

Statement on the occasion of the Philippine Human Rights Week

Sunday 2 December 2007, by [PAHRA](#) (Date first published: 30 November 2007).

On the occasion of the Philippine Human Rights Week

December 3-10, 2007

One fundamental rule in modern society is the recognition, promotion, protection and fulfillment of Human Rights. It emphasizes the centrality of all human beings and the value of human dignity as paramount concern in the pursuit for development. Today, we are not only celebrating the Philippine Human Rights Week but the commencement highlighting the year-round international campaigns on the embodiment of this fundamental rule — the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR).

Since December of 1948, various international instruments and mechanisms have been instituted according universal safeguards against infringements of human rights. Yet, until today, blatant and gruesome violations to human rights are continually perpetuated and remain unaddressed by no less than governments in many countries particularly in our society. In fact, the continuing incidence of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearance, torture, internal displacement, illegal arrests and detentions, among others, haunt both civil society and the international community as to the sincerity of our present leaders. As the UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial Executions, Philip Alston reported, “there is a passivity (among government officials), bordering on an abdication of responsibility, which affects the way in which key institutions and actors approach their responsibilities in relation to such human rights concerns.”

Human rights violations occur as a consequence of government’s campaigns waged against all “perceived enemies of the state” whether individual, opposition leaders or communities. They are also a result of blind adherence to group’s causes that aim at gratifying corporate intentions for profit or politico-military objectives to capture power at the expense of sacrificing innocent civilians. They emanate from greed of power that corrupts leaders to do everything to control and subjugate its citizens. They are actions that undermine the rule of law and democratic processes long fought by our ancestors that we may live in honor and dignity. They are acts perpetuating impunity like the Executive Order 197 instructing the military for safeguards against disclosure of military secrets even as they maybe involved in the commission of human rights violations.

There are however, glimmers of hope amid our present condition. We see shades of judicial activism in the Supreme Court “to prevent [us from] losing eye contact with [the] killings and disappearances, revive [our] righteous indignation and spur [a] united search for the elusive solution to this pestering problem.” We witness the approval of the Rule on the Writ of Amparo, providing remedy against threats to life, liberty and security by an unlawful act or omission of a public official or employee, or of a private individual or entity. Civil society untiringly engaged in advocacies and dialogues for the protection, promotion and fulfillment of all human rights for all.

In the light of celebrating the International Day and the National Week of Human Rights, we call on the government to honor its obligation and avowed commitments to human rights! We call on her to

uphold the rule of law; make all necessary efforts to end impunity and serve justice to victims of human rights violations. We demand that this government would cease to become the very obstacle to a human rights regime. We demand a stop to State terrorism!

PHILIPPINE ALLIANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES

Human Rights Week 2007

Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA)

#53-B Maliksi Street, Brgy. Pinyahan, Quezon City, PHILIPPINES

Tel. # (632)436-2633; Fax # (632)433-1714

e-mail address: pahra philrights.org

URL: www.philippinehumanrights.org