



Canadian Ecumenical
Justice Initiatives /
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la justice

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Le fonds du Primat pour le secours
et le développement mondial

310 Dupont Street, Suite 200
Toronto Ontario
Canada M5R 1V9
tel: 416.463.5312
toll-free: 1.877.403.8933
www.kairoscanada.org

November 7, 2019

H.E. Rodrigo Duterte
President of the Republic
Malacanan Palace
J.P. Laurel St.
San Miguel, Manila
Philippines

Dear Mr. President,

KAIROS is an ecumenical coalition of Indigenous peoples, settlers and newcomers in Canada working with people of faith and conscience all over the world for ecological justice and human rights. We have a long history of working with partners in the Philippines for human rights and just peace.

Today we learned that our partner in the Philippines, the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), was included on a list of “front organizations of local communist terrorist groups” by the Department of National Defense on November 5, 2019. This list, which includes other humanitarian organisations such as Oxfam, is part of a broader practice of red-tagging, a practice through which the government of the Philippines has identified its political opponents, organizations and individuals, as supporting the New People’s Army affiliated with the communist insurgency.

The consequences of red-tagging are dire. Over the last year, activists who have been red-tagged have been subjected to arbitrary arrests and killings.

The NCCP is a fellowship of churches following God’s call to serve the people of the Philippines. Their programs are focused on service, ecumenical education, and Christian unity. In these efforts they have worked with many churches and communities, as well as local government units and government line agencies. The NCCP is a member of the World Council of Churches, the Christian Conference of Asia, and the ACT Alliance. KAIROS has a long history of partnership with NCCP. We have worked in solidarity on the delivery of our Women of Courage program and continue to support NCCP’s ongoing efforts to defend human rights in the Philippines.

We join the NCCP in decrying their inclusion on this list of communist terrorist groups. We recognize the clear threat that is now posed to the NCCP staff, member churches, associate members, other ecumenical partners and the communities they accompany. In addition, the red-tagging will delay, or even prevent, the delivery of much-needed services to marginalized communities in the midst of disasters.

We call on the government of the Philippines to stop its crackdown on civil society organisations, especially arbitrary detentions and extra-judicial killings. We also demand that they end the practice of red-tagging which threatens lives and is contributing to a significant decline in the democratic space for a healthy civil society in the Philippines.

Further, we call on the Government of Canada through the Minister of Foreign Affairs to work with their counterparts in the Philippines to ensure the ongoing protection of human rights.

We stand firm in solidarity, action and prayer with the NCCP and continue to support their vital work and voice for inclusive and just peace in the Philippines.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jennifer Henry', is positioned above the typed name.

Jennifer Henry

Executive Director

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives

