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Contribution of NDF, Philippines

PHILIPPINES COUNTRY REPORT by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines

The Ruling System in Crisis

In the Philippines, the rapacity of US imperialism and the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords has rendered the semicolonial and semifeudal system hopelessly rotten. All Philippine products for export are in oversupply in the global market. At the same time, foreign consumer goods swamp the local market. Even the local production of staple food is now squeezed by imports. The foreign exchange income of the overseas contract workers is decreasing and is being used for nonproductive purposes.

The economy has plummeted. The budgetary and trade deficits are ceaselessly increasing. The sources of foreign credit have all dried up. In recent years the Macapagal Arroyo regime has borrowed heavily from the US capital market. The foreign debt is now USD 57 billion, up from USD 52 billion in 2001. But the current rating of the Philippines as an untrustworthy debtor is starting to block this source. The financial crisis of the domestic ruling system is daily worsening, as indicated by the rapid fall in the value of the peso.

The regime is unbridled in aggravating the economic and financial crisis as it rabidly follows the dictates of US imperialism, violates national sovereignty and auctions off the national patrimony. The demand for land reform and national industrialization is ignored. The regime offers no way out of the social and economic crisis.

The US takes advantage of this crisis and makes political and military impositions under the pretext of anti-terrorism and containing China and North Korea.

There is grave discontent among the toiling masses of workers and peasants. They are afflicted by rising unemployment, reduced incomes, soaring prices of basic commodities and the devaluation of the peso. They are victimized by the coercive apparatuses of the state. Thus, they are engaged in widening mass protests and strikes and are intensely desirous of armed revolution. Even the middle social strata are increasingly impoverished and are disgusted with the ruling system. The broad masses of the people are thoroughly disgusted by the puppetry, corruption, mendacity and brutality of the Macapagal Arroyo regime.

Elections and Peace Negotiations

The various factions of the local exploiting classes are now engaged in an electoral contest, from the presidential level downwards. The people cannot expect any significant change for the better from the forthcoming May elections. On the whole, the elections will put into office the political representatives of the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class.

However, at the national and lower levels of the electoral contest, it is possible to work out alliances for the benefit of the people and their struggle. The relatively more enlightened political leaders know the

strength of the revolutionary mass base and are therefore interested in cooperation and mutual support. Several progressive parties and candidates outside of the major parties of the exploiting classes are vying for a few seats in the Lower House of Congress. Despite the enemy campaign of assassinations and slander against them and the lack of campaign funds, they are acknowledged as capable of getting at least 16% of the votes. However, their strength is not sufficient to cause an immediate significant change for the better within the system. They are even in danger of being cheated of the votes that they get from the people. What they can do with certainty is to expose the rottenness of the system and defend the national and democratic rights of the people.

The Macapagal-Arroyo regime has agreed to resume the formal peace talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) within the framework of The Hague Joint Declaration and subsequent agreements on safety and immunity guarantees, on reciprocal working committees and on respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. It is clear in the Oslo Joint Statements that the GRP and NDFP can resume the formal talks because they agree on the principles and premises for undertaking the pertinent effective measures and calling on the US and other governments to remove the names of the CPP, NPA and the NDFP chief political consultant from the list of "terrorists."

It is timely and urgent for the negotiating parties to operationalize the Joint Monitoring Committee, as required by the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law, in the face of rampant human rights violations, and to accelerate the negotiation and agreement on social and economic reforms in the face of the rapidly worsening economic and social crisis.

The peace negotiations provide the opportunity for the NDFP and all the revolutionary forces and people to put forward the basic reforms needed to realize national liberation and democracy. The GRP and NDFP can move towards an alliance and truce through the peace negotiations only if the GRP can join the NDFP in a common patriotic stand against the interventionism and interferences of US imperialism in Philippine affairs in general and in the peace negotiations in particular and, if the prospective comprehensive agreements on social and economic reforms and political and constitutional reforms can stop US economic and political domination over the Philippines.

US imperialism is the No. 1 enemy of the Filipino people. It is the chief obstacle to the attainment of national liberation and democracy in the Philippines. It is the principal impediment to a just and lasting peace. The US imperialists are using the pretext of waging war on "terrorism" in order to intimidate the people. They are using the "terrorist" listing in order to blackmail the NDFP and sabotage the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations.

But US imperialism is actually weakening as it overreaches and seeks to impose its hegemony over the entire people of the world. Its deployable forces are conspicuously being exhausted as they are bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan. Its military presence in 140 countries offends so many peoples of the world. The US has plunged itself further into an unprecedented economic and financial crisis by pouring funds into contracts for military production, by building and using the department of homeland security for spying on and scaring the American people and by unleashing wars of aggression and intervention. It is whipping up war hysteria and fascism by pushing the USA Patriot Act as a model of "anti-terrorist" legislation and decree-making by the executive.

Right now, the US is serializing its military presence in the Philippines and laying the ground for reestablishing its military bases by using several pretexts, such as training exercises, war on terrorism, civic action, humanitarian work, and so on. But in time to come, the US will have increasing difficulties in giving economic and financial accommodations to its puppet regime in the Philippines in exchange for extraterritorial privileges. Even the political representatives of the exploiting classes are bound to become interested in gaining room for maneuver through good relations with ASEAN, China, Japan and Europe rather than with the US in the main.

But far more important to the Filipino people than any consideration of what the Philippine reactionary government can do in any direction is the continuity and advance of the new democratic revolution through protracted people's war and other forms of mass struggles against US imperialism and the puppet reactionaries. The Filipino people can best uphold, defend and promote their own national and democratic rights and interests through the advance of the armed revolution from one stage to another.

Growth and advance of the New People's Army

Under the absolute leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines, the New People's Army has benefited comprehensively and profoundly from the critical and creative achievements of the Second Great Rectification Movement. It has learned valuable lessons from its long and rich revolutionary experience. It has acquired strength significant enough for the reactionary state to recognize it as its main protagonist.

To oppose the semicolonial and semifeudal character of the domestic ruling system, the Party has correctly declared the general line of national democratic revolution, under working class leadership and through protracted people's war. Revolutionary politics is in command of the NPA. As a people's army, it serves the people. It arouses, organizes and mobilizes them. It has built 128 guerrilla fronts all over the country. These involve millions of people and cover significant portions of most provinces and municipalities of the Philippines.

In the current stage of strategic defensive, it strives to defeat the enemy by launching tactical offensives. In this regard, it has waged intensive and extensive guerrilla warfare on the basis of an ever widening and deepening mass base in order to advance from the early to the middle phase of the strategic defensive.

The NPA is now in the process of developing armed units at the regional level. These are mobile and flexible, in relative concentration and closely linked to the masses. They secure the regional Party leadership and regional army command and are capable of frequently deploying a strike force in coordination with the units of one or more guerrilla fronts to concentrate a superior force for annihilating weak parts of the enemy force. They play a key role in the accelerated seizure of weapons from the enemy and in the maturation of the middle phase of the strategic defensive.

Relative to the regional army unit of the NPA as the regional center of gravity, the guerrilla fronts are the relatively dispersed base of the NPA in a particular region. But every guerrilla front retains its previous internal structure, with a center of gravity and dispersed units. The platoon as main guerrilla unit is based in the guerrilla base and the guerrilla squads as secondary guerrilla units are based in the guerrilla zones. The guerrilla front retains its decentralized operations and launches offensives that it can win. It can also be integrated into bigger operational plans undertaken by the regional force.

Against U.S. intervention and aggression

The US is escalating military intervention and offensive operations in the Philippines. Its ultimate objective is to station its troops permanently and reestablish its military bases in the Philippines in order to intimidate and "contain" other countries in East Asia. As of now, US combat troops are being deployed in the battlefield and are asking for a fight with the NPA.

The US must be warned to cease and desist from fielding US military forces and violating the national sovereignty of the Filipino people and territorial integrity of the Philippines. Under international law, the character of the war between the GRP and the people's revolutionary government (represented by the NDFP) is a civil war even as the

GRP depends heavily on US indoctrination, training and equipment. However, in the face of current US military intervention, the Filipino people and all revolutionary forces should be ready to fight against a US war of aggression of whatever scale at any time. The aggression can occur at anytime when the US unilaterally believes that it can easily wipe out the NPA or decides that the puppet armed forces are no longer capable of keeping the local ruling system.

In the final analysis, US imperialism is the most brutal protector of the domestic ruling system of big compradors and landlords. We must either render ineffective US imperialism by defeating its reactionary puppets through civil war or defeat the war of aggression that US imperialism is likely to launch.

The spread and intensification of the people's revolutionary struggles against US imperialism on a global scale can remove or reduce its ability to launch aggression against the Filipino people. We must act in concert with the people of the world. We must contribute the most that we can to the global anti-imperialist struggle. Then we can also hope for the best from the revolutionary struggles of other peoples. Humanity must be freed from the scourge of imperialism and reaction in order to make a new and better world of greater freedom and all-round progress. **AB**