

OBSERVER

A JOURNAL ON THREATENED HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

ISSN: 2192-3353



© Benedikt Kratz

POLITICAL CHANGES IN THE PHILIPPINES - CHANGES IN HUMAN RIGHTS?

CONTENTS

Editorial	3
Political Changes – Changes in Human Rights Policies? A Record	4
Keeping up the Momentum: Human Rights Policy in the Philippines	7
Towards Ending Impunity in the Philippines – The Role of Civic Action & Judicial Processes	8
Aquino Administration’s Human Rights Direction: Traversing a Straight Path?	12
Civilian Protection Component of the International Monitoring Team	16
High Expectations of President Aquino – The View of Local HRDs	18
Fruitless Actions – How State-Agencies Protect HRD in Areas with “Landlord Resistance”	22
Statement of Assets, Liabilities, and Net Worth Cutting Down Corruption in Public Office?	25
Witness Protection – Remaining Challenge or Unmet Promise?	26
IPON Evaluates Red-Baiting	28
The Question of Red Baiting in the Philippines: More than Obstruction of NGO Work	29
Ikaw na ba, Ginoong Aquino? – Are you the man, Mr. Aquino?	30
Slum Fires in Manila – Evolving Conflict between Urban Poor and Private Property Owners	34
IPON Starts its Presence in Northern Mindanao	35
From Marcos to Another Aquino: Impunity, Accountability and Transnational Justice	36
IPON and the Instrument of Human Rights Observation	39
Aims and Scope	39

OBSERVER:

A JOURNAL ON THREATENED HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS
IN THE PHILIPPINES

EDITORIAL BOARD

Carmen Albers, Lukas Bauer, Stephanie Berry, Asja Caspari (Layout),
Luca Martin, Friederike Mayer, Martin Nambula, Johannes Richter,
Patrick Seeger, Johannes Tonn, Ester Vogt, Marin Wende.

EDITOR

I.P.O.N. International Peace Observers Network e.V.
Project Office
Nernstweg 32, 22765 Hamburg, Germany
www.ipon-philippines.info
editor@ipon-philippines.info
+49 [0] 402 5491947

OFFICE ADDRESS IN THE PHILIPPINES

IPON, c/o Cyrus A. Ellorin,
Ruiz Street, Sumpung
8700 Malaybalay
observer.mindanao@ipon-philippines.org
phone: +63 [0] 9393205776

68 Florida Street, Brgy. Villamonte
6100 Bacolod City
observer.negros@ipon-philippines.org
phone: +63 [0] 34 7040185

ISSN 2192-3353

PRICE SINGLE ISSUE 3.00 EURO

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

OBSERVER: is published biannual.

DONATIONS & MEMBERSHIP

International Peace Observers Network e.V.

PURPOSE: „Observer“

Registered non-profit institution; donation receipt and supporting
membership possible.

SWIFT/BIC-CODE: GENODEM1GLS

IBAN: DE40430609671119085800

BANK: GLS Gemeinschaftsbank, Germany


EDITORIAL DEADLINE

vol. 3, number 2: 15 October 2011

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Stiftung Nord-Süd-Brücken aus Mitteln des BMZ (foundation); not
responsible for the content.



 This work is licenced under the Creative Commons Attribution
3.0 Germany Licence. To view a copy of this licence, visit
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/de/>.
Reprints are welcome, please send us two copies.

EDITORIAL

After the election victory of Benigno Aquino, who had been supported by the “yellow army”, the new president appointed his “rainbow cabinet”. At that time, little attention was paid to the human rights policy of extrajudicial killings (EJK) and enforced disappearances (ED). During the presidency of Arroyo, human rights were treated with contempt, and EJK and ED increased tremendously, comparable to the (terror) regime of dictator Marcos. During the election campaign, the new president Aquino promised substantial improvements in the respect of human rights, and announced that he would follow in his mother’s footsteps, who had brought the dictatorship, a dark chapter for human rights, to an end. One year in office, the president now has to prove that his actions are according to the promises made. Is he really willing to put an end to the horrible time of Arroyo? Resuming peace negotiations with the communist guerrilla, and replacing the “counter-insurgency programme” with a new programme more peaceful in wording, is simply not enough. More serious steps are necessary to improve the judicial system: How will he prevent criminalisation of human rights defenders (HRDs) (cf. Observer vol. 1 no. 1) and impunity? Will there be any repercussions for Jovito Palparan, general under Arroyo, and will his alleged EJK and ED ever be addressed with a lawsuit? How will the Aquino administration ensure that human rights are complied with throughout all state institutions at all administrative levels – particularly within the police, military and the judicial system?

This volume will illustrate the change of power to a newly elected national administration and reflect on political changes in human rights at the macro as well as the micro-level. In the introductory article,



© ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES | Bayanihan - is this the way to shoulder Philippines challenges?

the authors address human rights injustices on the national level. The German Federal Government Commissioner for Human Rights Markus Löning states his impressions of the judicial system when he visited the Philippines early this year. The subsequent article discusses the condition of the judicial system with an emphasis on impunity. It avails itself of an example of an actual murder case of a representative of the civil society. The German Friedrich Naumann Foundation compares the Aquino administration with its previous government. Within the Philippine domestic security policy, the nonviolent peaceforce for the peace process in Mindanao will be discussed. The following three articles specialise on the micro level, namely, the specific shortcomings of the protection

programme for witnesses and their family members to avoid EJK. Not only the local needs and concerns with regards to the new presidency will be expressed and elaborated in an interview with a HRD, but also the hopes for improving the human rights situation. The basis of this will be the constructive interaction of national, regional and local authorities as a means to solve human rights related problems of local HRD groups in Negros Oriental in conflict with recalcitrant landowners. Carranza presents the expectations and possibilities of a truth commission, as an important tool to rehabilitate the human rights violations under the Arroyo regime. To enhance this volume, the article by Hammann highlights the election pledges of the presidential candidates for human rights during the previous election campaign. In the next issue one particular aspect of criminalisation of HRD will be discussed – the so called red-baiting – that is constantly committed by state authorities. ■

CALL FOR ARTICLES

Call for articles until the 15th October 2011 (editorial deadline). Welcome are articles with a systematic analysis on the national and local level.