

# **Philippine President Duterte's First 100 Days in Office - Citizens, stand for life, rights, and livelihood!**

Tuesday 11 October 2016, by [De GUZMAN CASTILLO Galileo](#), [Freedom from Debt Coalition](#), [iDefend](#) (Date first published: 11 October 2016).

## **iDEFEND marks Philippine President Duterte's First 100 Days in Office with March, Candle Lighting, and Ringing of Bells.**



Led by the coalition In Defense of Human Rights and Dignity Movement or iDEFEND, about 200 activists, human rights defenders, individuals from various people's organizations, labor groups, civil society, and social movements marched from Tomas Morato to St. Joseph's College in Quezon City to mark President Rodrigo Duterte's 100 days in office. The main call for the action, held October 8, was "*Mamamayan, manindigan para sa buhay, karapatan, at kabuhayan.*" (Citizens, stand for life, rights, and livelihood) Members of the academe, religious groups, and media also participated in the human chain formed by the people at St. Joseph's College.

Shouts of "*Kabuhayan, hindi patayan!*" (Livelihood, not killings!) filled the air to call attention to the continuing extrajudicial killings happening under Duterte's war on drugs. There were also candle lighting and ringing of bells.

### **Below are some excerpts from iDEFEND's statement:**

More than 3,500 people have died under Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte and his campaign against crime and drugs. This translates to 38 people being killed—vigilante-style or under 'legitimate' police operations—every day in the first three months of his administration.

Duterte's declaration of 'state of national emergency' is baseless—with Duterte's police chief even reporting that crime rate in the country went down and there is a ceasefire with the armed groups. But even if there is no clear basis for the 'state of lawless violence', Duterte ordered the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to join the Philippine National Police (PNP) in eradicating crime and illegal drugs.

Human rights defenders are being killed—labor leaders, peasant leaders, environmental rights defenders, indigenous peoples, even those who are not directly linked to illegal drugs like innocent children are being killed. Duterte's war on crime and drugs created a climate of violence,

extrajudicial killings, and summary executions, all at the expense of human rights, due process, and rule of law.

There is a deeper reason why illegal drugs are widespread and crime rate is high. These are caused by the lack of opportunity to have a life with dignity --- one with food on the table, clothes, housing, access to education, decent work, cheap medicines and social services. Poverty incidence and inequality in the Philippines remains high.

Genuine and continuous change will only be attained through a government that recognizes, supports, and pushes for all human rights for all people.

**Galileo de Guzman Castillo**

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## **Freedom from Debt Coalition**

Dear Partners,

Good day! On the occasion of President Duterte's First 100 days, Duterte have waged a war against illegal drugs that has left 3,500 suspects dead. This state sponsored violence is on a truly shocking scale. The declaration of "state of lawless violence" have added to the killings. Mass leaders campaigning against coal plants have been killed too.

The Duterte administration should not continue coal plant projects in the pipeline and instead shift to renewable energy. There are studies that those living near the coal plants have premature deaths. Furthermore, coal plants have contributed to climate change. And the Philippine area is one of the "manufacturer" of supertyphoons.

Workers benefits remains the same as contractualization continues — oppressive. The tax reform package proposal of the government may not be beneficial to workers too. As it proposes to reduce the income tax, yet the excise tax may be increased.

FDC joined iDefend's call for the protection of life and human rights. Church people, NGOs, Peoples Orgs, the youth, and individuals marched from Tomas Morato to St. Joseph's College in Quezon City, to demand:

- end the killings
- no to coal plants and mining
- "due process" not abuse
- to uphold peoples' democratic rights
- repeal automatic appropriations law; call for a debt audit
- to increase national budget for social services
- end contractualization
- enact pro-poor tax reforms
- to continue peace talks

Candles were lighted, bells were rung as a prayer was read for the above mentioned demands.

Anabel Julian

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**P.S.**

\* Photos by Galileo de Guzman Castillo. To see the complete photo album of the iDEFEND mobilization, please go to: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/focussouth/albums/72157673742106350>