

Press Release

Mindanao (Philippines): Workers rights must be protected in a better Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL)

Sunday 26 April 2015, by [Partido Manggagawa](#) (Date first published: 31 March 2015).

With calls mounting for a revision of the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL), the labor group Partido Manggagawa (PM) also called for amending the draft so that workers rights are better protected. "Along with our support for peace rather than war in Mindanao, we demand that the rights of workers, whether Moro, Christian or indigenous, in the Bangsamoro territory be respected and enhanced, and that these freedoms must be codified in the BBL," asserted Renato Magtubo, PM national chair.

He clarified that "Specifically we call for amending the draft provision in Article IX, Section 9 stating that 'The Bangsamoro government shall guarantee all the fundamental rights of all workers to self-organization, collective bargaining and negotiations, and peaceful concerted activities, including the right to strike, in accordance with law to be passed by Parliament.' Making labor rights subject to laws to be enacted by the Bangsamoro parliament opens a loophole to diminish workers' freedoms. This is a real threat since we know there is intense lobby from employers groups to degrade labor rights, among them security of tenure so as to promote contractualization in the Bangsamoro territory."

PM is aware that foreign capital such as American and Malaysian investors are partnering with Filipino business for prospects in mining exploration and agricultural plantations in the Bangsamoro territory. "Capitalists, whether foreign or domestic, should not monopolize the benefits of the peace dividend on the backs of sacrificing the rights of workers, whether Moro, Christian or indigenous," argued Magtubo.

PM also added its support for calls from indigenous groups in the proposed Bangsamoro territory for the recognition of the rights of the Lumad and the full inclusion of provisions of the Indigenous People's Rights Act into the BBL. Indigenous peoples such as the Teduray, Lambangian, Dulangan-Manobo and Erumanen ne Menuvu live in the areas to be absorbed in the Bangsamoro.

Amidst the outcry over the Mamasapano incident, PM joined other groups in appealing for negotiating a peace settlement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and opposed cries for all-out war. "Peace and development in Mindanao is in the interest of the working class and indigenous peoples. But social justice must accompany social progress thus our call for protecting workers and indigenous rights in the Bangsamoro," Magtubo elaborated.

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* "Workers rights must be protected in a better BBL". March 31, 2015:
<http://www.partidongmanggagawa2001.blogspot.fr>