



#### EDITORIAL

## Address the grievances of millions amid crisis

**T**he social and economic conditions of the Filipino people continue to deteriorate unabatedly under the Duterte regime as a result of its burdensome policies. Their daily individual effort to survive is always a losing struggle. The Duterte regime throws them mere crumbs to scrounge on, while giving the big oligarchs all opportunities to amass wealth.

The prevailing conditions behoove the revolutionary forces to give attention to the urgent clamor of the broad masses for immediate and long-term solutions to their grievances, in order to forge their strength in millions and effectively advance their rights and wellbeing.

Millions of Filipinos are indignant over grossly intolerable conditions of joblessness, homelessness, low income, high prices, lack of basic utilities and social services, insufficient government subsidies, breakdown of public infrastructure, land grabbing and rural

dislocation and other calamitous effects of the Duterte regime's anti-poor policies. The number of people living in poverty continues to rise.

In the cities and town centers, the toiling masses suffer daily from lack of clean water, high electricity prices, dilapidated public transportation system and traffic, and rising costs of education, fuel and communications. These utilities and services have all been subjected to privatization and are being operated primarily to generate

*"Address..." continued on page 2*

## NPA units in CL, ST seize 16 firearms

UNITS OF THE New People's Army (NPA) in Bulacan and Mindoro Oriental launched two consecutive military actions on February 25 at 26 wherein 16 firearms were confiscated and the destructive operation of a notorious company was paralyzed.

**Bulacan.** The NPA-Bulacan successfully raided the office and detachment of the Seraph Security Agency (SSA) in Barangay San Isidro, San Jose Del Monte City, Bulacan on February 25, 7:14-9:00 p.m. Seized during the attack were 12 high-powered rifles, two pistols, ammunition and seven Icom radios.

SSA has around 40 armed security guards and goons hired as mercenaries of Ayala Lands and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

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profits. Hundreds of thousands of urban homeless people are under threat of eviction from their shanties in the name of environmental cleanup even as destructive land reclamation is being carried out to satisfy big business hunger for real estate.

Land-use conversion is being pushed vigorously to pave the way for the construction of dams, mining operations, tourism and energy and infrastructure projects, as well as for the expansion of plantations. This is coupled with further import liberalization of rice and other agricultural commodities which threaten local production and rural livelihood.

Unemployment continues to run high as job-creation dip to two-decade lows, resulting from years of declining domestic productivity. Everyday, thousands are compelled to go overseas to seek low-paying contractual employment.

The Duterte regime has become an unbearable burden on the Filipino people. It has burdened the people with onerous taxes. It has acted incapable, inutile and indifferent to the demands of the people for measures to stem the decline of their standards of living.

Hundreds of billions of pesos of public money are pocketed by corrupt public officials through bribery and cuts and pork barrel allocations, siphoned to favored private businesses in the form of government projects and contracts, and squandered in large wasteful military purchases and operations. It is the super-rich oligarchs who aggrandize their wealth. They wallow in luxury and wasteful living in stark contrast to the hunger and extreme poverty of majority of the people.

In the face of the people's



seething discontent, the Duterte regime has implemented such measures as the so-called universal health care,





conditional cash transfer, "land reform," housing projects and other "welfare" programs. These are mere public stunts and palliatives which aim to obscure and perpetuate privatization and cutbacks in social spending, deregulation, rampant land conversion and other grievous neoliberal policies.

The Dutertes—consummate bureaucrat capitalists—and their allies, wish to perpetuate their power and privilege. The regime has declared all sorts of war to foment fascist zealotry and give the military and police vast powers to the detriment of democratic rights. Through despotic exercise of state power and violence, it has suppressed all forms of just opposition and stifled the people's grievances.

Amid grave social and economic conditions in the country and callousness of the Duterte regime, the Filipino people have no other recourse but to collectively raise their voices and assert their demands. They must wield strength in numbers.

To advance the people's democratic struggles, the Party calls on all activists to go deep among the masses in order to transform the people's indignation into mass action. They must pay close attention to the most urgent concerns, attitude and aspirations of the people.

They must untiringly carry out one campaign after another to rouse and mobilize the masses with the aim of addressing and resolving the big and small problems that they face daily. Regularly

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mount assemblies to discuss issues and give the people an opportunity to air their opinion. In the ongoing election campaign, the people should confront the candidates and challenge them to address their demands.

Activists must take every opportunity to conduct propaganda, whether in small group discussion, leaflet distribution, or in soapbox speeches in street corners or aboard buses or jeeps. Transform communities, factories, workplaces, schools and so on into hubs of mass activism.

They must train to be exceptional in agitation and rousing the people to take action in order to hold the reactionary government responsible for imposing burdensome taxes, preventing just wage increases, excessing borrowing of loans, sell-out of the country's patrimony and other anti-poor measures under the neoliberal policy regime. They must further raise the people's consciousness by exposing the regime's subservience to imperialist financial and com-

mercial interests.

The masses must be emboldened to assert their social and economic rights, as well as their democratic rights, in the face of heightened state suppression. They must expose the link between the rise of fascism with the social crisis, and the desperation of the ruling Duterte clique to prevent the people from rising up with clenched fists. The need for waging national democratic struggle must be made exceedingly clear.

They must help overcome the forces of disunity and disorganization and diligently work to build all forms of mass organization to represent the people's interests and demands. Build local and national alliances on the basis of common sectoral and class issues, and mobilize the people in town-wide, province-wide, region-wide and nationwide demonstrations.

The prevailing situation favors the Party's rapid growth. Party cadres must be able to effectively lead the practical work of activists by becoming models of tireless propaganda and organizing work

among the masses. They should assiduously conduct ideological studies, and assess, sum-up and always raise the level of practice. Advanced mass activists must be recruited promptly into the Party. We must build thousands of new Party branches, and strengthen and expand existing ones.

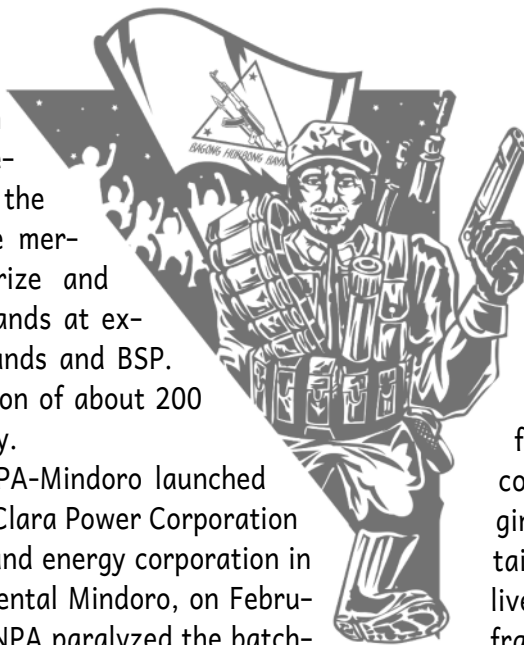
By conducting persevering propaganda and organizing work, and by being attentive to the level of the people's consciousness, the Party and all revolutionary forces can effectively rouse the masses to mount increasingly large mass actions. Considering how conditions in the country are like dry tinder, one spark can start a wildfire of mass resistance.

While strengthening the struggles for the people's economic rights and well-being, they should also guard against reformism, economism, sectoralism and other tendencies which stymie the people's revolutionary consciousness. The day to day struggles of the people must be linked to, be supportive of and help strengthen the people's war. AB

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(BSP). These institutions are notorious for grabbing about 700 hectares of land from farmers, Dumagats and Remontados. Ka Jose Del Pilar of the NPA-Bulacan, said that these mercenaries are used to terrorize and force residents to sell their lands at extremely low rates to Ayala Lands and BSP. This has resulted in the eviction of about 200 families from the said barangay.

**Oriental Mindoro.** The NPA-Mindoro launched a punitive action against Sta. Clara Power Corporation (SCPC), a destructive mining and energy corporation in Barangay Malvar, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro, on February 26, at around 3 p.m. The NPA paralyzed the batching plant and 44 heavy equipment of the company including a backhoe, five trucks, two payloaders, a crusher and a cement mixer. The Red fighters were also able to confiscate a 9mm pistol, a shotgun and eight



Icom radios.

Ka Madaay Gasic, NPA-Mindoro spokesperson, said that the action is a response to the Mindoreños' cry for justice over the unparalleled damages caused by SCPC's multimillion-peso hydroelectric power project in Naujan and Baco, Oriental Mindoro. When and after Typhoon "Nona" hit the province in 2015, about 3/4 of the province's population was affected by massive mudfloods due to the continuous underground blasting and logging operations of the SCPC in the mountains. The mudfloods claimed more than 10 lives, and destroyed P1.5 billion-worth of infrastructure and P2.9 billion-worth of agricultural properties.

While mounting the offensive, Red fighters gathered the SCPC workers to explain the reason for the punitive action.. AB

## CPP declares March 2019 as "NPA Month"

Last February 26, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) declared March 2019 as "NPA Month" in commemoration of the 50th founding anniversary of the New People's Army (NPA) on March 29. This is in celebration of all the victories and advancement of the people's war in all fields.

The CPP challenged all revolutionary forces to pay tribute to the genuine army of the people with the theme "Advance the people's war until victory!" This is in response to the relentless fascist attacks of the Duterte regime and the masses' worsening plight.

In conjunction with the celebration, NPA units are expected to mount tactical offensives across the country to defend the people's rights and concurrent with the advancement of genuine land reform and the establishment of mass organizations up to organs of political power. This is also alongside the mounting of punitive actions against the most notorious agents of the Duterte regime.

Amid the regime's attempts to hinder the spread of the message of

the revolutionary armed movement, the information, education and propaganda campaign must be intensified to propagate the justness of the armed struggle.

The CPP urged everyone to issue statements, create posters and brochures for recruitment, write poems, songs and stories, produce paintings and other artworks, and mount demonstrations. Maximize the internet and social media to propagate the revolutionary task of the NPA. Belie the "terrorist" tag by the US-Duterte regime and expose who the real terrorist is.

The whole month of March is an opportunity to convince the most

number of mass activists both in urban centers and the countryside to join the people's army, echo and propagate the slogans: "Serve the people! Serve the revolution!" Likewise, utilize the celebrations to raise the ideological, political and organizational capacities of Red commanders and fighters.

"Highlight the efforts and optimism of the Filipino people in carrying forward the people's war to a higher level and its nearing complete victory," ended the CPP. AB



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## NPA-SMR exposes "anti-NPA" declarations as AFP scheme

THE "PERSONA NON grata" declarations against the New People's Army (NPA) is a product of the intimidation and psywar campaign of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). This was revealed by Ka Rigoberto F. Sanchez of the NPA-Southern Mindanao Region after successive broadcast about the so-called condemnation of the NPA by various local government units and Lumad communities in regions within the area of responsibility of the AFP Eastern Mindanao Command.

Sanchez said that the psywar and intimidation campaign is a result of "peace and development outreach programs" launched by the military under the "whole-of-nation approach" of its Oplan Kapayapaan. The military is relentlessly launching "peace-building seminars" in Davao City, Davao Oriental, Compostela Valley, Davao del Norte, Bukidnon and Caraga. The AFP is using its paramilitaries such as the Alamara and Bagani to intimidate and compel Lumad councils to participate in such seminars. Afterwards, they are

forced to participate in rallies and carry placards with anti-insurgency calls.

The military is also using these "seminars" to promote its corruption-ridden Enhanced Comprehensive Local Integration Program, notoriously known as its fake surrender campaign. In Compostela Valley on February 20, three farmers illegally arrested by the 71st IB in Sitio Binogsayan, Barangay Napnapan were presented as "NPA surrenderees." This was despite the definitive statement by local government officials that the arrested, identified as Eddie Avila, Graciano Embalsado and Pulpy Lariwan, are civilian residents of the said barrio.

On top of this, the AFP are also tagging legal organizations, progressive partylists and non-government institutions defending human rights and working for the welfare of peasants and Lumads as fronts of the CPP. Thus, the AFP is endangering members and leaders of the said civilian institutions as targets for arbitrary arrests and killings. AB

# AFP illegally arrests two minors

Elements of the 88th IB illegally arrested and detained two minors in Sitio Sanggiapo, Barangay Sinuda, Kitaotao, Bukidnon on February 18 at around 11 a.m. The victims were identified as Loujean Antian Lumbatan, 17, a student of Sinuda High School, and Ara Mystica Antian Pangcat, 10, a student of Cabalansihan Elementary School. They were detained inside the camp until 11 p.m.

The victims' parents and relatives who trooped to the camp to ask about their whereabouts were outrightly rejected by soldiers who bluntly denied that the two are under their custody. The victims attested that they were prevented from speaking out at that very moment. After the incident, the victims were brought to the headquarters of the 88th IB in Maramag where they were subjected to intense interrogation. They were only released in the afternoon of February 19.

## Terrorism in Negros

Armed agents of the regime continue to victimize civilian residents in Negros. Added to the violations perpetrated by the military and police are recent cases of intimidation, destruction of property and illegal arrests perpetrated by elements of the 94th IB and the Philippine National Police (PNP) Regional Office 7.

**Intimidation.** Elements of the 94th IB blocked on March 2 more than 400 delegates of a humanitarian mission who were supposed to probe into the situation of communities that are currently being occupied and terrorized by armed state elements in Guihulngan City, Negros Oriental. The delegation was composed of various organizations and formations that stand in solidarity with the victims of fascist and tokhang-style attacks of the 94th IB and PNP troopers against the residents of Guihulngan City under the guise of Synchronized Enhanced Managing of

Police Operations (SEMPO) or Oplan Sauron.

Most recently reported among the attacks perpetrated by the 94th IB was the torching of Tisoy Pasinabo's house in Sitio Panagtugas, Barangay Trinidad in the said city on February 24 at around 3 a.m. Members of the Pasinabo family were among the 87 residents who evacuated on January 28 due to relentless intimidation against them by the soldiers.

The residents temporarily evacuated to San Carlos City, Negros Occidental. Victims treated by doctors showed signs of trauma due to the terror and fear sparked by continuing military operations in their communities. In an interview, an elderly resident of Sitio Kasingan attested that she was not able to sleep since the soldiers arrived.

**Militarization.** Residents reported that 110 AFP and police troopers occupied sitios Tabalogo and Malatanglad in Barangay Budlasan, Canlaon City, Negros Oriental. Residents were terrorized by the house-to-house operations and investigation conducted by the military.

**Illegal arrests.** On February 22 at around 2:00 a.m., combined units of the 94th IB, PNP-Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and Special Action Force, under the command of PS/Insp. Ruben E. Verbo Jr., illegally arrested five civilians in Barangay Budlasan, Canlaon City, Negros Oriental. The victims were identified as



Guillermo Casipong Sr., 62, his children, Jerome and Guillermo Jr., Emilio Mahinay, and Francine Maribong. A soldier threatened to kill Mahinay and held him at gunpoint while being interrogated. The victims are currently detained in the Canlaon City Police Station. In Mabinay, Nimrod Balansag, a peasant-leader of KAUGMAON-Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) was also arrested on February 15. All victims were slapped with trumped-up charges of illegal possession of firearms.

In a statement by KMP on March 3, it condemned the accelerated fascist attacks against peasants in the province carried out under the US-Duterte regime's Memorandum Order 32 which effectively placed the whole Negros Island under indefinite martial rule. It called for an independent probe on Oplan Sauron which is being utilized by the AFP and PNP in perpetrating human rights violations.

Meanwhile, progressive organizations, human rights defenders, academics, lawyers, journalists and church people in Cagayan de Oro condemned the list issued by the AFP which maliciously linked them to the New People's Army and the Communist Party of the Philippines. The said list was issued by the 4th ID last February. **AB**

# The Filipino women's plight and struggle

In a semicolonial and semifeudal society, women are exploited not only as workers or farmers but are further oppressed due to gender discrimination and male chauvinism.

Compared to men, women's wages are relatively lower and working conditions are more exploitative. Likewise, they are constrained by the predominant patriarchal culture which sets their societal "role" as mere housekeepers who attend to the needs of their husband, children or younger siblings, elderly parents and other relatives.

Their dire situation has become even more miserable with the implementation of the worst neoliberal policies by the US-Duterte's regime. They are compelled to spend longer working hours to cope with the increasing costs of transportation, food and other basic commodities. Rocketing costs of basic services further bury them in debt. They are burdened with the lack of decent job opportunities and living wages in the absence of genuine industrialization and land reform.

Amid this, women workers and peasants' struggle for their rights and wellbeing and for the welfare of their families is more justified than ever. In ending the current system, it is crucial to mobilize their sector to take part most especially in the armed revolution.

## Filipino women's situation

The ratio of men to women population in the Filipino society is almost equal. However, women compared to men's rate of participation in the labor force is relatively lower (49% and 77% respectively), both in urban centers and the countryside.

Women's wages are lower and their working hours are longer. More than 1.2 million women work in the retail sector wherein majority are compelled to accept wages which do not meet even half of the family liv-

ing wage. They are also compelled to work for up to 52 hours a week without receiving overtime pay. About 1.8 million women work as housemaids, laundry women and others who serve their employers 24/7.

In enclaves dominated by foreign companies, 65-75% of workers are women. As majority are contractual workers, they are not allowed to join unions and are denied benefits including maternity leave. Discrimination and abuse against women is prevalent as the said companies are allowed to impose exploitative conditions without being regulated by the state.

In the countryside, women shoulder the burden of worsening landlessness due to pervasive land-grabbing and use-conversion into mining sites and plantations. On top of high costs of land rent, low farm-gate prices, usury and other exploitative conditions, they are further burdened with the unimpeded importation of agricultural products which will result in the eventual demise of the agricultural sector.

Almost half of those leaving for work abroad are women. Majority of them are employed as manual laborers, suffer hazardous working conditions and denied their labor rights. They also have no protection against physical and sexual abuse and exploitation.

## Revolutionary mobilization

From the onset, the national democratic movement recognizes that since half of the Filipino people are women, its victory significantly depends on mobilizing women in all fields of struggle. It recognizes that women experience greater exploita-



tion compared to men. Added to the exploitation, oppression and suppression they suffer are the prevalence of male chauvinism and gender discrimination.

In the history of the revolutionary movement, the issues of women are recognized and addressed. In its early stage, Makibaka (Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan) was established as an ally organization of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. For the first time, an organization clearly articulating the oppression against the sector and the need for a liberative women's movement in a national democratic revolution was formed.

Likewise, the program of the Party, both in its first and second Congress, states that the rights and welfare of women while waging revolution and in the future socialist society must be respected. This covers courtship, marriage and divorce, wherein their wellbeing is primarily ensured and protected. The Party and NPA ensures equal rights and opportunities to its male and female members.

These measures have long been instituted to encourage women's participation in the revolution. Current conditions are ripe to further increase their number and enhance their capabilities in all fields of the struggle. They are encouraged to participate in all lines of work—in the economy, politics, culture, military

and organizational leadership—to shatter the stereotypes against women wherein they are considered as mere housewives, cooks and laundrywomen among others.

The revolutionary movement knows that the complete liberation of women can be achieved through their struggle. They must be roused and supported in the fight against gender discrimination and male chauvinism alongside their struggle against exploitation by imperialists, landlords and bureaucrat capitalists. They must also be roused to help men combat the remnants of chauvinism

which manifest even within the progressive and revolutionary movement.

Intellectuals must rip their illusion of equality between men and women just because both are able to enter college, become professionals and enjoy social mobility. They must combat the bourgeois concept of "women empowerment" that is being propagated by imperialists and the ruling classes as this only means assimilation into the status quo of the reactionary bureaucracy and plunderous corporations. AB

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### **Nurses fight against inhumane working conditions**

NURSES AND HEALTH workers of the University of Santo Tomas Hospital (USTH) in Manila are planning to mount a strike against inhumane working conditions in the hospital.

Due to lack of employees in the hospital, nurses are required to render longer hours of work. This affects the quality of their service. They attested that majority of them are compelled to work for more 12 hours daily.

At present, the hospital has 965 employees, 579 of whom are union members. Majority of the union members voted in favor of the strike last February 11. They filed a notice of strike at the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) after negotiations between the union and administration deadlocked.

They also exposed the prevalence of contractualization in the USTH. Newly employed workers are obliged to pay P5,000-P7,000.

Meanwhile, members of the Organization of Zagu Workers (ORGANIZA) conducted a prayer vigil last February 19 in front of the office of Zagu Food Corporation to oppose its unfair labor practices and plan to dismantle the union. Recently, ORGANIZA filed a notice of strike at the National Conciliation and Mediation Board.

In Baguio City, the lack of DOLE inspectors tasked to ensure occupational safety in workplaces was exposed. The regional DOLE office has only 16 labor inspectors who are also tasked to check on the operations of about 20,000 business establishments in the city. Meanwhile, there are only 800 inspectors tasked to check on the operations of more than 900,000 business establishments across the country. AB

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### **Progressives launch Manila Baywatch**

MORE THAN 200 members of fisherfolk, urban poor, women, religious and environmental organizations assembled at the Malate Church in Manila last February 22 to launch the Manila Baywatch, an alliance that will keep an eye on the progress of the so-called rehabilitation and reclamation of Manila Bay.

The group asserted that if the regime's rehabilitation plan is sincere, it should have focused on constructing housing units along the bay and canals instead of forcibly evicting residents. Manila Bay has to be rehabilitated based on the needs of the fisherfolk and not to their detriment.

The US embassy is set to benefit from the project as it is set to erect buildings in the area. AB

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### **Women welcome passage of Expanded Maternity Leave Law**

THE EXPANDED MATERNITY Law was finally enacted after it was formally approved by Rodrigo Duterte last February 22.

The Gabriela Women's Partylist (GWP) along with other progressive groups and personalities lobbied and campaigned for the said law for almost a decade. The law grants 105 paid days of maternity leave to expectant mothers. They are also granted the right to avail another month of leave without pay.

GWP said that the passage is a product of their assiduous campaign, along with other groups, in recognition of the significant role of women in the economy. "This is a positive development in ensuring women's rights to maternal health and job security," added the GWP.

However, GWP warned that the said law must not be used to discriminate women workers. Only 2% of the total working women population get pregnant. In addition, majority of women workers are contractuels and thus denied their right to even the most basic benefits. In the service sector and factories in export processing zones, employers do not hire pregnant women workers. Even married women are not hired as they can get pregnant. More often than not, they are not re-employed after childbirth. AB

## Commemoration of the 100th anniversary of Comintern

THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAN movement commemorated the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Third International or the Communist International (Comintern) by its First Congress in Moscow on March 2-6, 1919. The Comintern was the outcome of the victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution which established the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia and paved the way for seven decades of successful socialist revolutions and constructions in one-third of the entire world. It has had far-reaching revolutionary influence and consequences beyond its 1943 dissolution.

On March 1, Jose Maria Sison, founding chairperson of the Communist Party of the Philippines issued an article wherein he retraced the historic role of the Comintern in assisting in the consolidation of the Communist Party of the Philippine Islands (CPPI), the old Communist Party of the Philippines, since its establishment in 1930. The complete article can be accessed in the CPP website at [www.philippinerevolution.info](http://www.philippinerevolution.info). AB

## DPRK resists US armtwisting

NEITHER AN AGREEMENT nor a joint statement was announced after the second meeting of Kim Jong Un, leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or North Korea), and US President Donald Trump during the last week of February in Vietnam. The objective of the said meeting was to rediscuss the denuclearization of the DPRK, an agreement forged during the first meeting between the two in Singapore last year. This was first agreed upon by the DPRK and the Republic of Korea (South Korea) as an initial measure for the reunification of the two Koreas. The DPRK refused to immediately dismantle its nuclear facilities when the US failed to revoke the economic sanctions it imposed against the former. The sanction restricts a number of countries to trade with the DPRK. This constrains commerce in the DPRK and compels it to rely on trade with China and other independent countries.

It is clear that the DPRK that will not drop its capacity to manufacture and use nuclear weapons without a serious concession from the US. Its nuclear arsenal is considered as one of the most powerful weapons against direct US aggression and intervention, and its aggression through South Korea wherein US troops and nuclear arms are stationed. Among the demands of the DPRK to the US are the forging of a peace treaty between North and South Korea, the immediate end of economic sanctions and war games being conducted in its borders and seas, and the reduction in the number of US troops stationed in South Korea. At present, about 28,500 US troops are stationed along the boundary of the DPRK and South Korea.

Since the first meeting, the DPRK suspended its missile and nuclear testings. Contrarily, the US has just started to temporarily suspend its war games with the army of South Korea. At present, its nuclear-capable submarines, warships and aircrafts which it may use against the DPRK are still stationed in Asia. AB