies on how to proceed with its war in Syria. It appears that there are differences between the Pentagon on the one hand and the State Department and CIA on the other hand on how to prosecute the war against the Assad government.

This has surfaced with the emergence of a "dissent memo" addressed to Obama signed by 51 State Department diplomats that has been leaked and published by the New York Times and Wall Street Journal advocating direct US bombing of Syrian government forces to force Syria into submission. So far, the US strategy has been to basically engage in theatrical bombings against ISIL that aims to check ISIL advances while making sure that it is not totally eradicated in order to maintain a situation of chaos hoping that the Assad government will eventually collapse. The "dissent memo" in effect calls for the US to commit an overt aggressive war on a sovereign nation that poses no direct threat to the US thus blatantly contravening international law.

Two Pentagon officials have come out in public saying that the Defense Department is not enthusiastic about supporting the rebels fighting in the city of Aleppo because they are believed to be affiliated with Jabhat Al Nusra and Al Qaeda which are in the US terrorist list. The CIA, which supports these so-called moderate rebels, has no qualms working with such groups saying that alliances of convenience are necessary in the face of guess what -- the Russian threat.

But of course these differences are only superficial and just symptomatic of the current failure of the US to impose its will in Syria. There is unity though on the goal of overthrowing Assad by whatever means in order to maintain US grip of the oil-rich region of the Middle East and keep up the pressure on Russia, the Middle East being considered by US military strategists as part of the soft under belly of the Russian Federation.

The US is a declining superpower. But it still possesses enormous military power that it can use to cling on to its global hegemony. The dread of losing its place of preeminence can drive it to become ever more bellicose in bullying other countries into submission. Its wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria have already resulted in millions of deaths, cities destroyed and millions of desperate refugees scattered in the Middle East and Europe. The people of the world must put up resistance against this evil monster if they want to have a peaceful world. ■

CULTURAL REVOLUTION

**China's GPCR continues to inspire world's peoples
against capitalism and revisionism**



By Isah Antonio

“There is a strong need for the continuing revolution under the proletarian dictatorship in order to combat revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism. Socialism has not failed. The counter-revolutionaries seized power from the proletariat. The masses have to take the power back and they will!”

These were the two significant principles put forward by speakers during a forum to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution (GPCR) launched by the Communist Party of China led by Chairman Mao in 1966.

The forum, held last May 29, 2016 in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, was sponsored by the People's Resource for International Solidarity and Mass Mobilization (PRISMM) and the Revolutionaire Eenheid (Revolutionary Unity-Netherlands).

Guest speakers at the forum were Prof. Pao-yu

Ching, internationally known author on socialist development and capitalist restoration in China and Prof. Jose Maria Sison, Chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle and Founding Chairperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines. Prof. Pao-yu spoke on the relevance of the GPCR in the light of China and Russia becoming capitalist while Prof. Sison discussed the impact of the GPCR on the Philippine revolution.

Pio Verzola, Executive Director of PRISM introduced the work of PRISM. The PRISM is a proto-institute that generates and shares resources needed by activists for revolutionary mass work, building organizations and mobilizing the people on the different issues that confront them. Its main thrust is to promote mass work for the purpose of revolutionary change.

Thomas Hofland of Revolutionaire Eenheid spoke of the need to gain more knowledge of the situation in The Netherlands and to counter what he sees as the rise of the rightists in the

Netherlands citing the so-called debate between D66 and the neo-Nazi group Pegida and their attacks on the migrants and refugees. He acknowledged that there was much to learn from the experiences of the people's struggles from other countries such as the Philippines, China and even from the Netherlands.

Relevance of the Cultural Revolution

Prof. Pao-yu stated that there is indeed reason to celebrate the GPCR half a century after its launch because the Cultural Revolution is as relevant today as it was in 1966.

The Cultural Revolution provided 10 additional years for the Chinese people to develop socialism and demonstrate its superiority. China's socialist construction from 1956 to 1976, a period of merely 20 years, showed that socialism was not just an abstract concept but a shining example of what could be accomplished when the proletarian class was in charge.

Prof. Pao-yu stated that the Cultural Revolution made several unprecedented breakthroughs in the field of industry, education and the practice of the broadest and most comprehensive democracy whose impact proved to be essential in transforming a society during the socialist transition.

"The Chinese revolution and socialist construction transformed China from a poor underdeveloped country exploited by imperialist powers to become an independent country free from foreign domination and exploitation," said Prof. Pao-yu.

She added: "During socialism working people in China commanded the highest respect ever in the history of humankind, and they exerted their utmost effort to build a new society for

future generations."

Unfortunately, the revisionists led by Deng Xiaoping restored capitalism in China and reversed all the changes and gains made during the Cultural Revolution. Since then, the Chinese people have once again experienced intensified oppression and exploitation as they have been relegated to being a mere source of cheap labor.

Nevertheless, Prof. Pao-yu is hopeful for the Chinese people, stating that the Cultural Revolution's major breakthroughs clarified and articulated the

fundamental differences between socialist development and capitalist development. It showed the concrete path to continuing class struggle during the socialist transition.

Prof. Pao-yu said: "We can say with confidence, "Socialism has not failed. The counter-revolutionaries seized power from the proletariat. We just have to take the power back and we will!"



The Cultural Revolution's Impact on the Philippine Struggle

Prof. Jose Maria Sison spoke about the impact of the Great Cultural Revolution on the struggle of the Filipino people for national democracy and socialism.

He said that while the world capitalist system is now afflicted by unprecedented crisis, the GPCR gives humankind the hope that socialism can be attained and developed until communism is attained.

Filipino revolutionaries are lucky because they can learn from Mao's theory and practice of continuing revolution under the proletarian dictatorship through the GPCR in order to

combat revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism as in China from 1966 to 1976.

Sison stated: “The view of the Communist Party of the Philippines is that Chinese society has ceased to be socialist since it came under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie through the successful coup (of Deng and his cohorts in 1976. Since then, the bourgeoisie has taken over and changed the character of the ruling party despite the continued use of the name Communist Party.”

On the question of US and China relations, Prof. Sison explained that the relationship between the US and China in economic and security issues is one of collusion and contention.

Open Forum

During the open forum, members of the audience put forward interesting questions before the speakers such as if there are genuine Maoists within the CPC and if they are in a position to overthrow the revisionists in the Party; the assessment of the success and failure of the GPCR and is there a mass movement to unmask those pretending to be communists; what is the correlation of the Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution; and how was it that Deng and his cohorts were able to restore capitalism in China despite the 10-year cultural revolution.

The cultural activists from the Linangan Cultural Network and Revolutionaire Eenheid performed numbers interspersed with excerpts from the musical film “The East is Red” that depicted the struggle of the Chinese masses. The performers raised the slogans “Unity is our strength!”, “Long live the revolution!” ■



Filipino revolutionaries are lucky because they can learn from Mao’s theory and practice of continuing revolution under the proletarian dictatorship through the GPCR in order to combat revisionism, prevent the restoration of capitalism and consolidate socialism as in China from 1966 to 1976.



The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) is an alliance of revolutionary organizations with roots in the various sectors and regions of the Philippines. Its goal is to build a society that enjoys national sovereignty, genuine democracy, social justice, progress and peace. It seeks to unite with all forces willing to achieve these goals.

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BOARD OF EDITORS

Ed Ladera
Isah Antonio
Jose Emilio Jacinto III
Bagani Dong-Ilay

CONTACT INFO

NDFP International Office
Amsterdamsstraatweg 50
3513 AG Utrecht
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 30 2310431
Email: ndf@casema.nl
Web: www.ndfp.org

BERTA CACERES LIVES!

By Tito Meza

Standing erect with your lance of truths
Your forehead held high in plain sight of the
venomous vermin
You – leaving footsteps of love with each
taken step
And in every battle you rode into

Today, the people that you loved
Profoundly cry your absence
We tell you – YOU will live eternally in our
hearts
Because you are of those who never really
die

Intibuca is in mourning
Honduras laments your loss
Thousands will lift up your fallen sword
And only justice will allay their tears

Bertita, comrade of walks
Comrade – defender of the rivers
Flower of love of the beautiful day
You have opened the road to liberty
Your example lives

Your name runs through our America
The vermin hide in their sewer of hate
The guitars of the night sing for you
And thousands raise their voices and shout –
BERTA CACERES LIVES!

Berta Caceres was a beautiful and passionate woman leader of the Indigenous Lenca community in Intibuca, Honduras. She organized and led the Lenca people in standing up to multinational corporations, supported by the US imperialist-backed Honduran military, which were trying to take over the land, privatize the resources, contaminate the rivers and destroy the life of her community. Berta Caceres was the coordinator of the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH). Since the US-backed military coup on June 28, 2009 in which Barack Obama and



Hillary Clinton played key roles, Berta Caceres had been an active leader of the Honduran

resistance. She was assassinated on March 2, 2016. There have been protests and vigils held in Berta Caceres' memory across Latin America and around the world, including as part of March 2016 International Working Women Day's activities. The following poem was written by a Honduran patriot in the USA in honor of Berta Caceres. "Berta Lives!! The Struggle Continues!!" -- Rose Brown, Assistant Editor, Ray O' Light Newsletter