

2014 STATE OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES ADDRESS

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES - FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE, PEACE & EQUALITY!

We, the *bae, datu, fulong, baylan, timuay, mantikadong*, the indigenous leaders of indigenous communities in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, belonging to the different tribes of the B'laan, Higaonon, Kalanguya-Ifugao, Mansaka, Erumanen ne Menuvu, Erumanen ne Menuvu Kirinteken, Aeta-Abellen, Dumagat, Pala'wan, Subanen, Subanon, Ilongot, Manobo Matigsalog, Egongot (Ilongot) Bugkalot, Bukidnon, Manubo Blit, Teduray, Tagbanwa, Tasaday, Lambangi-an, Ybanag, Remontado, Aeta, Ayta, at T'boli-Ubo, together in solidarity with our friends, allies and partners have gathered here in the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City from 23 to 25 July 2014, to convey the true state of the indigenous peoples in Philippines.

TRUTH

We are the indigenous peoples of the land — peoples descended from ancestors and communities who have been time immemorial occupants and owners of territories in Mindanaw, Visayas, and Luzon. Ancestral domains — land and natural resources — is life; life is our ancestral domains. We, indigenous peoples respect our ancestral domains, which will be inherited and taken care of by generations to come. We are peoples with our own culture, beliefs, customs, traditions, and laws.

JUSTICE

What is legal is not necessarily just. Philippine state policies fail to address our concerns and realities as indigenous peoples. These policies are insensitive to our diverse cultures. They do not correct and remedy historical and present injustices, and human rights violations and abuses that we continue to suffer.

1. Policies on mining and other extractives, plantations, and other exploitation of land and natural resources continue to trample upon our rights as first stewards of the land, and our right to consent or dissent to activities encroaching upon our ancestral domains. Mining destroys our territories, degrades our bodies by chemicals, and compromises our health especially indigenous women. Mining fails to justly compensate for the loss of resources, and leaves our territories unrehabilitated and in its plundered state.

We are victims of militarization and human rights violations because of the entry of these companies. Violence and threat of violence is used to suppress our voices, including extrajudicial killings of indigenous leaders.

The promised benefits of policies on the extraction, development and utilization of natural resources continue to be enjoyed only by the private powerful few while, like beggars, we are left to wait for dole-outs from culturally insensitive projects like the 4Ps Program; or compelled to abide by policies ignorant of the real situation of indigenous women such as the prohibition for traditional healers to assist in childbirth, or disallowing birth to occur at home.

2. The Joint Administrative Order No. 1 series of 2012 by the NCIP, DENR, DAR and LRA compromised our basic and legal rights and resulted in the further delay in the processing of the certification of titles over our ancestral domains. We reject policies like JAO1 that do not have our participation in its formulation, and which are deliberately made complex resulting in the delay of the processing of CADTs and ultimately, in the denial of our rights.

Meanwhile, with other marginalized peoples, communities and sectors, we, indigenous peoples, have our ways to resolve land and other conflicts. We will not be deceived by projects or activities like the National Greening Program (NGP) by which fake indigenous leaders were created as well as fake NGOs, and which make us compete against each other, or fight against our co-equals and fellows, whom like us are similarly exploited and downtrodden.

3. We, as indigenous peoples, have our own governance, our own Indigenous Political Structures (IPS). Our own governance and IPS are often not reflected in state laws and policies. We recognize the women in our community as equals and partners in decision-making. The state policy of “IP mandatory representation in local legislative councils” has generally been used by local political elites for their own selfish interests. While we do not entirely reject this “IP mandatory representation in local legislative councils” — we reject fake “representatives” that are chosen by LGUs, by the NCIP, or by any person or entity that do not have our mandate nor represent our true and collective interest, and which only satisfy a person’s or a few’s greed.

PEACE

We are indigenous peoples; we have the right to self-determination. We, too, want lasting peace in Mindanaw. We support everyone who works for the attainment of peace in Mindanaw. We support the full inclusion of indigenous peoples rights in the core area in the Bangsamoro Basic Law and full exclusion of the adjacent IP territories. We recognize the diversity of indigenous peoples and communities in Mindanaw. We affirm that our identity as indigenous peoples is intrinsically linked with our ancestral domains. Lasting peace in Mindanaw can only be achieved if all rights are recognized, respected and protected and no one is excluded.

EQUALITY

We, indigenous peoples, are human beings and as such are not inferior to anyone. We condemn any form of discrimination, separating us from the rest of the Filipino people through health, education, access to food and peaceful living.

**WE ARE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES AND WE CONTINUE TO ASSERT OUR RIGHTS!
UNITED, WE SHALL STRUGGLE!**

**Recognize and Respect Indigenous Peoples’ Rights over Ancestral Domains!
Recognize and Respect the rights of Indigenous Women!
Scrap the Mining Act of 1995! Enact the Alternative Minerals Management Bill!
Fast track the processing and awarding of CADTs! Scrap JAO 1 series of 2012!
Respect Indigenous Peoples’ Governance and Indigenous Political Structures!
Full participation of IPs in all levels of Decision making affecting ADs/ALs!
Investigate the implementation of NGP in Ancestral Domains!
Ensure consistency of 4Ps with the customs and traditions of its IP beneficiaries!
Investigate incidents of human rights violations and**

Hold Human Rights violators accountable!
Respect Indigenous Peoples' Customary Laws!
Transform the NCIP! Make government officials accountable!
Recognize Indigenous Peoples Rights in the Bangsamoro Basic Law!
Full Support of the Peace Agreements!