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Philippines

Mindanao: Statement regarding the killing of Comrade Zandro/Tripon

- News from around the world -

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Statement of the Executive Committee of the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Mangagawa – Mindanao (RPM-M) and the National Operational Command of the Revolutionary People’s Army (NOC-RPA) regarding the killing of Comrade Zandro/Tripon.

While the entire country, especially those affected by typhoon Odette, is still in a horrible situation, and the people are still in shock and grappling to recover from the extent of the devastation, not to mention the hardships brought about by the pandemic and the looming threat of the Omicron variant, the fascist State elements of the Philippine National Police (Provincial and Regional Mobile groups, and the SWAT) under the command of CPIU LDNPPO PLTCOL Arnold T. Lao, along with the 52nd MECH Company of the 5th Mechanized BN of the Armed Forces of the Philippines under the command of Capt. Mark Anthony Rufino, launched a treacherous ceasefire-violation military action against Comrade Zandro/Tripon in the dawn of December 18, December 2021 at Purok 3, Pulang Yuta, Kapatagan, Lanao del Norte. This attack was made a few days before the Christian communities, one of which is the village of Comrade Zandro/Tripon, would celebrate Christmas Day in the midst of the effects of the typhoon and the Pandemic.

The large number of barbaric state forces that was deployed and mobilized manifests their clear intent to kill – not to capture – the lone comrade Zandro/Tripon. This is reminiscent of what the State did against Comrade Ruben of the RPA and other revolutionaries from other political blocks. The huge amount of resources and human power that was employed to kill our Comrade could have been put to better use in responding to the more pressing needs of the people ravaged by the Typhoon and suffering from the pandemic. However, we know that they are compelled to pursue these evil acts to justify the immorally huge budget of the National task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC). It is crystal clear that they are scrambling for accomplishments in this part of the country to ask for more budget in 2022.

The killing of Zandro/Tripon manifests the evil policy of this regime against those who dare stand and fight alongside the poor and the oppressed. And this policy is mainly implemented through the NTF-ELCAC. This further shows the AFP’s desperate efforts to present accomplishments to justify its expenses and lobby for more funds.

It should be mentioned that the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa – Mindanao, along with its armed component the Revolutionary Peoples’ Army (RPA) observed the terms of the Ceasefire Agreement with the Philippine Government which was formally signed in 2005. The killing of Comrade Zandro/Tripon is not only a gross violation of the signed agreement. Moreover, it further shows the utter insincerity of the present regime to honor and uphold the Government’s commitments to revolutionary forces.

Since the beginning of this regime, the state forces have been trying to hunt and kill RPA cadres like Comrade Zandro/Tripon. The RPA elements patiently evade numerous military operations in its areas of operations to spare the Communities from evacuation and dislocation, comply with its end of the ceasefire agreement and help preserve the gains of the Peace Talks towards building long-lasting peace in the communities. Comrade Zandro/Tripon himself relocated in several instances to avoid engagement with the State forces. Despite these, and while suffering from various health problems like a lingering cataract, Zandro/Tripon still continued to religiously perform his vocation of helping his community of small farmers in their everyday lives, until that fateful dawn. For decades, since his youthful years, Zandro/Tripon has been serving the poor communities and the oppressed peoples in different provinces where he was deployed.

If the fascist regime believes that the killing of Comrade Zandro/Tripon, a veteran revolutionary, will weaken the

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morale of his comrades, then they are mistaken. The death of an amiable and well-loved comrade and community leader only fuels the fire in each and every element of the RPA. In fact, the incident only highlights the evil and barbaric character of this regime towards the poor and the oppressed who dared to fight for what is right. It thus helps to clarify the basis for the continuance of the Socialist Revolution, and the need to strengthen the movement to fight with the masses and the oppressed.

The fascist will surely try to blacken the memories of Zandro/Tripon, and conveniently label him as a criminal or even a terrorist. But the people he helped and served will forever speak the truth about him, and no amount of disinformation will destroy the revolutionary service that he rendered most of his adult life.

Once again, the AFP and the PNP is behaving like criminals and assassins. The RPMM will try its best to help bring all State-made extra-judicial killings, such as this one, to all forums up to the international level.

The entire membership of the RPMM and the elements of the RPA, including its allied forces, extends its condolences to the bereaved family of Comrade Zandro/Tripon. His life and services given to the movement and to the people will never be in vain.

We call for an independent investigation of the Military Operation in Pulang Yuta, Kapatagan, Lanao del Norte!

Stop the militarization of the countryside, the communities, factories, and government agencies! Junk the Terror Law! Scrap EO 70! Abolish NTF-ELCAC!

Uphold and continue the peace talks with the revolutionary forces, with the peoples' active participation!

We give the highest recognition and salute to our martyr Comrade Zandro/Tripon!

ANZELMO GUERERRO

Executive Committee
RPMM

RAUL FAUSTINO

National Operational Command
RPA

December 20, 2021

Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa – Mindanao (RPM-M)

Revolutionary Peoples' Army (RPA)

Mindanao, Philippines

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