



**UN Human Rights Council
21st session
Item 6**

**Universal Periodic Review - the Philippines
Statement delivered by Marie Hilao-Enriquez, Karapatan**

I am Marie Hilao-Enriquez, Chairperson of Karapatan, a human rights CSO in the Philippines and a partner of CIVICUS, World Alliance for Citizen Participation, whom we greatly thank for allowing us to speak on their behalf.

Madame President, I also thank the members of the Working Group on the just-concluded second cycle of the Philippines Universal Periodic Review in May of this year. I especially take note of Switzerland's recommendation to render compensation to the victims of martial law.

It is a continuous and worrying concern that extra-judicial executions, disappearances and other human rights violations persist under a so-called democracy and even under the so-called righteous path taken by our new President 'Noy' Aquino. Under the two-year administration of the present dispensation, from July 2010 to June 2012, Karapatan has documented 99 victims of extrajudicial executions. Only a week ago, another indigenous peoples leader was reportedly killed by paramilitary groups under the control of the Philippine military in Agusan del Sur, Mindanao. Also this month, a son of another indigenous leader in Mindanao was killed and the leader wounded in an ambush.

Mme President, 21 September is the 40th anniversary of the declaration of martial law in our land. We hope that the lessons of that dark period will not be lost on all of us, especially on our President, as his family was also a victim of that dark era. We call on this august body to continue monitoring the human rights situation, as killings, enforced disappearances, other violations and impunity, which are all reminiscent of martial law, persist to this day. We note that these violations occurring today are engendered by the same policies implemented by the previous Arroyo administration and now being implemented by President Aquino. Notably, we urge this Council, as we urged past ones, to compel our government to review its internal security plan, a euphemism for the counter-insurgency programme and now called Oplan Bayanihan, which has enabled these violations. It is also disappointing that justice remains elusive to past and present victims of human rights violations; perpetrators like former Major General Jovito Palparan, Jr and his cohorts are still free and unpunished, despite the issue of arrest warrants.

Through this Council, we also urge our government to study well and consider the plight of the majority poor in our land, especially indigenous peoples, considering that this is the fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples, in its economic policies and its ventures into mining, public partnership projects and other government undertakings that it considers to contribute to the nation's economic uplifting, but which bring forth more sufferings to our poor and neglected sectors. The conflict in our land will continue if the grievances of our people remain unaddressed.

Thank you, Madame President.