



Mindanao Indigenous Peoples Council of Elders and Leaders (MIPCEL)
And
Mindanao Indigenous Peoples Youth Organization (MIPYO)



February 12, 2021
Davao QRT Office

Joint Statement of Mindanao Indigenous Peoples Council of Elders and Leaders (MIPCEL) and Mindanao Indigenous Peoples Youth Organization (MIPYO) on the International Day of Condemnation on the use of Child Warriors in Armed Conflict

We are not talking here of numbers nor of names amongst the list of names and or faces in the gallery. We are talking here of our children, brothers and sisters. We are talking here of Awing Apoga, Asenad Bago, Manuel Salangani and more youth from Talaingod, of Magdalena Gano of San Miguel, Surigao del Sur and of Jocelyn Wata of Arakan, North Cotabato. We are talking here of the stories of IP pupils brought to the University of the Philippines (UP) in Manila like Michael Dondoyano and Lance Kuyan.

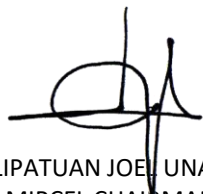
These are real people, IP youth from the different tribes in Mindanao with one story to tell. Yes at the young age of 10 and 12 years old they had been recruited to the NPA, had bear arms against government forces, wounded and scarred, seen relatives being killed by their own comrades. They had been witness on the horror of wars. A hundred more students as young as 5 to 7 years old being taught that taking arms against the government is the rightful thing to do. Systematically and methodically radicalized in Lumad schools established by the CPP NPA NDF in all regions in Mindanao. Taught that the government is the demon and target of their anger. Anger being molded by forcing these youth to join rallies, lakbayans and immersions, until they are angry enough to join the NPA units. Angry enough to bear arms at an early age. Pawns of the CPP NPA NDF in their so called Peoples War, sacrificial lambs in their greed to seize political power.

We condemn with the rest of the world for the CPP NPA NDF terrorist group exploitation of our children, brothers and sisters and turning them into Child Warriors. We condemn the adults pretending to be human rights defenders that had contributed in this system of exploitation like Representative Eufemia Culiamat, whose daughter fell victim of this systematic recruitment and still believing that it is the right of the children to enter the path of violence. She is a failure as a mother and as a leader. She for a long time had exchange tradition with revolution. The tribe's elders and leaders are promoter of peace that's the essence why the community choose leaders.

We also condemn the strongest possible the terroristic and cowardly act of the CPP NPA NDF, they who cannot bring their fight to their own home and territories and used our ancestral domains as their battlegrounds. Bringing the cursed of death and destruction into our communities and our lives. Cursed that suffered our future, our children.

So we call on the government and International institution to help us and inform the world so that they will know and help bring justice to our children and our people. So they will not be victimized into a deception that will make them unconscious supporters of these terrorist organizations.

Signed: February 12, 2021 at Davao QRT Office, Dona Vicenta, Bajada, Davao City.



LIPATUAN JOEL UNAD
MIPCEL CHAIRMAN

Signed by:



ALBIN JAMES BINAYAO
MIPYO CHAIRMAN

Jocelyn Wata

Asenad Bago

Magdalina Iligan

