

Aktionsbündnis Menschenrechte - Philippinen

c/o philippinenbüro e.V. im Asienhaus
Hohenzollernring 52
D - 50672 Köln/ Germany

Ph: +49 [221] 7161 21 22

E-Mail: info@amp.ngo

Web: www.amp.ngo



Cologne, 23.05.2022 | AMP Statement

2022 Philippine Presidential Election

After the landslide victory of Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. and Sara Duterte-Carpio in the 2022 presidential election the Aktionsbündnis Menschenrechte-Philippinen (AMP) calls on the new government to immediately address the dire human rights situation in the country.

The AMP expresses its concern that neither Marcos Jr., the son of former dictator Marcos Sr., nor Duterte-Carpio, the daughter of outgoing President Rodrigo Duterte, have distanced themselves from the human rights violations committed under their fathers.

Both Marcos and Duterte-Carpio vowed to continue President Duterte’s war on drugs and to disallow independent international investigations into the human rights abuses under the Duterte government. Instead of neglecting these abuses, the unity proclaimed by the Marcos-Duterte tandem should imply acknowledging the victims and human rights violations, enabling justice, and ending impunity. The AMP therefore calls on the designated President Marcos and Vice-President Duterte-Carpio to enable the investigation and prosecution of at least 279 cases of extrajudicial killings of human rights defenders (HRDs) and journalists¹ as well as of about 12,000-30,000 extrajudicial killings in the name of the so-called war on drugs.

The new administration must also end the increasing criminalization and violence against HRDs and political opponents. Especially with the passing of the problematic Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) of 2020, the Duterte administration created a dangerous tool to denounce and muzzle any critics of the government. “Red-tagging”, meaning the alleged accusation of HRDs to be supporters of the communist insurgents, has become a widespread practice to vilify opponents and needs to be stopped.

Freedom of the press and freedom of expression have also suffered tremendously under President Duterte. The government repeatedly targeted independent and critical media by bringing charges against individual reporters and news agencies. Worryingly, both Marcos and Duterte-Carpio failed to participate in public election debates and refused to cooperate with media workers during the campaign period. It is imperative that the integrity and space for independent media and critical discourse must be restored to protect the fundamental characteristics of democracy in the Philippines.

The AMP therefore **calls on the new government of the Philippines to:**

- End Duterte’s abusive anti-drug campaign, and immediately and impartially investigate all cases of killings of HRDs and journalists without delay and bring all perpetrators to justice,

- Immediately stop all intimidation, threats, and violence against HRDs, journalists, church workers, and indigenous peoples by state security forces, civil servants, and government officials in the Philippines,
- Order the Philippines National Police and Armed Forces of the Philippines to cease filing trumped-up charges against HRDs and to restrain from making statements that stigmatize HRDs, especially those suggesting that defenders are members of the communist rebel group, the National People's Army,
- Amend the ATA to bring Philippine counter-terrorism legislation in compliance with international human rights standards,
- Resume the stalled peace negotiations with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and continue the peace process and development of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.
- Cooperate with the independent media and protect freedom of the press and freedom of expression by repealing all criminal defamation laws, including those set out in Articles 353 to 355, Articles 358 to 362 of the Revised Penal Code, and Section 4(c)(4) of the Cybercrime Prevention Act,
- Ensure that prosecutors and judges do not open trial proceedings in cases of manifestly fabricated charges against HRDs,
- Fully cooperate with the independent investigations of the International Criminal Court and the international human rights mechanisms.

¹ <https://amp.ngo/en/project/joint-submission-to-the-summary-of-the-stakeholders-report-for-the-upr-2022/>