

LIBERATION INTERNATIONAL

Publication of the International Information Office of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines

May - June 2007

Fraud and violence mark Philippine elections

By Bagani Dong-ilay

The mid-term elections held in the Philippines on 14 May 2007 was marred by massive fraud and violence. The conspicuous presence of international observers did not deter Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her political allies from using government resources and other foul means to secure electoral victory for pro-administration candidates, especially in the House of Representatives. In fact, some of the international observers were even harassed and intimidated by security forces of the Arroyo regime.

For the illegitimate and detested president Gloria Arroyo, these mid-term elections were a fight for political survival. She is facing the prospect of a third impeachment procedure in the incoming Congress. She had earlier survived two attempts at impeachment because she controlled a big majority in the outgoing parliament. She needed to ensure the retention of such a majority to crush an impending third impeachment procedure.

Initial reports on election-related violence put the number of those killed at 126 in 215 cases of violent incidents. In one widely reported incident in Batangas, south of Manila, a teacher died in a fire while serving her election duties in a school torched by armed men suspected to be Arroyo soldiers. In another incident, two poll watchers of the Kabataan (Youth) party-list group were abducted and murdered in Capalonga, Camarines Norte, south of Manila. Jun Bagasbas, 20 years old, and Ronilo Vallevare, both Kabataan organizers and poll watchers, were reported seized by soldiers on 15 May and were found dead the next day.

Rebutting a US embassy statement in Manila claiming that the “recent

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Stop Gloria Arroyo's Cheating!

A broad range of opposition political parties, election monitoring groups and concerned citizens marched to the election canvassing area in Manila, 30 May, to protest the fraudulent conduct of elections. Up for grabs are executive and legislative posts in the municipal, city and provincial councils, and seats in the lower and upper chambers of Congress. photo from Arkibong Bayan.

NDFP scoffs at US saber-rattling

Escalation of US military intervention in the Philippines will result in far worse human rights violations, stated Professor Jose Maria Sison, Chief Political Consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

Prof. Sison's statement followed the pronouncement of US Pacific Forces commander Admiral Timothy Keating that the US military will join the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in its fight against the New People's Army if requested by the Arroyo regime.

“My estimate is that the Filipino people and the revolutionary forces will become more determined to wage revolution through people's war,” says Prof. Sison, “and that they are not at all cowed by the actual atrocities and threats that have been unleashed against them by the US and the Arroyo puppet regime.”

Despite Admiral Keating's saber-rattling, the NDFP reiterated its willingness to resume peace negotiations with the

Government of the Republic of the Philippines. The NDFP Chief Political Consultant clarified that, “the NDFP has consistently made clear that it is willing to resume the formal talks in peace negotiations after certain prejudicial questions are answered satisfactorily and that ceasefire is possible upon the forging of a 10-point Concise Agreement for an Immediate Just Peace proposed by the NDFP since several years ago through Speaker Jose de Venecia,”

He added: “The prejudicial questions that need to be resolved first of all include the gross and systematic human rights

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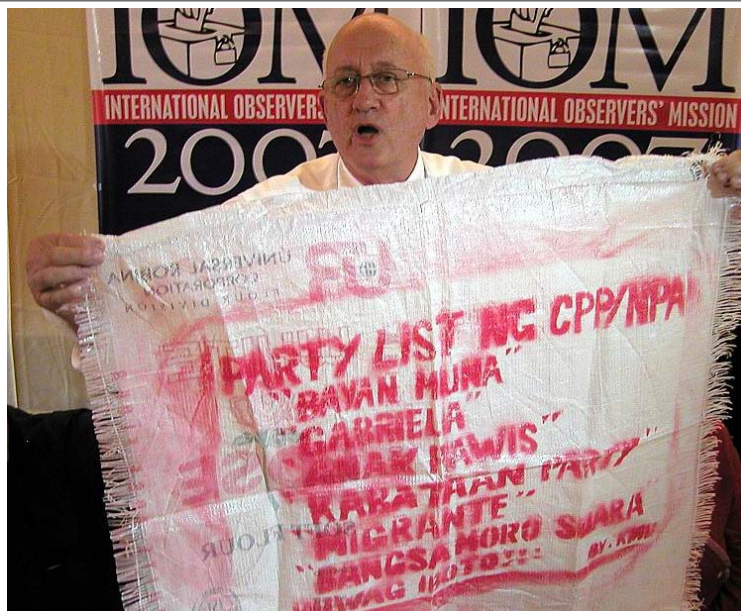
elections showed a vibrant democracy”, Canadian journalist Stefan Christoff said, “We didn’t see a vibrant democracy. What we did see was coercion, corruption, and violence. What we witnessed first hand was vote buying (and) the effects of the military violence.”

”We interviewed dozens of community residents who vividly described the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) entering communities and demanding that people vote in certain ways and not vote in other ways.”

Other foreign observers revealed how security forces of the Arroyo regime were openly campaigning for administration candidates and threatening people from voting for progressive partylist groups like Bayan Muna (People First), Gabriela Women’s Party, Anakpawis (Toiling Masses), Kabataan and Suara Bangsamoro.

Members and leaders of these opposition groups have been the target of extrajudicial killings, disappearances, harassments, illegal detention and torture. They have been publicly accused by security and intelligence agencies as “communists” to justify their being the target of state terror and violence.

On 18 and 30 May, thousands of angry demonstrators led by election watchdog Kontra Daya (Anti-Fraud) marched to the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC), where the national canvassing of votes was being held, to denounce “the Arroyo administration’s orchestrated cheating” in the elections.



Bayan Muna = CPP-NPA = assassination target. Professor Gill H. Boehringer of Australia shows reporters a type of deadly propaganda material which was used against militant opposition parties during the election period. Boehringer was a member of the People’s International Observers Mission which visited seven key voting regions, 14-18 May, to observe, document and report on the midterm elections. At left is Rev. Larry Emery of the USA. photo from Arkibong Bayan.

Speakers at the demonstrations pointed to the very obvious case of election fraud in the province of Maguindanao in southern Philippines. Election returns from the province showed an incredible 12-0 victory for Arroyo’s senatorial ticket, Team Unity. A local election official revealed that public school teachers in the province were forced at gunpoint by soldiers to fill up ballots with the names of Team Unity candidates. School children were also coerced to use their fingerprints on the ballots to create a semblance of authenticity.

Massive fraud was also implemented in Maguindanao during the 2004 national elections to ensure the victory of Gloria M. Arroyo as president. Arroyo

continues to suffer from a question of legitimacy because most people believe she lost in 2004. Massive cheating and grave coercion, perpetrated by top officials of the Commission on Election and the AFP with the collusion of local officials and other political allies clinched the election victory for her.

There were also reports of money flowing to buy votes. It is not unusual in reactionary politics in the Philippines for the incumbent to use the resources of the government, including public money, to carry out massive vote-buying. Reactionary politicians take advantage of widespread poverty to bribe the voters during the election period. Once they are in office, they take back what they have given away -- and more -- by stealing the people’s money from the government coffers.

Despite the dirty maneuvers and violence used by the Arroyo regime against its political rivals, the people expressed their disapproval and opposition to Arroyo by voting into office more opposition senatorial candidates.

The incoming Senate will be composed of a majority from opposition parties and independents. Despite the regime’s bloody campaign of killings and harassment, progressive opposition parties once again gained seats in the House of Representatives. Their electoral victory is expected to reinforce further the broad united front of the Filipino people lined up against the much-hated and murderous US-backed Arroyo regime. ■

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Filipino children victimized by US-Arroyo regime's dirty war

By Jose Emilio Jacinto III

Like King Herod in the bible story who ordered the slaughter of children because it was predicted that one of them would challenge his oppressive rule, the US-puppet government of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has also been targeting and victimizing Filipino children in its dirty counter-revolutionary war.

The US-Arroyo regime is systematically oppressing and subjecting children to fascist attacks. At the same time the regime uses children as ammunition for its dirty propaganda, to smear the reputation of the revolutionary movement regarding so-called "child soldiers".

Consider: According to Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concerns, the death toll of children killed by the Arroyo regime during its military operations since 2001 has reached 54. Additionally, 17 children have been tortured, 69 illegally arrested, three raped and 63 beaten by the regime's security forces. These figures reflect the wanton disregard of the regime not only of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, but also international laws and rules of war, violations of which constitute war crimes.



The recent tragic death of 9-year old Grecil Buya in the hands of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is one of the latest graphic illustrations of the regime's policy towards children, especially those from the impoverished masses.

Grecil was shot at close range on 31 March 2007 by members of the 101st Infantry Brigade in New Bataan,

Target of militarization.
Relatives and concerned citizens demand justice for the brutal killing of 9-year old Grecil Buya by security forces of the US-Arroyo regime. photo from Kabiba Foundation.

Compostela Valley, in southern Philippines. In an effort to justify killing the child, AFP troopers presented her as an "NPA child soldier" and planted an M16 rifle beside her as they photographed her. However, human rights groups and even the government's Commission on Human Rights have found the AFP claim false. Grecil's parents have filed charges against the AFP for the murder of their child.

There is also the case of a 16-year old pregnant girl and a 17-year old boy arrested on 26 and 29 May in Leyte island, in central Philippines, who are still under military detention.

In the past year alone, several cases of children being charged with rebellion were brought to the fore. Among the cases highlighted by the media were the illegal detention and torture of the 'Sagada 11' backpackers, three youths from Quezon province who were tortured to force them to admit that they were members of the New People's Army, and 11 minors who were arrested and jailed in Camp Bagong Diwa in Bicutan as alleged members of the CIA-created Abu Sayyaf.

"There is clearly an AFP propaganda routine of coming up with fabricated reports about 'NPA child soldiers' to cover up their violations of international conventions on children's rights and tarnish the reputation of the NPA as a champion of children's rights," said Ka Roger Rosal, spokesperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), in a recent press statement. "There are numerous cases where the AFP forcibly conscripts children and uses them as guides in their military operations."

The CPP has time and again denied the NPA's recruitment of 'child soldiers' by stressing that it conscientiously abides

Army troopers abduct, torture 6 children in Mt. Province

Operating troops of the 54th Infantry Battalion of the fascist Philippine Army abducted on 15 June six students of the Mountain Province General Comprehensive High School (MPGCHS), as they were returning home from school along the mountain trail of Sagada, Mountain Province, in northern Philippines. In a statement released to the Philippine media, the revolutionary Cordillera People's Democratic Front (CPDF) condemned the act, describing it as yet another "grave crime against the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera region".

Family and relatives found the children days later detained without cause in a

military camp in Lagangilang, Abra province, northwest of Mountain Province. They have reportedly been subjected to harsh treatment, intensive interrogation, physical and psychological torture, and death threats.

Ka Roger Rosal, spokesperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines, strongly condemned the abduction as another of the US-Arroyo regime's "wanton disregard of civil and democratic rights of the people and of children's rights in particular."

The students were on their way home to Barangay (village) Kili, Tubo, Abra – a 10-hour hike along isolated mountain

Troopers abduct, page 4, col 2 ...

Dirty war, page 4, col 1 ...

... *Dirty war, from page 3*

by international laws prohibiting the recruitment of children below 15 years old for combat work and has in fact a policy of recruiting only those 18 years and older.

This malicious propaganda about NPA child soldiers is being whipped up by the fascist regime in collaboration with a handful of pseudo-progressive groups in the vain attempt to diminish the ever-widening support for armed revolutionary struggle and to malign the revolutionary movement before the international community. It is also being used to deflect international concern and condemnation over the extrajudicial killings of unarmed civilians by the regime's death squads.

The oppression confronting Filipino children cannot be dissociated from the violations of the political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Filipino people. They are the consequence of a rotten political, economic and social system that benefits only the foreign monopoly capitalists led by the US and the local ruling comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord classes.

Although forty-five percent or almost 33 million of the Philippine population are children aged 17 and younger, the Philippine government remains indifferent on the appalling situation of Filipino children:

- for every 1,000 infants born, almost 43 die instantly due to illness, malnutrition, absence of medical services and other causes.
- more than 28% of children aged five and younger suffer from severe malnutrition.
- two million children dropped out of school in 2006; majority of those who dropped out came from public schools as indicated by sharp falls in enrolment. A total of up to 5.7 million children are not enrolled in school.
- many of these children might have been forced to leave school to earn a living. In 2006 some 2.5 million children aged 5 to 17 were working either to augment family income or simply to survive, including 25,000 child domestic helpers.
- one and a half million children are estimated to roam the streets of the country's urban areas as itinerant peddlers. Among them are 60,000 – 100,000 children who are forced into prostitution.

... *Troopers abduct, from page 3*

trails – when they were abducted by the fascist troops. They were detained without cause and heavily tortured for several days, without their parents' or the school authorities' knowledge.

The entire village of Kili, with the help of residents from northern Sagada villages, organized search teams to look for the missing schoolchildren. It was only days later when they found the severely traumatized children in the military camp.

On July 2006, 18-year old student Michael Uyad of barangay Gueday, Besao, Mountain Province, was mercilessly murdered by operating troops of the same 54th IB-PA along the same mountain trail.

On March 2006, another unit of the same battalion abducted, detained and tortured two farmers from Balingayan, Tubo, Abra, who were en route to Bontoc, Mountain Province to deliver carabaos (water buffalos) they sold to their counterparts in Mainit village. The fascist army troops also butchered and consumed the carabaos.

According to the CPDF, the massive and increasingly brutal military operations against the Cordillera peoples are part of the US-Arroyo regime's Oplan Bantay Laya 2 (Freedom Watch) military program.

These have resulted in the disruption of economic activity in the area and have wreaked havoc on the lives of poor peasants and national minorities. Rice fields ready for harvest have been abandoned; cows and carabaos in communal pasturelands have been left unattended; and small-scale mining activity have all but ceased. ■

Furthermore, because of globalization policies which continue to institutionalize unemployment and poverty, and to plunder and ravage the Philippine economy, thousands leave the Philippines daily to seek employment overseas. Children suffer emotionally and psychologically from this separation from their parents because the Philippine government cannot generate decent employment for its own citizens.

Indeed, despite their age and because of the intensifying state oppression and violence against them and the people, more and more children are awakening early and learning the need for revolution to change Philippine society. Revolution will indeed be their only hope, as with the rest of the Filipino people, for a truly free, just, prosperous and peaceful nation. ■

... *US saber-rattling, from page 1*

violations, the murder and abduction of NDFP consultants in the peace negotiations, the "terrorist" listing of the CPP, NPA and the NDFP Chief Political Consultant and the misappropriation of funds for the indemnification of the victims of human rights violations under the Marcos regime."

"The aforesaid 10-points CAIJP are clear principles to guide the forging of comprehensive agreements on socio-economic and political reforms. But bloodthirsty Arroyo officials, chiefly executive secretary Eduardo Ermita and national security adviser Norberto Gonzales, have frenziedly engaged in gross and systematic human rights violations in a vain attempt to terrorize and pacify the revolutionary movement and compel the NDFP to capitulate."

According to Prof. Sison, Keating's statement must be seen in the context of the Bush-Arroyo war of terror and their coordinated attempts to use the new Anti-Terror Law to intimidate the NDFP to abandon the revolutionary struggle.

Meanwhile, Fidel V. Agcaoili, NDFP Human Rights Committee Chairperson, advised Admiral Keating to study history. He explained that the US-Marcos dictatorship failed to destroy the revolutionary movement and only succeeded to fan the flames of popular resistance despite the full backing of the US government in terms of finance, materiel and manpower.

He also said that the US-Arroyo regime's war of terror, unleashing death squads to kill progressive legal activists and unarmed civilians, has failed to deter the people in their fight. Instead, the gross and systematic human rights violations perpetrated by the regime are drawing widespread condemnation and increasing its isolation from the Filipino people and the international community.

"It would serve Keating well," declares Agcaoili, "to recognize the limits of American power. Right now the US is sinking deeper in two quagmires, in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even Bush is now in boiling water in Washington for launching wars of aggression."

He added that, "However, should the US decide to bring in more troops and engage in further intervention or aggression, the Filipino people and the revolutionary forces would gain the golden opportunity to render justice to the more than 1.5 million Filipinos who were martyred by US military actions during the US-Filipino War in 1899 up to the end of the US pacification campaigns in 1914." ■

Anti-malaria campaign in the guerrilla zones Curing more than the illness

By Jeng Remedios

Malaria remains a significant health problem in the Philippines. Official reports indicate that malaria is the eighth leading cause of illness in the country, affecting up to 10.2 million people or about 12.5% of the population, in 65 of the total 81 provinces.

According to a 2005 country report of the World Health Organization, more than 90% of malaria cases nationwide are found in the poorest 25 provinces. It further states that “these areas report significantly higher deaths caused by malaria and face challenges of access to health care for prompt and effective treatment and shortages of antimalarial drug supplies, especially in the peripheral health centres”.

The reactionary government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) is incapable of addressing this health disaster, despite support and funding from the WHO Roll Back Malaria and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The vast majority of Filipinos simply does not receive the benefits of such support after the funds go through the corrupt and rotten GRP bureaucracy. Coupled with an ever-decreasing budget for health services, the health situation of Filipinos under GRP jurisdiction is deplorable as ever.

But the revolutionary masses and their army, the New People’s Army, have gone against the odds and have recently registered breakthroughs in its anti-malaria campaign. Despite meager resources and amidst the ruthless attacks of the reactionary security forces, the revolutionary movement has been able to provide information and health services to thousands of people affected by the illness.

The nationally-coordinated campaign was kicked off with health trainings for medical officers of the NPA at the regional, guerrilla front and platoon levels. Initiated and developed by the National Health Bureau of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the Medical Section of the NPA National Command, the trainings are providing medics with the capacity

to lead the campaign in their respective areas of responsibility.

Ang Bayan (The Nation) in March 2007 published a report on the breakthrough and gains of the campaign in Cagayan Valley region, in northeastern Philippines, where malaria is highly endemic.

The reported breakthrough happened in a cluster of barrios (villages) where malaria is the leading cause of illness and which had suffered from a significant number of malaria-related deaths in recent years. Several have died without even reaching the hospital. The cluster of barrios is also a revolutionary base of mass organizations and local organs of political power in the region.

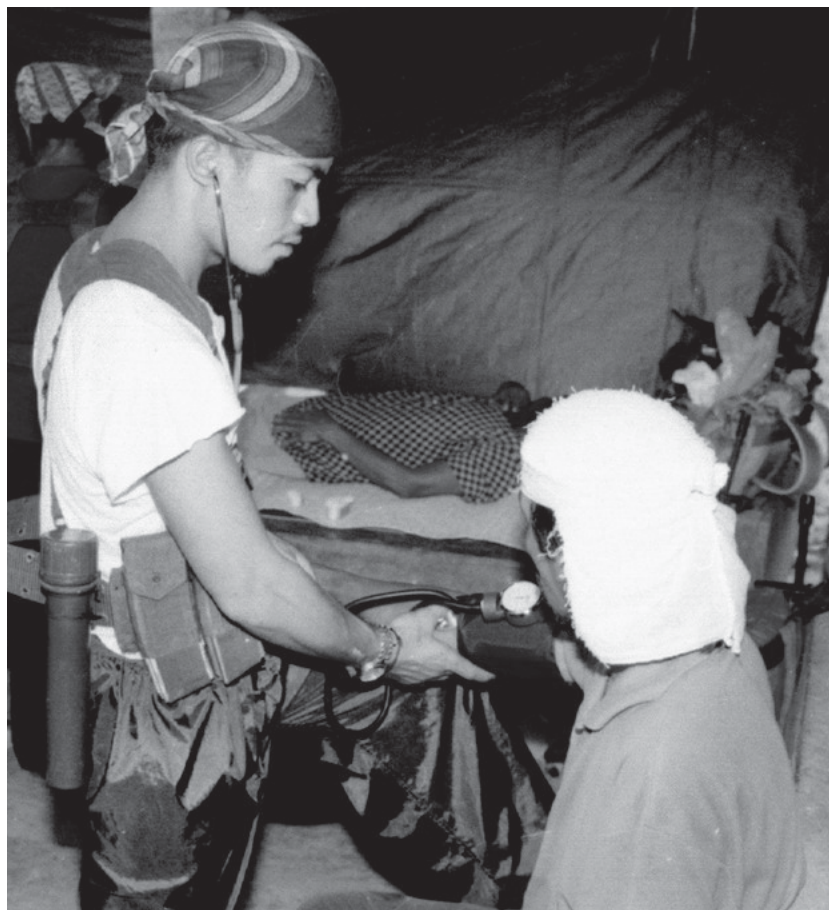
As the first step in the campaign, the regional NPA command conducted a training on malaria among 17 of its medical officers. A similar training was

subsequently conducted for 25 villagefolk and an additional seven NPA medics. The training program included the signs and symptoms of malaria; distinguishing malaria from other diseases with similar sets of symptoms, a new treatment regimen, and disease prevention.

Undergoing the training gave the comrades confidence in facing the challenges ahead.

The revolutionary masses warmly welcomed the training program. Parents volunteered their children to participate. A teenaged girl even wept and begged her parents that she be allowed to skip regular school so that she could attend the training.

The NPA instructors also learned from the villagefolk. It was observed that the masses were faster and more accurate in



Medical officers of the NPA provide health services and training, and help in setting up community health programs under the supervision of the local Party branch and the organ of Red political power. file photo.

Fujimori must pay for his crimes

Former Peru President Alberto Fujimori was back under house arrest after a Chilean prosecutor recommended his extradition to Peru to face charges of grave violations of human rights and corruption.

The regime of Fujimori was notorious for authorizing death squads to torture and kill thousands of dissenters. The Peruvian people and officials of the current government want Fujimori to stand trial on charges of bribery, misuse of government funds and sanctioning death squad killings during his more than 10 years of rule ending in 2000.

The victims who survived and relatives of the victims of death squads have been campaigning for the trial of Fujimori.



Former president Fujimori (1990-2000) back in house arrest. AP.

They stated that the trial and punishment of Fujimori would send a clear signal to other government leaders that they cannot commit human rights violations with impunity and rob the people's coffers and get away with it. Justice will be served. ■

... *Anti-malaria, from page 5*

their diagnosis, owing to their long and practical experience with patients suffering from malaria.

Graduates of the training led the formation of village-level health committees. Committee members were also given training on basic acupuncture. Even when the NPA medics were not around, the committee can now take care of the community residents.

In one of the barrios, the NPA medics started acupuncture treatment on an old lady who had been paralyzed for five years. Committee members continued the treatment when the medics were not around. After three weeks, the medics received a letter from the committee members reporting, "Grandmother can now walk; when will you be back?"

The barrio health committees also conducted spraying, treated mosquito nets with insecticides and performed regular sanitation measures to prevent the disease. At the same time, they also reached out to local health personnel of the GRP, up to the municipal health centers, to encourage them to assist in the anti-malaria campaign and the revolutionary masses' health programs.

The health campaign and services conducted by the NPA and the revolutionary mass organizations have contributed greatly to the consolidation of Red political power in these areas. For every victory attained, it becomes even clearer that the NPA, under the

leadership of the CPP, truly serves the interest of the masses.

During the three month supervision of the NPA medical staff and the active operation of the barrio health committees, two thousand people were provided health services. No less than ten community clinics were set-up. On the other hand, when the reactionary AFP conducted a "medical mission" in the same area, only a handful participated in spite of their voluminous supply of commercial medicines.

As a result of the health campaign, nine villagers joined the ranks of the NPA. Many of them indicated their interest in becoming medical officers themselves.

Through health work, participation of the masses in revolutionary activities has become livelier. At the same time, scientific thinking is promoted, shattering age-old superstitions on health and health care. "So, it was not the offering of chickens which cured mother," one said. "It was malaria after all which caused his fever," said another, "it was not because he stepped on an elf's mound."

The experience in Cagayan Valley is also being replicated in other areas where malaria is endemic. The anti-malaria campaign is now also a regular component of the programs of existing village health committees. Other regions have registered victories as well.

With the coming rainy season (September to December) it is hoped that

Latin America digs in vs. US attack

President Hugo Chavez of Venezuela is calling for the creation of a common defense pact among Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua and Bolivia to establish military cooperation and to become more independent of US influence.

Citing the continuing terrorism and aggression of the US and the collaboration of other countries in the region through the Washington-based Inter-American Defense Board, Chavez stated that it is now time to establish a joint defense strategy to prepare the people of Latin America against attacks by the US. He called for joint military aid and intelligence and counter-intelligence cooperation.

The four countries have established the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas or ALBA for economic development, banking, finance and trading cooperation. ALBA began as an agreement between Venezuela and Cuba. Later on, Bolivia and Nicaragua joined the bloc and Ecuador is considering membership in ALBA. ■

deaths from malaria will be minimized where the campaign is operational. The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) is currently appealing for support for the further success of the anti-malaria campaign and the health work of the revolutionary movement.

The anti-malaria campaign, in particular, needs to continually address issues such as the availability of simple but accurate diagnostic aids (so as not to overdiagnose and thus prevent possible drug resistance); procurement of appropriate and adequate drug supply for treatment and preventive intervention; and continuing training and research support. ■

Financial support can be coursed through the following bank account:
 NDF Stichting Internationaal
 Informatie Buro,
 Account No: 394570642
 Rabobank, Utrecht, the Netherlands;
 for antimalaria program
 IBAN No: NL 70 RABO 0394 5706 42.
 BIC: RABONL2U.

Vilma Espín Guillois: Cuban heroine and revolutionary (1930-2007)

By Isah Antonio

www.bohemia.cu

It was a very sad day indeed for the people of Cuba when they heard news of the passing of Comrade Vilma Espín Guillois last June 18. For Vilma was not just an ordinary Cuban woman, she was a true revolutionary who has served her country and her people very well.

To the millions of Cubans and the international revolutionary community, Vilma will be remembered not only as a heroine of the Cuban revolution and an outstanding combatant of the army but as an untiring fighter and staunch defender of the emancipation and rights of women and the rights of children.

Born in Santiago de Cuba on 7 April 1930, Vilma actively participated in student demonstrations following the coup d'état by Batista in 1952, joined the ranks of the 26th of July Movement and assumed political and revolutionary responsibilities at a young age. She took part in the armed uprising of 30th November 1956 in support of the Granma expedition, converting her home into the headquarters of the revolutionary movement in Santiago de Cuba.

Vilma was named provincial coordinator of the clandestine organization Oriente until she joined the Rebel Army in June 1958 where she excelled as a guerrilla fighter of the Frank Pais Second Western Front. She did not shirk from any dangerous task and responsibility.

Upon the victory of the revolution in 1959, she headed the unification of women's organizations and the establishment of the Federation of Cuban Women, whose organization, from its highest leadership, she served until the last moments of her life.

She was elected member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba from its foundation in 1965. She was also a member of the Political Bureau and a member of the Council of State since its establishment.

No national or international forum, activities, actions were too distant for Vilma to attend, in order to defend Cuba and the noble and just ideals of the revolution from their detractors and enemies, especially US imperialism.

Vilma's unceasing desire to fight for the interest of women and children was manifested in her work as president of the National Commission of Prevention and Social Attention and the Commission of Children and Youth as well as the Commission on Women's Equal Rights of the National Assembly of People's Power.

She fought for equal opportunity for women and against sexual discrimination. Education for women and children was top priority in her agenda. Today, women in Cuba make up 66 percent of the technical workforce of the country. They take part in almost all the university degree courses. Whereas before, there were hardly any women involved in the field of science, today women are in the majority.



As Comrade Fidel Castro has stated, Vilma's example is today more necessary than ever. The devotion of her entire life to the struggle for women's rights is an exemplary feat that is to be emulated.

Comrade Vilma will be eternally linked to the most significant victories of the Cuban women in the revolution and as one of the most outstanding fighters for the emancipation of women in the country and throughout the world. ■

Cuba scores victory at UN Human Rights Council

Cuba scored a victory at the United Nations Human Rights Council when the Council decided to discontinue the mandate of the so-called Personal Representative of the High Commissioner on Human Rights in Cuba.

This puts an end to the hypocrisy of the United States as a champion of human rights of the Cuban people. The move is also a blow against the US' genocidal policy of blockade and aggression against Cuba.

The Council's decision, adopted during its fifth session 11-19 June in Geneva, recognizes the unjust, selective and

discriminatory nature of the actions of the US for two decades.

Although US actions against Cuba have caused untold hardships for the Cuban people, the people have stood united and persevered in their struggle against US imperialism. Cuba has continued its internationalist duty by extending help and solidarity to underdeveloped countries through thousands of their doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, sports trainers and technicians.

The decision to discontinue the mandate was supported by the Non-Aligned Movement and other Third World countries. ■

NYC meeting salutes Philippine revolutionary leader

By Sharon Eolis, N.P. New York

On June 10, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, USA Chapter and the Anakbayan Filipino Youth Collective of New York and New Jersey held a tribute to the life and writings of Filipino revolutionary leader Jose Maria Sison, who is currently exiled in the Netherlands.

The meeting brought together anti-imperialist forces among anti-war, grassroots and community organizations and heightened awareness among progressives of Sison's historic role and the leadership he has provided to the struggle for Philippine liberation.

Secretary General Berna Ellorin of Bayan USA (New Patriotic Alliance) introduced the meeting: "We are thrilled to bring to the world a glimpse of the man this government has so wrongfully labeled a terrorist. Terrorists are not popular or supported by the people. But tonight it is clear Jose Maria Sison's life has won the hearts and minds of the Filipino people and strong support from all those who yearn for freedom from US war and aggression around the world. He is not a terrorist, but a genuine freedom fighter, because he has dedicated his life to the democratic cause of oppressed peoples."

Revolution Books, the site of the tribute, is launching the fifth edition of the historic text entitled "Philippine Society and Revolution," which Sison wrote in 1970 under the name Amado Guerrero.

Sison was a radical student leader who became the founding chairperson of the re-established Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), and is now chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). He is also chairperson of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), a global alliance of anti-imperialist organizations.

The dictatorial regime of Ferdinand Marcos held him political prisoner for more than eight years, from 1977-1986. In 2002, the US State Department declared that Sison, the CPP and the New



Prof. Jose Maria Sison interacts with New York audience via video conference. photo from www.bayanusa.org

Peoples Army (NPA) were all terrorist organizations and that the Philippines was "the second front of the war on terror."

Through an international video conference Sison was able to participate interactively with the audience in New York City. The discussion ranged over the prospect of socialism in Latin America, the state of socialism in China, the struggle for immigrant rights in the US and the impact of the Katrina disaster.

Cultural presentations included Asian-American musician Fred Ho's saxophone rendition of Bayan Ko, (My Country), a patriotic folk song first heard in the 1920s during the US occupation of the Philippines. Sison's poem, "The Guerrilla is Like a Poet" was read in Pilipino and English.

The ILPS US Coordinating Committee, the Malcolm X Grassroots Movement, the International Action Center and New York City Labor Against the War delivered solidarity statements. *Articles copyright 1995-2007 Workers World.* ■



The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) is an alliance of revolutionary organizations with roots in the various sectors and regions of the Philippines. Its goal is to build a society that enjoys national sovereignty, genuine democracy, social justice, progress and peace. It seeks to unite with all forces willing to achieve these goals.

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is a publication of the NDFP
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**NDFP International
Information Office**
Postbus 19195 | 3501 DD Utrecht
The Netherlands
Email: ndf@casema.nl
www.ndfp.net