

**STATEMENT OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN
IN THE PHILIPPINES
1-2 March 2014
NCCP Compound, Quezon City, Philippines**

WE, KANKANAHEY, SUBANEN, IFUGAO, KALINGA, MANOBO, DUMAGAT, TEDURAY, AND MANGYAN WOMEN PARTICIPATING IN THE “NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN” 1-2 MARCH 2014 AT THE NCCP COMPOUND, QUEZON CITY, PHILIPPINES HAVING DISCUSSED AND EXCHANGED THE SITUATION OF OUR RIGHTS AS WOMEN AND AS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES,

> REITERATE OUR BIRTHRIGHT AS PEOPLES TO OUR ANCESTRAL LANDS AND ALL THE RESOURCES THEREIN, OUR RIGHT TO OWN, MANAGE AND CONTROL OUR RESOURCES AND OUR RIGHT TO DETERMINE THE KIND OF DEVELOPMENT WE WANT THAT DOES NOT AGGRESS ON OUR CULTURES, SPIRITUALITY AND SUSTAINABLE LIFEWAYS;

> ARE PROUD THAT WHILE WE LIVE OF THE LAND, WE ARE ABLE TO SUSTAIN IT AS REFLECTED IN THE RICH RESOURCES AND BIODIVERSITY IN OUR TERRITORIES THROUGH GENERATIONS;

> ACKNOWLEDGE OUR RICH KNOWLEDGE, VALUES AND PRACTICES RELATED TO NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, HEALTH AND AGRICULTURE, AMONG OTHERS, AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO TRANSMIT THESE TO THE FUTURE GENERATION; THESE KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICE AND VALUES ARE OUR STRENGTH IN KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES RESILIENT TO DRASTIC CHANGES INCLUDING THE IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE;

IN THE CURRENT STATE OF ECONOMIC, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL CRISES, DRIVEN BY MACROECONOMIC POLICIES AND POWER PLAY, HOWEVER, OUR LIVES AND OUR CHILDREN’S FUTURES ARE UNDER THREAT! IN THE WORDS OF ADELFA BULAYONG, A SUBANEN WOMAN : “I NOW LIVE WITH UNCERTAINTY.”

WHILE PLAYING GULLIBLE HOST TO FOREIGN INVESTMENTS, THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT IS CONSISTENTLY PLAYING DEAF AND MUTE TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES. MINING COMPANIES, ENERGY PROJECTS, MONOCROP PLANTATIONS, TOURISM AND ECONOMIC ZONES HAVE TATTERED OUR TERRITORIES WITHOUT OUR DUE CONSENT. ON TOP OF THESE, IS THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE GOVERNMENT’S ARMY AND MILITARY FORCES TO QUELL OUR RESISTANCE TO THESE ENCHROACHMENTS; THE USE OF PARAMILITARY FORCES AND RECRUITMENT FROM AMONG OUR YOUTH, HAVE ALSO DIVIDED OUR COMMUNITIES ASIDE FROM BRIBERY, THREATS, VILIFICATION AND INTIMIDATIONS, AMONG OTHERS.

MILITARIZATION AND THE CULTURE OF IMPUGNITY HAS RESULTED TO A SERIES OF EVACUATIONS ESPECIALLY IN MINDANAO, SINCE 2013. IN THE RECENT APRIL-MARCH 2014 EVACUATION OF TALAINGOD IN DAVAO DEL NORTE, 20 VIOLATIONS

OF HUMAN RIGHTS WERE RECORDED BY ELEMENTS OF THE 60TH INFANTRY BATTALION OF THE PHILIPPINE ARMY. THREE OF WHICH ARE CASES OF GENDER VIOLENCE. ONE OF THE SURVIVORS WAS USED BY THE MILITARY AS A GUIDE FOR THEIR OPERATION. SHE WAS ALSO FORCED TO UNDRESS AND DISPLAY HER TATTOO.

DISPLACEMENT MEANS THE ABANDONEMENT AND ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION OR THEFT OF OUR CROPS, LIVESTOCKS AND PROPERTIES. FOOD INSECURITY USUALLY FOLLOWS. IN SOME COMMUNITIES FOOD BLOCKADES ARE IMPOSED. IT ALSO IMPLIES THE DISRUPTION OF COMMUNITY LIFE. IN AGUSAN DEL NORTE WHERE THE MILITARY ENCAMPED IN A COMMUNITY SCHOOL IN 2014, MOTHERS WERE FORCED NOT TO SEND THEIR CHILDREN TO SCHOOL BECAUSE OF FEAR. TEACHERS WERE REPORTEDLY HARASSED BY THE PRESENCE OF MILITARY IN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS;

WHILE WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE NOBLE INTENTION OF THE STATE'S " NO HOME BIRTH" POLICY, WE CONSIDER THIS AS AN AFFRONT TO INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT. IT IS INSENSITIVE TO THE PARTICULAR SITUATIONS OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN. PREGNANCY AND GIVING BIRTH ARE CELEBRATIONS OF LIFE FOR US, INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND OUR COMMUNITIES, NOT A BURDEN WITH DOUBLE PENALTIES AS REQUIRED BY THE SAID POLICY.

WE ALSO ACKNOWLEDGE THE INTENTION OF THE CURRENT PANTAWID PAMILYA PILIPINO PROGRAM AND THE CONDITIONAL CASH TRANSFER FOR THE POOR AND MARGINALIZED. HOWEVER, WE NOTE WITH CONCERN HOW IT HAS DISEMPOWERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN DUE TO ITS DOLE-OUT APPROACH, LOOPHOLES AND ARBITRARY IMPLEMENTATION. THE STRICT COMPLIANCE TO CONDITIONALITIES HAS A CONTROLLING IMPACT ON INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S ROLES AND ACTIVITIES. TIME HAS TO BE ALLOCATED FROM THE DAILY PRODUCTIVE AND REPRODUCTIVE WORK TO COMPLY TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROGRAM.

RECOMMENDATIONS :

1. FOR THE STATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES TO MUSTER ITS POLITICAL WILL TO FULLY AND EFFECTIVELY COMPLY WITH ITS OBLIGATIONS TO ITS CONSTITUENTS, ESPECIALLY THE INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND THEIR COMMUNITIES :
 - A) ENSURE ACCESS TO JUSTICE BY INDIGENOUS WOMEN WHO ARE VICTIMS AND/OR SURVIVORS OF GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS; BUILD AWARENESS AND CAPACITIES OF GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL TO BE ABLE TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL;
 - B) PULL OUT ALL MILITARY ELEMENTS FROM INDIGENOUS TERRITORIES.

- C) REPEAL THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S MEMORANDUM 221, 2013 ALLOWING THE USE OF SCHOOLS BY THE MILITARY;
- D) STOP RECRUITMENT OF INDIGENOUS YOUTH INTO PARAMILITARY SERVICE.
- E) REPEAL THE MINING ACT OF 1995 AND E.O 79;
- F) STOP ALL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN INDIGENOUS TERRITORIES UNLESS AND UNTIL GENUINE FREE AND PRIOR CONSENT IS GIVEN BY THE COMMUNITY. GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR SHOULD RESPECT COMMUNITY PROTOCOLS.
- G) REPEAL THE 'NO HOME BIRTH' POLICY. INSTEAD, INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE, PRACTICES AND SKILLS RELATED TO GIVING BIRTH AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, ECT. SHOULD BE PROMOTED AND DEVELOPED;
- H) REDESIGN THE 4Ps, CCT AND OTHER SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS IN CONSULTATION WITH INDIGENOUS WOMEN AND THEIR COMMUNITIES TOWARDS AN APPROPRIATE, INDIGENOUS-SENSITIVE, RIGHTS BASED AND SUSTAINABLE RESULTS.
- I) ENSURE ACCESS TO BASIC SERVICES BY BRINGING SCHOOLS AND HEALTH SERVICES TO REMOTE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' COMMUNITIES INCLUDING HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AND TEACHERS. SUPPORT COMMUNITY INITIATIVES FOR SCHOOLS OF LIVING TRADITION AND STRENGTHEN THE INDIGENOUS CURRICULUM.
- J) REGULATE EMPLOYMENT/ CREATE JOBS WITH APPROPRIATE PAY AND SECURITY OF TENURE TO PREVENT MASS MIGRATION OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN EXPOSING THEM TO ABUSE AND VIOLENCE.
- K) SUPPORT AND PROMOTE CONSTRUCTIVE YOUTH PROGRAMS THAT CONTRIBUTES TO THEIR DEVELOPMENT AS IMPORTANT PLAYERS IN THEIR COMMUNITIES AND SOCIETY;
- L) PROMOTE AND PROTECT INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE, VALUES AND PRACTICES

- M) ENSURE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' ACCESS TO THE ALLOCATED 15% IP FUND THROUGH INFORMATION DISSEMINATION, TECHNICAL AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT;
 - N) ENSURE INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S ACCESS TO THE GAD BUDGET THROUGH EFFECTIVE INFORMATION DISSEMINATION, TECHNICAL AND LOGISTICAL SUPPORT;
2. FOR UN AGENCIES, NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND SUPPORT GROUPS :
- A) SUPPORT INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S INTIATIVES FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN RELATION TO ENHANCING KNOWLEDGE OF AND ACCESS TO RIGHTS, PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING INCLUDING THE FPIC PROCESS;
 - B) SUPPORT ALLIANCE BUILDING AND NETWORKING AMONG INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S GROUPS/COMMUNITIES;
 - C) SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN CONTINUING RESEARCH, DOCUMENTATION AND ORGANIZING AMONG INDIGENOUS WOMEN;
3. FOR US INDIGENOUS WOMEN, WE HAVE FURTHER AGREED TO TAKE ON THIS COMMON AGENDA :
- A) CONTINUING CAPACITY BUILDING WORK ON INDIGENOUS/HUMAN /WOMEN'S RIGHTS;
 - B) CONTINUING COMMUNITY EDUCATION, ORGANIZING, ALLIANCE BUILDING AND NETWORKING AMONG INDIGENOUS/WOMEN ;
 - C) DEVELOP THE USE OF MULTI-MEDIA AND OTHER FORMS OF COMMUNICATION TO EXPOSE ISSUES AND CONCERNS OF INDIGENOUS WOMEN;
 - D) DOCUMENTATION AND MONITORING OF VAW IN OUR COMMUNITIES;
 - E) SUPPORT LOCAL INITITATIVES TO ACCESS THE 15% IP FUND, THE GAD FUNDS AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES/MECHANSIMS AVAILABLE FOR INDIGENOUS WOMEN;
 - F) STRENGTHEN INDIGENOUS WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE FPIC AND INDIGENOUS DECISION- MAKING PROCESS;

G) REITERATE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WORKING WITH MEN TO
ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ;