

LIBERATION

INTERNATIONAL

SPECIAL PEACE ISSUE ■ March 2017

Published by the International Office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines

PEOPLE'S WAR IS FOR PEOPLE'S PEACE

**CPP holds National Assembly for Just and Lasting Peace
to mark 48th anniversary**

This is *Liberation International's* special issue on the ongoing peace negotiations the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) is holding with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP).

After a hiatus of five years, the formal talks between the two parties resumed on Aug. 22, 2016 in Oslo, Norway, following the assumption into the GRP presidency of former Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte, who had declared his intention to revive the peace talks with the revolutionary movement.

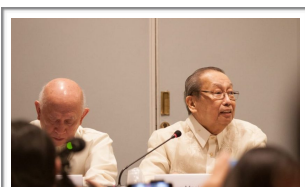
The NDFP responded positively to this call, consistent with its position to negotiate with any GRP president for a just and lasting peace based on the implementation of fundamental reforms that are for the benefit of the Filipino people.

Since the resumption of the talks in Norway, two more rounds have been held in October 2016, also in Oslo, and in January 2017, in Rome, Italy. The fourth round is to take place this April 2-6 in the Hague, the Netherlands.

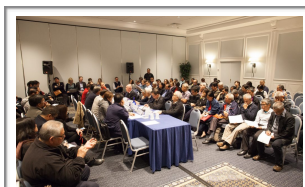
The articles we are publishing here are aimed at giving the readers an insight into the NDFP's attitude and position with regard to the peace negotiations. Our banner story (see page 4) is a coverage of the celebration of the 48th anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines on Dec. 26, 2016, which adopted the theme "People's War is for People's Peace".



ENGAGING THE
DUTERTE REGIME 2



NDFP'S OPENING
STATEMENTS 6



NDFP-GRP JOINT
STATEMENT 12



INTERVIEW WITH
JALANDONI 15

Strengthen in an all-rounded way in engaging the Duterte regime

(This article was first published in the July 7, 2016 issue of Ang Bayan (The People), the official publication of the Communist Party of the Philippines.)

Let us take advantage of every opportunity under the newly-installed Duterte government to all-roundedly strengthen and expand the Party, the NPA, the mass organizations and organs of people's democratic power.

Indeed, there is much potential in building and strengthening a progressive and pro-people alliance between Duterte and the national-democratic forces.

The national democratic movement is glad that Duterte himself is helping build and nurture this alliance. At the same time, it is also keenly aware that Duterte is the current chief of the reactionary state dominated by US imperialism, the big bourgeois compradors and big landlords.

The national democratic movement welcomes Duterte's offers of cooperation in order to forge a progressive and pro-people alliance as an additional means of advancing the people's demands for national freedom and social justice.

On the other hand, the revolutionary and progressive forces are aware of the limitations of such an alliance. They are also aware of the dangers of being tied down, completely swept or drowned by it.

They are also aware that the reactionary ruling classes remain dominant and that comparatively the potentials of a progressive and patriotic alliance remains very small. The progressive aspect of Duterte is being counteracted and overpowered by US imperialism and the puppet ruling classes.



Thus the revolutionary movement and legal mass movement must untiringly consolidate its own strength. Developing the people's independent strength is the key factor for a progressive alliance to emerge and serve as an effective weapon

for advancing their interests and welfare. Such independent strength is also necessary to be able to persevere in advancing mass struggles in the cities and the people's war in the countryside with or without an alliance.

To effectively confront and take advantage of the new situation, we must, above all, further expand and strengthen the Party. Build and implement a plan for ideological, political and organizational consolidation especially for the next six months. Carry out special Marxist-Leninist studies to strengthen our grasp of the particularities of the current situation and tasks in advancing the revolution. At the same time, continue implementing the three-level educational program.

The prevailing situation opens considerable political advantage for the national democratic forces. The people's agenda and the overall national democratic political line are now at the center of national political discussions, discourse and debate.

Members of mass organizations, Red fighters and commanders of the NPA and Party members and cadres must sharpen their grasp of the line and analysis of the semicolonial and semifeudal social system and program of the CPP for a people's democratic revolution. Arouse the biggest number of people with regard the need to take action and struggle for national and social liberation.

Let us carry out a widespread education movement and enroll an unprecedented number of people over the coming months. Win over the support and cooperation of broad sectors, organizations, institutions as well as officials of the reactionary government who are ready to assist the education movement for rousing the people.

Build the national democratic schools in villages, schools, factories and semi-proletariat communities, government and private offices, call centers, churches and other places. Ensure the supply of books and other reading references, as well as other equipment necessary to effectively carry out widespread mass education.

Continue to rapidly expand the NPA. While carrying out agrarian revolution, carry out widespread recruitment from the peasant youth masses. Undertake widespread enlistment of urban youth to undergo training as new Red fighters. Carry out widespread propaganda for armed struggle. Further expand and consolidate the people's militias.

Strengthen the military, political, cultural and economic capability of the NPA. Continue to provide the NPA with weapons and military training. Continue to carry out tactical offensives targeting the worst units with fascist crimes against the people. Disarm and arrest the biggest criminals involved in trafficking illegal drugs. Undertake measures to defend the environment against destructive mining, logging and plantation operations. Expand several-fold and consolidate the mass base. Aim to achieve

The national democratic movement is also keenly aware that Duterte is the current chief of the reactionary state dominated by US imperialism, the big bourgeois compradors.

unprecedented rate of expansion and strengthening of the mass organizations of peasants, women and youth. Undertake antifeudal campaigns. Carry out production campaigns.

Rapidly expand the reach of organizing and mobilizing workers' unions. Take advantage of the favourable

situation for advancing the struggle against contractualization and wage increases in order to reach out to hundreds of thousands of workers. Expand several times over and strengthen the mass organizations and education movement in poor communities, campus, government officers, churches and others.

Expand and strengthen the underground movement in order to secure the Party, cadres and activists.

Let us maximize the NDFP's peace talks with the Duterte regime. Mobilize hundreds of thousands of people to support the 12-point program of the NDFP and the clamour for a just and lasting peace. In doing so, we can strengthen Duterte's progressive aspect and the potentials of forging a strong alliance through formal agreements that will serve as its general program of action. ■



CPP HOLDS PEACE ASSEMBLY ON 48TH ANNIVERSARY

Protracted people's war is essentially a struggle for peace

More than 15,000 revolutionary forces and representatives from at least 10 regions in the country, peace advocates, officials from both Government of the Republic of



the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines made up the fiery, artistic and militant celebration of today's 48th founding anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines and National Assembly for Just and Lasting Peace in Paquibato district, Davao City.

open field some 200 meters away from the barangay covered court where the program was held. More than 200 NPA combatants stood in stiff attention amid a tactical inspection presided by NDF consultant Porferio Tuna, Jr.

the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines made up the fiery, artistic and militant celebration of today's 48th founding anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines and National Assembly for Just and Lasting Peace in Paquibato district, Davao City.

The activity was divided into two parts: the whole day National Peace Assembly, and the night concert-rally for the CPP celebration.

Participants came from the National Capital Region, Bicol, Southern Tagalog, Cordillera, Panay, Southern Mindanao, North Central Mindanao, North Eastern Mindanao, Far South Mindanao and Western Mindanao regions.

The National Peace Assembly and CPP anniversary celebration, hosted by 1st Pulang Baganí Battalion-NPA Southern Mindanao, paid homage to the Party's absolute leadership of the Filipino revolution as it also condemned the unfulfilled promises of the Duterte government in granting amnesty to the more than 400 political detainees in the country and in the numerous ceasefire violations committed by AFP, PNP and paramilitary in some 500 villages nationwide.

The December 26 celebration kicked off at around 8:30 am with six platoons of the 1st Pulang Baganí Battalion-New People's Army Southern Mindanao mounting a battalion formation at an

In his message to the Army, Tuna hailed the New People's Army as the true army of the masses—determined, disciplined and strong defender of the people. He also gave salute to martyred NPA commander Ka Parago who was killed in an enemy raid in Paquibato last year.

At the formal opening of the National Peace Assembly, representatives from the GRP and NDF marched, flanked by NPA guards and bearers of flags of NDF member organizations. An NDF choir sang flaming songs in chorale. A Lumad Datu (tribal chieftain) and Moro leader gave a rousing oranda (song) and prayer.

In militant dances and speeches led by NDF consultant Concha Araneta from Panay, the resounding message of the National Peace Assembly and CPP anniversary was clear: People's War is for People's Peace. The only way to annihilate the roots of violence and unrest is to realize the land distribution for the millions of peasants in the country, to respect the ancestral domain of indigenous people and Moro people, to abolish the wage slavery and end the exploitation of all workers, and to attain justice for all victims of human rights abuses and oppression. And the only way to pursue peace is only by waging the national democratic revolution and the people's war.

In an audiovisual message, NDF Chief Political Consultant Jose Maria Sison took the occasion to condemn the Duterte government for renegeing on its commitment to the peace negotiations, particularly on the amnesty and freedom of all political prisoners. This is in violation to the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and to the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). The non-release of political detainees also runs counter to the possible declaration of the bilateral interim ceasefire agreement between the NDF and the GRP and the acceleration of the peace negotiations.

In a press conference, former chief of the NDF peace negotiating panel and now senior adviser Luis Jalandoni stressed that the NDF will not lay down its arms even as it is engaged in peace talks with the Duterte government. Jalandoni also warned that as human rights abuses are perpetrated with the continued implementation of counter-revolutionary program Oplan Bayanihan and Enhanced Oplan Bayanihan, it will be forced to withdraw its ceasefire declaration to protect the masses and defend communities.

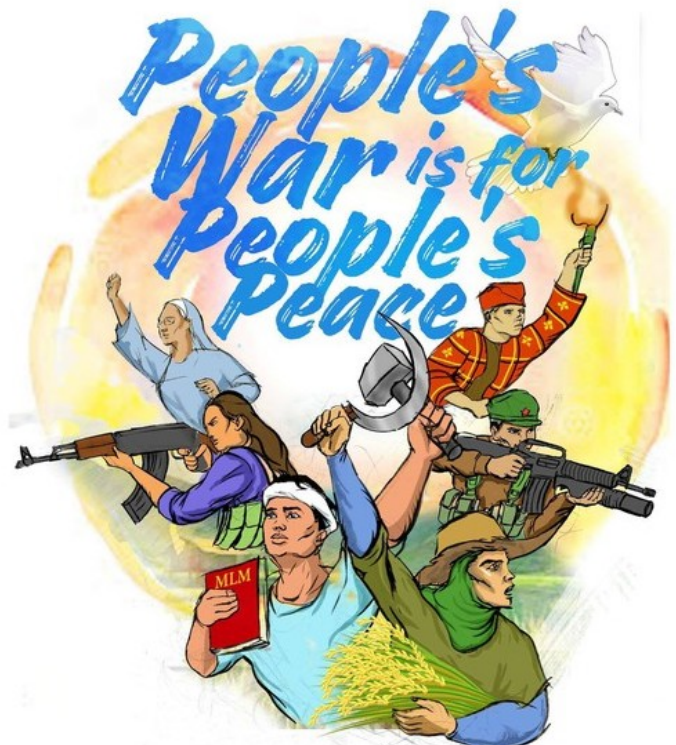
Ka Wendell, master of ceremonies of the celebration, said the communities are clamoring for an end to the ceasefire as they face threats from COPD and PDOP military troops that continue to operate in peasant and Lumad communities. Disciplined as they are, the NPA Red fighters stood ground to abide with the CPP's unilateral ceasefire declaration and in respect to the ongoing GRP-NDF peace negotiations.

At the press conference and later at the open forum with the assembly participants, NDF leaders took turns to explain the various provisions of the next substantive agenda for the peace talks, the Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-economic Reforms (CASER).

NDF consultant Eduardo Genelsa said Mindanao continues to be resilient and to advance despite escalating enemy attacks because communists, cadres, NPA combatants, and revolutionary forces have vigorously waged the armed struggle and raised the people's

war to greater heights.

NDF leaders assert that there can be no peace until the roots of armed struggle are addressed decisively. The revolutionary forces are now stronger more than ever to wage armed revolution, gain concrete benefits for the people, and ultimately attain justice and true peace. Indeed, today's celebration highlighted the militant battlecry: there can be no just and lasting peace without the people's war. ■



Please click or copy the following link to view the video of the anniversary celebration: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FVifIsOfztk>

OPENING STATEMENTS OF THE NDFP'S PANELISTS

'Our constituency demands that there ought to be a substantive reason for the high risk of agreeing to an indefinite and prolonged ceasefire'

(Opening statement of Luis G. Jalandoni, former head of the NDFP Negotiating Panel, at the resumption of formal peace talks, Aug. 22, 2016.)

Hon. Foreign Minister of the Royal Norwegian Government, Borge Brende, Hon. State Secretary Tore Hattrem, Special Envoy to the Philippine Peace Process, Elisabeth Slattum, Hon. Jesus Dureza, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Hon. Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III, Compatriots and Friends,

We in the National Democratic Front of the Philippines Negotiating Panel, Consultants and Staff, warmly greet and convey our heartfelt thanks to the Royal Norwegian Government for its determined and painstaking efforts as Third Party Facilitator since 2001 in patiently and efficiently working to move the peace process forward.

Their unwavering assistance and support, and the uniquely significant commitment of GPH President Duterte to push ahead the peace negotiations to address the roots of the armed conflict in order to achieve a just and lasting peace, with the tremendous efforts of our dedicated staff of lawyers and other committed organizations, have brought us to this point of high expectations for the success of our endeavors to achieve a just peace.

It is our unique privilege that in this session, our newly released NDFP consultants are present. Surely, their long standing dedication to serve the people and their rich experience will be a major contribution to these peace negotiations and give a decidedly significant push to achieve our goals in attaining a just and lasting peace.

May I introduce our Negotiating Panel: Vice-Chairperson of our Panel is Fidel Agcaoili, also the Chairperson of our Monitoring Committee under the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL), Julieta de Lima, Chairperson of our Reciprocal Working Committee on Social and Economic Reforms, Coni Ledesma, Member of the Monitoring Committee and Chairperson of the NDFP Special Office for the Protection of Children, and Asterio Palima, our representative for the Nordic countries. Of course, all of you know, Prof. Jose Maria Sison, Founding Chairperson of the Communist Party of the

Philippines and NDFP Chief Political Consultant. We have a further array of consultants, lawyers, and staff whom you shall surely get to know in the following days.

We are confident that both our negotiating panels, consultants and staff, will be able to take up the agenda we both agreed upon on our June 15 Joint Statement signed here in Oslo. We shall take up the following agenda points in the coming five days:

1. Reaffirmation of previous peace agreements;
2. Reconstitution of the list of personnel covered by the Joint

Agreement on Safety

and Immunity Guarantees;

3. Acceleration of peace talks on social and economic reforms, political and constitutional reforms, and end of hostilities and disposition of forces;

4. Amnesty Declaration for the release of all detained political prisoners; and

5. Mode of interim ceasefire

We shall once more take a point stated in our Joint Statement of June 15, namely, the release on humanitarian grounds of the sick and elderly, overly long detained, and women political prisoners.



More importantly, we expect the realization of the amnesty proclamation to release all political prisoners as a necessary incentive for the ceasefire between the two parties. Our constituency demands that there ought to be a substantive reason for the high risk of agreeing to an indefinite and prolonged ceasefire, which could amount to capitulation and mere pacification, without substantive incentives for the revolutionary movement and without assurance of success in forging satisfactory agreements on social, economic and political reforms.

Whatever is the mode of ceasefire for a start or in the long run, there must be clear premises, terms and mechanisms so that the ceasefire can be more stable, less prone to violations and less vulnerable to actual occurrences and allegations of ceasefire violations. At the same time, the ceasefire should promote the advance of substantive negotiations and agreements and not deter or delay the peace process. The two panels must discuss fully the subject of ceasefire before further work is assigned to the respective ceasefire committees of the GPH and NDFP.

With the commitment for just and lasting peace, declared by GPH President Rodrigo Duterte and the leadership of the NDFP, Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army, we are confident we can decisively move forward towards achieving a just and lasting peace. The Filipino people, our Third Party Facilitator, our peace advocates in the Philippines and abroad, are one with us in aspiring for meaningful reforms like land reform and national industrialization, political and constitutional reforms that will strengthen our independence and national sovereignty, negotiate the end of hostilities, and attain a just and lasting peace.

Thank you very much!

'I intend to pursue the policies of the revolutionary movement on the peace negotiations'

(Opening statement of Fidel V. Agcaoili, NDFP Peace Negotiating Panel Chairperson, Oct. 6, 2016.)

Magandang bapon sa ating labat (Good afternoon to all of us)!

This opening statement will be brief.

As the newly-appointed Chairperson of the NDFP Negotiating Panel, I intend to pursue the policies of the revolutionary movement on the peace negotiations as ably carried out by my predecessor and now Senior Adviser, Chairperson Luis Jalandoni.

Let me tell you frankly that I do not relish this new role. I was content to be an ordinary member of the Panel and, sometimes, be appointed as emissary to the GRP, to then Presidents Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos and now to President Rodrigo Duterte. But rest assured that I will do my best to accomplish the task that has fallen on my shoulders.

My opening statement focuses on the issue of the release of all political prisoners as a matter of justice and in compliance with the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and



the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). The most effective method of release is through an amnesty proclamation as offered by President Rodrigo Duterte himself.

The release of all political prisoners through amnesty was offered by President Duterte during my first meeting with him on 16 May 2016 in connection with the resumption of the peace negotiations.

Compared to the various methods that I had recommended, such as archiving, bail, release on recognizance, etc., he stated that granting amnesty would be the most effective mode in releasing the JASIG-protected persons, the sick, elderly, women and long-term detainees for humanitarian reasons, and all the political prisoners.

His offer was made in the presence of a current member of the GRP, a congressman who is now in our midst in this current round of talks as a member of the delegation from the House of Representatives, and several other persons.

Now, I am mentioning this in order to clarify that the proffered amnesty proclamation pertains to the political prisoners and not to a general amnesty that is mutually extended to the forces of both Partis in the final settlement of an armed conflict.

We should not muddle these two amnesty concepts, lest we be accused of intending to make use of the political prisoners as a leverage or hostage to secure advantage across the negotiating table or to demand capitulation of one side by another.

The continuing detention of the more than 400 political prisoners is manifestly a grave injustice. It does not befit a regime that wants to bring about change by engaging in peace negotiations with the revolutionary movement and the Moro people.

We should bear in mind that their continuing detention is a blatant violation of the CARHRIHL. They are unjustly detained on trumped-up charges of common crimes in violation of the Hernandez political offense doctrine that has been enshrined in the CARHRIHL.

President Duterte himself in his conversation with NDFP lawyers and GRP Panelists on 15 August 2016 in Malacanang Palace, reaffirmed his belief in the correctness and justness of the 1956 Philippine Supreme Court decision on the case against Amado V. Hernandez on rebellion complex with common crimes.

The NDFP stands firm in calling for the release through amnesty of the 432 political prisoners not only as a matter of justice but also in basic compliance of the CARHRIHL.

Their release will undoubtedly serve as an incentive in accelerating the peace negotiations and in forging a more stable ceasefire agreement.

I hope we can resolve these crucial issues so that we can move forward.

Maraming salamat po (Thank you)!

‘The Filipino people want to end the oppressive and exploitative ruling system’

(Statement of Prof. Jose Maria Sison at the opening Ceremonies of the third round of talks in Rome, Jan. 19, 2017.)



His Excellency, Eric Forner, Ambassador of the Royal Norwegian Government to the Philippines, Her Excellency, Ambassador Elisabeth Slattum, special envoy of the Royal Norwegian Government to the Philippine Peace Process, and His Excellency Foreign Secretary the Hon. Perfecto Yasay,

Dear Compatriots in the Negotiating Panels and Delegations of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, and

Distinguished guests and friends,

As Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, I reiterate to all of you the warmest greetings and best wishes of the NDFP for solidarity and peace in the new year and our deep gratitude to the Royal Government of Norway for consistently supporting the Philippines peace process and facilitating this third round of formal talks in the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations

and to the Government of Italy for cooperating and letting Rome be the venue of the current round.

As in the previous two rounds of formal talks in Oslo, I continue to declare that the two negotiating panels can negotiate in a nonadversarial way and overcome any obstacle by addressing the roots of the armed conflict and seeking to satisfy the demands of the people for basic social, economic and political reforms in order to lay the foundation of a just and lasting peace and build a Philippines that is truly independent, democratic, just, prosperous and progressive.

In my telephone conversation with President Duterte last month, we discussed in earnest how to make the GRP-NDFP negotiations successful. I am pleased that President Duterte has publicly expressed few days ago the wish to meet with me at a certain point after the third round of formal talks and to take necessary measures to ensure further advance of the peace negotiations.

It is important that at every round of formal talks, the GRP and NDFP review and require compliance with the already existing agreements. Each side has its own concerns regarding these. The NDFP is grateful for last year's release of the NDFP consultants detained in violation of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL). The NDFP continues to expect the release of the hundreds of political prisoners in compliance with the CARHRIHL and JASIG.

The concurrent or reciprocal unilateral declarations of ceasefire by the GRP and NDFP can be easily turned into a more stable bilateral ceasefire if the GRP complies with the CARHRIHL by releasing all political prisoners listed by the NDFP who have been unjustly and wrongly imprisoned on trumped up charges of common crimes. The most effective remedy for such release is through general amnesty as President Duterte himself told the NDFP emissary in May 2016.

In view of the apparent political rehabilitation of the fascist dictator Marcos with his burial in the Libingan ng mga Bayani, the NDFP has been concerned about adverse consequences to the provisions in CARHRIHL for justice and indemnification of the victims of human rights and violations during the Marcos regime. It seeks an assurance from President Duterte and the GRP

that said provisions will continue to be respected and complied with. At any rate, I am glad that in advance of the third round President Duterte assured the aforesaid victims that they would be indemnified promptly and properly.

The NDFP is seriously concerned with violations of the CARHRIHL and the unilateral ceasefire arising from Oplan Bayanihan and Oplan Kapayapaan and from the anti-drugs campaign Oplan Tokhang and Double Barrel. In this regard, we the NDFP expect the GRP to comply with CARHRIHL. The Joint Monitoring Committee received complaints for investigation and appropriate action.

Ahead of the third round of formal talks, the Filipino people are expecting the Reciprocal Working Committees on Social and Economic Reforms to make a significant advance. Both RWCs have already fleshed out the common outline of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER) and can indeed make a significant headway in the current round in reconciling their respective draft and agree on how to accelerate the unification of the drafts by holding bilateral draft sessions by teams before the fourth round.

The prospect is in sight that within six months the CASER shall already be ready for signing by the panels and everyone will understand how genuine land reform, national industrialization and expansion of social services shall be realized. The GRP and NDFP should be truly interested in social, economic and political reforms. The Filipino people want to end the oppressive and exploitative ruling system dominated by foreign monopoly capitalists, domestic landlords and capitalist bureaucrats.

With regard to political and constitutional reforms, the NDFP holds the view that there are good and viable examples of both unitary and federal forms of state. A federal system of government is not necessarily good or better than a unitary form of state, especially when it carries over from an already rotten unitary form of state certain malignancies and does not have constitutional guarantees against the penchant of the oligarchy for puppetry, dictatorship, graft and corruption, dynasty-building and warlordism.

The NDFP is willing to maintain its alliance with the GRP and the Duterte administration in particular by cooperating in the founding of the Federal Republic of the Philippines, creating a

parliamentary system and making a new constitution that upholds, defends and promotes national independence, democracy, economic development, social justice, cultural progress, independent foreign policy and international solidarity with peoples and all countries for peace and development.

The Reciprocal Working Groups on Political and Constitutional Reforms of both panels have already finished and exchanged their drafts of the Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms. They have advanced ahead of schedule. There is plenty of time to enrich and polish these drafts even while CASER is still being negotiated. It will not be surprising if after the signing of the CASER by the panels, it will take one or two rounds of talks or some three months after the forging of CASER to finish the CAPCR for signing by the panels.

The advantage of having the CASER and CAPCR signed and approved by the principals within the first two years of the Duterte government is that these agreements shall be implemented for at least two years before the end of said government. If implemented to the satisfaction of the Filipino people and the NDFP, these agreements shall lay

the full basis of the Comprehensive Agreement on the End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces as early as 2020-21. The leaders, officers and troops of the warring parties can expect to benefit from a mutual general amnesty.

The Filipino people, the NDFP and its forces continue to hope that the peace negotiations will successfully pass through the following tests and phases: the amnesty and release of all political prisoners in compliance with CARHRIHL, the forging of CASER and CAPCR, the implementation of the three priorly cited agreements and the forging and finalization of the EHDF.

In various ways, President Duterte can prove in real and concrete terms that he is truly a patriotic and progressive president and fights against the imperialists and oligarchs for the benefit of the people. The GRP-NDFP peace process is one of the best ways to do so. And other ways follow easily, when the good agreements are implemented and the broad masses of the people are aroused, organized and mobilized to act for their own good along the national and democratic line.

Thank you. ■

NDFP PROGRAM AND GRP CONSTITUTION ARE GUIDING FRAMEWORKS FOR AGREEMENT ON SOCIOECONOMIC REFORMS

The Communist Party of the Philippines' (CPP) Guide for Establishing the People's Democratic Government and the Program for a People's Democratic Government of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and the 1987 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) will serve as "guiding frameworks" in crafting an agreement on social and economic reforms under the proposed framework and outline exchanged by the NDFP.

Earlier this week, the NDFP exchanged with the GRP a proposed "framework and outline" for the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms, the second substantive agenda to be tackled in the next round of peace negotiations in Oslo, Norway on October 6-10.

The exchange of "framework and outline" was

agreed upon during the meeting of the Reciprocal Working Committees on Social and Economic Reforms (RWC-SER) of both Parties last August 24. The substantive agenda on social and economic reforms is next to be negotiated by the two parties according to the framework agreement set by The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992.

"The interests, rights and welfare of the people, and addressing the roots of the armed conflict should be of utmost importance," says NDFP consultant and RWC-SER member Randall Echanis.

However, Echanis said, "We anticipate a spirited and interesting discussion on the frameworks, and at the same time expect it to be a bit contentious."

► **NDP PROGRAM ... PAGE 11**

CPP ON THE POSITIVE OUTCOME OF THE OSLO TALKS

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) congratulates the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) Negotiating Panel and representatives of the incoming Duterte regime for attaining positive results in the June 14-15 preliminary talks held in Oslo, Norway. The meeting was facilitated by the Royal Norwegian Government.

The CPP fully supports the agreements made during the preliminary talks. The positive atmosphere and outcome was reflected in the joint statement issued on June 15.

The CPP is elated that an agreement was reached to pursue peace negotiations starting the third week of July on the basis of previously signed agreements. The CPP welcomes the plan to accelerate negotiations to complete the remaining substantive items of socio-economic reforms, political and constitutional reforms, and ending hostilities and disposition of forces.

The CPP also supports the plan to reconstitute the list of personnel who will be protected under the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and release all political prisoners through an Amnesty Proclamation to be concurred to by the Philippine congress.

The CPP is also pleased that the Duterte panel will recommend to have all NDFP consultants released in order to allow them to participate in peace talks. Their plan to recommend the release of political prisoners on humanitarian grounds is also highly commendable.

The CPP also welcomes the plan to discuss an interim ceasefire and its modalities.

The attitude of the incoming Duterte regime toward peace negotiations with the NDFP is big departure from that of the Aquino and Arroyo regimes. Under the previous two regimes, peace negotiations were regarded mainly as a psywar operation that was a secondary to and served only the counter-revolutionary war of suppression.

Considering how the incoming Duterte regime is vigorously pursuing talks with the NDFP, even before being formally inaugurated into office, the CPP and all revolutionary forces expect peace negotiations with the Duterte regime to move forward with unprecedented speed.

If the Duterte regime will continue to pursue this path, the CPP expects peace negotiations to attain historic achievements over the coming period. The CPP and revolutionary forces under the NDFP are looking forward to discuss and forge agreements with the Duterte regime with the aim of serving the nationalist and democratic interests of the people and pursuing their democratic empowerment.

The CPP and all revolutionary forces reiterate its full support to the NDFP Negotiating Panel, its head Luis Jalandoni, NDFP Senior Political Consultant Jose Ma. Sison, and NDFP panel members Fidel V. Agcaoili, Julie de Lima Sison, Coni Ledesma and their consultants and assistants. *(June 18, 2016)* ■

◀ NDF PROGRAM ... PAGE 10

Echanis added that “under the NDFP proposal the responsibility for implementation of the agreement shall be joint and separate.”

The Guide for Establishing the People’s Democratic Government is a 1972 document of the CPP that is being used by the NDFP as basic law in setting up the organs of people’s political power in guerrilla bases and revolutionary territories.

According to the NDFP proposal, the main CASER objectives are: a) carry out agrarian reform and national industrialization; b) advance the rights of exploited, oppressed, discriminated and disadvantaged sectors of society; c) uphold,

protect, defend and promote economic sovereignty; and d) conserve the national patrimony and protect the environment.

In addition to the GRP’s 1987 Constitution and the CPP’s Guide for Establishing the People’s Democratic Government, the NDFP also proposed that the CASER refer to “universally accepted principles and instruments of international law, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of 1966, the International Labor Convention of 1948 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize and other similar or relevant international covenants.” *(Sept. 23, 2016)* ■

JOINT STATEMENT ON THE SECOND ROUND OF TALKS BETWEEN THE GRP AND THE NDFP

We, the Negotiating Panels of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), successfully held the second round of talks from 6 to 9 October 2016 in Oslo, Norway, facilitated by the Royal Norwegian Government (RNG).



Chairperson Luis G. Jalandoni for his invaluable contribution to the sustained conduct of the peace talks through the years.

NDFP Panel Chairperson Fidel V. Agcaoili thanked the GRP Panel Chairperson for his congratulations. He narrated the need to

expeditiously pursue

the work for the grant of amnesty and the release of prisoners (as listed by the NDFP).

At the opening ceremonies, RNG Special Envoy to the Philippines Peace Process, Ambassador Elisabeth Slattum, welcomed the GRP and NDFP delegations. She reiterated the continuing commitment of the RNG to support the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations.

NDFP Panel Chairperson Agcaoili announced the appointments of Mr. Jalandoni as NDFP Senior Adviser and Benito E. Tiamzon as new member of the NDFP Panel.

Secretary Jesus G. Dureza, GRP Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (PAPP) reiterated the commitment of the two Parties in the peace negotiations toward resolving the armed conflict.

The Chairpersons of the GRP and NDFP Negotiating Panels, Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III and Fidel V. Agcaoili, introduced their respective Panel Members:

NDFP Chief Political Consultant Prof. Jose Maria Sison thanked the RNG for its caring and efficient facilitation. He stated that the amnesty and release of all political prisoners are a matter of justice and compliance with the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) and will be a big incentive to the forging of a more stable ceasefire as well as to the acceleration of the peace process.

On the side of the GRP: Panel Chairperson, Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III and Panel members, Hernani A. Braganza, Atty. Rene V. Sarmiento, Atty. Angela L. Trinidad, and Atty. Antonio B. Arellano.

GRP Panel Chairperson Silvestre Bello III congratulated Fidel Agcaoili for being the newly-designated Chairperson of the NDFP Negotiating Panel and reiterated the determination of the Duterte administration to bring the peace negotiations to a successful conclusion as soon as possible. He also extended his deepest appreciation to former NDFP Negotiating Panel

On the side of the NDFP: Panel Chairperson Fidel V. Agcaoili and Panel Members Julieta S. de Lima, Coni K. Ledesma, Asterio B. Palima and Benito E. Tiamzon.

Both sides also brought along the heads and members of their respective Reciprocal Working Committee-Socio and Economic Reforms (RWCs-SER), Reciprocal Working Groups-Political and Constitutional Reforms (RWGs-PCR), Reciprocal Working Groups-End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces (RWGs-EHDF), Joint

Monitoring Committee (JMC) under the CARHRIHL, respective ceasefire committees, advisers, consultants, cooperators, experts, resource persons, technical personnel and observers.

The Parties noted the presence of the six-person delegation from the House of Representatives headed by Hon. Ruby M. Sahali as well as Tarlac Gov. Susan Yap. The other members of the House delegation are: Deputy Speaker Bai Sandra S.A. Sema, Hon. Leopoldo N. Bataoil, Hon. Nancy A. Catamco, Hon. Jesus N. Sacdalan, and Hon. Carlos Isagani Zarate.

The two Panels agreed on the following:

1. Releases

The Parties reviewed the Joint Oslo Statements dated June 15 and August 26, 2016 on the issue of the immediate release of detained prisoners listed by the NDFP, giving premium on those prisoners who will be released based on humanitarian grounds. They also reviewed the circumstances and status of JASIG-protected NDFP consultants.

They took good note of the positive steps so far taken, including the finalization of the Revised Guidelines on the Presidential Committee on Bail, Recognizance and Pardon, and agreed to accelerate the process consistent with the Parties' common resolve.

They also agreed that the presidential clemency for and release of three remaining JASIG-protected consultants, Eduardo Sarmiento, Emeterio Antalan and Leopoldo Caloza, shall be expedited. The GRP shall release the prisoners who are listed by the NDFP in accordance with the CARHRIHL pending the approval of the proposed amnesty for their benefit.

The GRP Panel affirms its commitment to work for the release of these prisoners in expeditious and acceptable modes.

2. Amnesty Proclamation

The Panels reviewed the circumstances and status of the proposed amnesty proclamation since the first round of talks on August 27, 2016.

The GRP Panel said that the amnesty proclamation has already been drafted and endorsed to the Office of the President. The NDFP Panel requested a copy of the said proclamation. The GRP Panel assured the NDFP that it shall have a copy in due time.

Meeting of RWCs, RWGs, JMC and respective ceasefire committees.

a. RWCs-SER

The RWCs-SER discussed their respective proposed drafts on the framework and outline of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER).

After several sessions, the RWCs-SER agreed on a common CASER framework and outline which both parties have initialed (Annex A).

The RWCs-SER agreed to conduct their respective consultations, exchange drafts, and schedule their bilateral meetings to correspond to the formal meetings of the Negotiating Panels.

b. RWCs-PCR

The RWGs-PCR agreed on a common outline (Annex B). This shall be fleshed out by each side in the period of November to December 2016 in the Philippines. The two sides shall exchange the en fleshed drafts of the common outline in the last week of January 2017 by email. They shall discuss the drafts in order to reconcile them on the date and venue decided by the Panels.

c. RWCs-EHDF

The RWGs-PCR agreed on the topic outline of the NDFP RWG-EHDF as the common outline (Annex C).

The RWGs-EHDF will continue to hold unilateral meetings in order to develop their respective outlines and submit the same to their respective Panels. In the meantime, the RWGs-EHDF shall study and follow closely the progress of the work of the RWCs-SER and RWGs-PCR.

The RWGs-EHDF have agreed to exchange drafts of their respective en fleshed common draft outlines upon completion by the RWCs on SER of the draft CASER and after the RWCs on PCR have substantially moved forward in the drafting of a CAPCR.

d. Joint Monitoring Committee

The JMC discussed and agreed to undertake joint activities including the distribution of CARHRIHL in several local languages, brochures, poster-making contest and calendar.

The JMC likewise agreed to develop the monitoring system and promote human rights by conducting fora and trainings which will be planned by the Joint Secretariats.



The JMC will recommend the inclusion of the study of human rights and international humanitarian law in the curriculum of schools.

They had extended discussions and clarifications on documentation and investigation.

The Joint Secretariat shall finalize the coverage of the Joint Education and Capacity Building.

The JMC shall correspondingly amend the budget to cover the various joint activities and submit it to the RNG.

The JMC discussed the Draft Common Supplemental Guidelines initialed in April 2011 including further amendments by the NDFP MC to which the GRP MC asked for more time to study and comment.

The JMC discussed its budget and agreed that the coverage is for fifteen months, beginning October 2016 to December 2017.

e. Respective ceasefire committees

The Parties renewed their commitment to work through their respective ceasefire committees to reconcile and develop their separate unilateral ceasefire orders into a single unified bilateral document within 60 days from August 26, 2016.

The Parties engaged in preliminary discussions on different drafts for a potential bilateral ceasefire, took note of concerns on issues related thereto, and relayed alleged incidents vis-a-vis their separate unilateral ceasefire orders.

The Parties stressed that they are exerting best efforts to develop a single unified document of a bilateral ceasefire agreement within a desired period.

The Parties have likewise reaffirmed their declarations of their respective unilateral indefinite

ceasefires.

3. Next Meeting

The Panels agreed to meet again on the third week of January 2017 in a foreign neutral venue. They have instructed their respective RWCs and RWGs to synchronize their schedules.

Expression of Gratitude to RNG

Both Panels reiterated their appreciation and gratitude to the Royal Norwegian Government for its steadfast support to the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and acknowledged the facilitation of Special Envoy to the Philippine Peace Process Elisabeth Slattum and her team.

Signed in Oslo, Norway on 09 October 2016

Fidel V. Agcaoili

Chairperson of the NDFP Panel

Julieta S. de Lima

Member, NDFP Panel

Coni K. Ledesma

Member, NDFP Panel

Asterio B. Palima

Member, NDFP Panel

Benito E. Tiamzon

Member, NDFP Panel

Sec. Silvestre H. Bello III

Chairperson of the GRP Panel

Hernani A. Braganza

Member, GRP Panel

Rene V. Sarmiento

Member, GRP Panel

Angela L. Trinidad

Member, GRP Panel

Antonio B. Arellano

Member, GRP Panel

Witnesses:

Prof. Jose Maria Sison

NDFP Chief Political Consultant

Luis G. Jalandoni

Senior Adviser, NDFP Panel

Sec. Jesus G. Dureza

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process

Mayor Edgardo D. Pamintuan

Adviser, GRP Panel

Elisabeth Slattum

Third Party Facilitator

For the Royal Norwegian Government

INTERVIEW WITH OUTGOING NDFP PANEL CHAIRPERSON LUIS JALANDONI

‘Ups and downs in the peace talks are to be taken in stride, as both sides seek a negotiated solution to the armed conflict’

1. In the light of recent pronouncements of GRP President Duterte, what do you think would be the immediate scenario in the peace talks?



LJ: Widespread calls from within and outside the country to continue the peace talks, build on the important gains of the last three rounds of talks, pursue the social, economic, political and constitutional reforms and implement the comprehensive agreement on respect for human rights and international humanitarian law and struggle for a just and lasting peace.

The revolutionary movement will reach out to President Duterte, banking on his decades-long cooperation with the revolutionary forces in Mindanao, and urging him to listen to positive elements in his peace panel and other progressive elements in his administration.

The gains in the last round of formal talks in Rome include agreement in principle by both sides to free distribution of land to farmers, national industrialization, cooperation in establishing a Federal Republic, and after two years of implementation of social and economic and political and constitutional reforms to proceed to the end of hostilities. A bilateral ceasefire can be agreed upon and the release of political prisoners can be realized.

2. You have seen the ups and downs in the peace talks, do you think the peace talks would be able to reach its conclusion according to the set agenda?

LJ: The possibility continues to exist. The people will have to mount a powerful and persistent campaign to push for the continuation of the

peace talks and concrete initiatives from positive and creative minds on both sides, to overcome the peace spoilers such as the big landlords and compradors, the military and the US establishment. Prof. Jose Ma. Sison, the Chief Political Consultant of the NDFP has gently urged President Duterte, saying he (Sison) appreciates that Duterte, as President of GRP and Commander-in-Chief has to uphold the GRP and express concern for his troops. So, Sison, urges President Duterte to listen to his peace panel and other progressives in his government and endorse and support back channeling talks to resolve current problems.

On February 20, President Duterte met with three Cabinet members nominated by the NDFP, Secretary of Social Welfare and Development Judy Taguiwalo, Head of the National Anti-Poverty Commission Liza Maza, and Secretary of Agrarian Reform Rafael Mariano. All three strongly advised President Duterte to continue the peace talks with the NDFP.

► **INTERVIEW ... PAGE 16**



agreement will become a permanent ceasefire without the needed social, economic and political reforms. It would mean for them a pacification of the revolutionary forces and the imposition and persistence of the unjust social system with abject poverty, landlessness, lack of health and slow death through exploitation.

5. Do you think the revolutionary movement would still keep its informal alliance with Duterte?

The revolutionary movement expects to maintain and develop its informal and even formal alliance with Duterte if and when this is beneficial to the people in achieving a just and lasting peace and genuine independence and a well developed economy through land reform, national industrialization, good health, progressive education, and adequate housing for the people, protection of the environment and respect for the national minorities, their lands and their right to self-determination. ■

◀ INTERVIEW ... PAGE 15

The Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army offered to release six Prisoners-of-War as a gesture to encourage the continuation of the peace talks, even while fighting continues with the termination of both sides of their unilateral ceasefires in early February.

Ups and downs in the peace talks are to be taken in stride, as both sides seek a negotiated solution to the 48-year-old armed conflict.

3. How do you see your role now since giving up the chairmanship of the NDFP peace panel?

LJ: As a senior adviser to the NDFP Negotiating Panel, I will continue to help. Since I attend negotiations and even co-sign important documents and agreements, I am also available for invitations to speak at peace forums or media interviews. I was honored to be invited to a Peace Summit in Davao City where more than 15,000 peasants, workers and other mass organizations and progressive sectors attended and a very special treat, the formation of the Pulang Bagan Battalion of the New People's Army. The call was for the continuation of the peace talks, land reform and national industrialization, and the release of all political prisoners. Under enthusiastic applause, I told the audience that the NDFP would never agree to the dismantling of the NPA and the surrender of weapons. I said the NPA has been vital for the growth of the people's organizations, defending them and their programs, and would be needed to carry out land reform and national industrialization and other needed reforms.

4. Why do you think the GRP is dead set on inking a bilateral ceasefire agreement?

LJ: The military and hawks in the Duterte government believe that the bilateral ceasefire



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.

Liberation International is published by the NDFP International Office in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

BOARD OF EDITORS

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

CONTACT INFO

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