

36th Session of the Human Rights Council
Agenda Item 6: UPR Adoption – Philippines
Oral Statement of Franciscans International
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Thank you Mr President,

Franciscans International, Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines and Task Force Detainees of the Philippines would like to express our concerns on the serious and deteriorating human rights situation in the Philippines.

While UPR is expected to be a constructive engagement of state in improving their human rights situation of the state under review, the Government of Philippines fails to accept key recommendations such as cases of extrajudicial executions in the frame of government's policy on war on drugs. The government also rejects to collaborate with other UN mechanism, especially the UN Special Procedures on Extrajudicial, summary and arbitrary execution for a country visit.

Mr President,

We express our grave concern on violent policies of the current government against its own people. Now we are experiencing the return of Presidential dictatorship and tyrannical ways of leadership, which we thought ended 31 years ago. Due process and the rule of law are set aside for the poor and powerless while politicians charged with plunder are set free on bail. The war on drugs policies has indifferently killed more than 12 000 Filipinos, including innocent children. Most of victims are those coming from the poor and marginalized background.

We also observe the obsession of the government to apply Martial Law, as currently happens in Mindanao, which leads to more than 300'000 people being internally displaced.

We, human rights defenders, continue to receive threats from the government, as shown by the public statement of the President in 16 August, who stated that those working on human rights should be shot by the police for "obstructing justice". Recently, Bishop Pablo Virgilio David was threatened with an obstruction of justice charge by no less than the Department of Justice Secretary for giving sanctuary to witnesses in the Kian Loyd delos Santos killing.

Finally, we would like to strongly support the recent call from the Conference of the Catholic Bishop Conference of the Philippines, "In the name of God, stop the killings! May the justice of God come upon those responsible for the killings!" Justice and human rights have to be restored in the Philippines. I thank you.