

LIBERATION INTERNATIONAL

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Achieve strategic stalemate in five years – CPP

By Ed Ladera

Close to 3,000 people gathered on 26 December at Marihatag, Surigao del Sur province, in southern Philippines, to celebrate the 41st anniversary of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). The celebration was attended by residents from nearby villages and towns, and reporters and media workers.

Similar gatherings were also held in various other parts of the Philippines in the guerrilla fronts an even in the urban areas, clandestine gatherings commemorating the CPP's 41st anniversary.

The CPP leadership, in its anniversary statement, calls on its forces to make a great advance in the people's war for new democracy. It declares its determination to strive within the next five years to make the great advance from the stage of strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate, fulfilling all the requirements and without skipping any necessary phase.

Strategic stalemate means that the revolutionary armed forces shall have achieved parity in the revolutionary war against the armed forces of the reactionary government. The strategic stalemate paves the way for the next stage in the protracted people's war, namely the strategic offensive, which pushes towards the nationwide victory in the struggle for national and social liberation.

The CPP's optimism is based on three factors. First is the ever worsening crisis of the world capitalist system, which is now in the throes of its worst crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Second is the accelerated worsening crisis and rotting of the semicolonial and semifeudal ruling system in the Philippines. Third is the revolutionary forces of the people led by the Party that have far more strength now than at the start of our people's war in 1969, and have the sufficient strength and critical mass to carry out the tasks and plans for advancing to the next strategic stage of the people's **Stalemate, page 2, col 1 ...**



Banners of the NDFP member organizations are held aloft during the 41st anniversary celebrations of the CPP in Mindanao, 26 December 2009. philippinerevolution.net.

Help the people of Haiti, Reject US military occupation!

By Prof. Jose Maria Sison
Chairperson, International
League of Peoples' Struggle
NDFP Chief Political Consultant

On 12 January 2010, a magnitude 7 earthquake shook Haiti. The quake and its numerous aftershocks have wrought death and injury to a huge number of people and catastrophic damage to their homes and vital public infrastructures. Some estimates say up to 200,000 have been killed and more than 2 million people were rendered homeless. Billions of dollars worth of public and private infrastructure have been devastated.

The people of Haiti are undergoing incalculably great suffering. We, the International League of Peoples' Struggle convey our deepest sympathies to the Haitian people for their loss and express our most heartfelt recognition of their plight. We join the

people of the world in lending our wholehearted support to help ease their suffering and call on our member-organizations and allies to extend immediate rescue and relief support to the victims in Haiti.

In the face of the devastation, the people of Haiti have had to rely on themselves and have shown heroism in helping each other as they go through the rubble, digging with their hands and puny tools to pull out what they can of the victims, both survivors and dead. With hardly any government or international aid support effectively reaching them on the ground despite the speed of information and hype of international dis-

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war within the next five years.

From the current 120 guerrilla fronts where the New People's Army (NPA) operates, the CPP calls for increasing these to 180 guerrilla fronts to cover all rural congressional districts in the country. The CPP, NPA and National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) have developed revolutionary mass organizations of workers, peasants, women, youth and cultural groups in these guerrilla fronts covering more than 800 municipalities and 10,000 villages, in 70 out of the 81 provinces in the country. A guerrilla front covers some 6 to 8 municipalities.

People's committees or organs of political power are organized in these areas. The people's committees conduct programs of land reform, health, education, culture, settling disputes, and self-defense. They are examples of people's empowerment and constitute the people's democratic government.

The CPP likewise calls for the establishment of more relatively stable base areas. Based on an ever widening and deepening mass base which now runs into millions, the NPA is tasked to intensify its tactical offensives against the regime's military, police, and paramilitary forces. In the process, it will be able to establish wider and more stable base areas.

The CPP calls on its tens of thousands of Party cadres and members to intensify their recruitment of Party members and reach 200,000 within the next five years. These are needed to lead the varied tasks of the revolutionary movement in order to achieve the great advance to the strategic stalemate.

The CPP calls for the further implementation of its genuine land reform program from its current minimum program of rent reduction, elimination or reduction of usury and raising of farm workers' wages to its

maximum level wherever the strength of the peasant movement and the NPA render it feasible. Such maximum program would make more land available for free distribution to the poor and middle peasants and farmworkers.

The CPP further calls for the campaign of mass organizing, raising domestic production and settling of disputes to be pursued well.

The current revolutionary land reform program has already benefited millions of peasants and farmworkers. This program constitutes the main content of the new democratic revolution because it is the answer to the basic aspiration for land of the peasantry which comprises the majority of the Philippine population.

Together with raising the level of the revolutionary movement's land reform program, there is the requirement to raise the level of the health, education, cultural and self-defense programs. Through people's clinics, for example, combining the use of herbal medicines, acupuncture and Western medicine, the NPA medics and community health workers provide needed health care to vast areas of the country, totally neglected by the reactionary government.

A comrade prepares a mural for the anniversary celebration of the Communist Party of the Philippines in a guerrilla base in northern Philippines. philippinerevolution.net



The educational and cultural programs are also being further developed. Programs for literacy, numeracy and revolutionary education are constantly improved, with the educated youth and workers from the urban areas playing an important role. They are the teachers to the current generation of schoolchildren neglected and exploited by the reactionary government.

People's militia and the self-defense units of the mass organizations have to be increased so they can become auxiliaries and reserve forces of the NPA, besides carrying out police duties within the guerrilla fronts and ensuring the safety of the mass organizations.

The CPP 41st anniversary statement concludes with the following exhortation:

“We are confident of fulfilling the ideological, political and organizational requirements for our Party to achieve the great advance from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate in the next five years. We must seize every minute, every day and every week for carrying out plans and the tasks assigned to us.”

For the complete 41st anniversary statement of the CPP, please see www.philippinerevolution.net. ■



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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Accumulated strength over the years will make the targets attainable -- Fr. Salas

[Editor's note: Liberation International interviewed representatives of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines from the various regions of the country, asking them about the conditions on the ground, and about the call of the Communist Party of the Philippines to attain strategic equality with the reactionary state forces in the next five years. The NDFP representatives illustrated how the revolutionary movement is growing, despite the non-stop and vicious attacks of the security forces of the Gloria Arroyo government. They also explain how the revolutionary organizations and the organs of political power are preparing themselves for the next strategic leap in the ongoing people's war, from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate.

LI presents the first in this series of interviews, with Fr. Santiago Salas, Spokesperson of the NDFP in Eastern Visayas region, in central Philippines.]

By Roselle Valerio

Roselle Valerio: The government of Gloria Arroyo has boasted of defeating the revolutionary movement by the end of its term in June 2010. How far has it gone in terms of achieving this goal? In the region, how much damage has the Arroyo regime's national security program Oplan Bantay Laya wrought against the people's army, the local organs of political power, the mass movement and the people's livelihood?

Fr. Santiago Salas: It is not the revolutionary movement but the Arroyo regime that is on its way to defeat by the end of its term. There is no way that the regime can declare triumph over the revolutionary movement. The New People's Army continues to grow and carry out increasing tactical offensives, while the revolutionary mass movement rises up and leads the people as well as influences the united front.

Long before the regime's deadline for Oplan Bantay Laya in June 2010, the revolutionary movement had pronounced it a failure as early as in 2008. In fact, the 8th Infantry Division of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in the region had implicitly admitted as much in the last quarter of 2009 by downgrading its goal from defeating the revolutionary movement to ostensibly reducing it into in consequence by the end of Arroyo's term.

No guerrilla front in the region had ever



been dismantled by Oplan Bantay Laya. The NPA has not suffered militarily under Oplan Bantay Laya because it carries out guerrilla warfare. The average casualty ratio shows that 9-10 enemy soldiers are killed for every Red fighter.

The local organs of political power remain intact and carry out their functions while taking precautions in the midst of enemy operations. While political killings and harassment under Oplan Bantay Laya have sought to cripple the mass movement, this perseveres and carries out anti-feudal, anti-imperialist and antifascist struggles. Military operations have also at times led to economic suffering for the people because of the enemy's wanton targeting of civilians and their communities. But the people have stood up to defend their rights, carry out various mass struggles, and practice economic production to support the NPA and their war.

RV: Do you think that the enemy is still capable of launching massive military operations against the armed revolutionary movement before June 2010? In the region, which units of the Arroyo regime's security forces are most responsible for launching brutal attacks against the people and the revolutionary movement?

FSS: The enemy is sorely overstretched and under-strength in the region. The 8th ID has in fact sought augmentation by at least three battalions, but the Arroyo government agreed only to the recruitment of a battalion of raw recruits. The 8th ID's battalions have often been arbitrarily pulled out and redeployed elsewhere in the Visayas and Mindanao, because the regime is at war on many fronts especially with the NPA and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

While the division can mount up to brigade-sized operations for a time, these do not last for long and always end without much consequence. The notorious enemy units in the region include the 63rd Infantry Battalion, the 34th IB, the 14th IB and the 19th IB. While these have never been able to seriously damage the NPA, these are hated by the people for carrying out extrajudicial killings, torture, economic blockades and other violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

RV: Have US military forces been involved in counter-revolutionary activities in the region?

FSS: In 2008, the US Navy carried out psychological warfare operations in the guise of a humanitarian mission in Western

Fr. Salas, page 4, col 1 ...

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Samar. While ostensibly on limited movement, the foreign enemy troops in fact ventured into parts of the hinterland.

In 2009 also, US special operations forces carried out a secret training of 8th ID troops in Western Samar. This was made known only after the completion of the training and earned a chilly reception from the public because of the US military intervention.

RV: Despite the vicious attacks of the Arroyo regime, the revolutionary movement has managed to advance significantly in the last 10 years. What were the major victories achieved in the region within the last decade? How would you compare the revolutionary movement of today to that of 10 years ago?

FSS: A major victory in the region is the raising of the fighting capabilities of the people's army and the intensifying of guerrilla warfare based on an expanding and deepening mass base.

For a time during and after the Second Great Rectification Movement (1992), the people's army struggled to shake off conservatism after the premature regularization of the 1980s. Now the NPA is very capable in the study and practice of guerrilla warfare. Ten years ago, the NPA could only carry out a handful of tactical offensives. But since 2007, guerrilla offensives have been increasing in the region. In 2008 and 2009, there were a total of 143 tactical offensives, inflicting casualties of more than 180 enemy troops killed in action while confiscating 63 firearms.

The NPA in the region aims to carry out at least 100 tactical offensives every year, especially annihilative actions.

Another major victory in the region is the continuing consolidation and enthusiasm of our mass bases. Many of these have existed for decades. While there are twists and turns throughout the years, the people remain enthusiastic and filled with revolutionary optimism because they have seen the betterment of their lives in the political, economic and cultural spheres. Thus while we may have some weaknesses and shortcomings, the people remain warm to the revolutionary cause and eager to learn and participate in the mass campaigns.

Still another victory is the growth of the united front in the region. In the past ten years we had accomplishments that we had never done before. For one, we were able to face the butchery of Gen. Jovito Palparan in 2005 and compel his removal from the

region, the first time that a division commander had been removed from the region because of widespread opposition.

We also continue to garner friends and allies not only in the region, but even outside, up to the international level. Thus we continue to gain strength even after the vicious attacks on the people under Oplan Bantay Laya, and we look forward to more dramatic strides.

RV: In its statement marking the 41st anniversary of the re-establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines on 26 December 2009, the Party's Central Committee declared that the people's war should advance from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate within the next five years. How have the people and the revolutionary mass movement in the region reacted to this declaration?

FSS: The people and the revolutionary mass movement have responded warmly to the CPP Central Committee's declaration. There is a lot of excitement over our revolutionary gains and capabilities, and such enthusiasm is being translated into the sober buckling down to the tasks required for such a momentous leap.

RV: Do you think that this target is achievable in the next five years, given the objective situation and the condition of the revolutionary forces in the region?

FSS: While it appears daunting, we are confident that the accumulated experience and strength over many years, as well as the raging domestic and international crises, will make the target not only reasonable but attainable.

RV: What are the targets that have been defined for the region, in order to contribute to the achievement of this five-year strategic goal? Please illustrate what targets have been set in the region for advancing the land reform program, the revolutionary mass movement and the local organs of political power, and the armed struggle against the armed counter-revolution.

FSS: In the agrarian revolution, we aim to consolidate our gains. That means the management and development of the confiscated, abandoned or donated lands; sustaining the victories in rent reduction and other antifeudal struggles; and preventing the return of the worst forms of exploitation, as well as developing production and the economy to the benefit of the mass base and for the war.

We also aim to extend the antifeudal struggle on a wider scope, to reach the plains, the plantations and other land of the biggest landlords in the region, and other areas along the lines of transportation. We are also carrying out a campaign right now against hunger, poverty and repression in response to the current crisis in the region, and to serve as the launchpad for the anti-feudal struggle.

With regards to base-building, we are striving to further raise the level of consolidation of the guerrilla bases through invigoration of the antifeudal struggle, as well as the establishment of municipal mass associations and municipal organs of political power. We are also working towards close-knit guerrilla bases to establish the base areas. We are also strengthening other areas where we are active, while further expanding the guerrilla fronts to reach new areas

In the armed struggle, we are working to raise the fighting capability of the NPA units and commands to achieve, at the minimum, one annihilative tactical offensive every three months and seize firearms from the enemy. We are also developing the people's militia units so these can be capable and fully mobilized for the participation of the masses in guerrilla warfare.

In front-building, which is the expression of advancing the three integral tasks in the people's war, we aim to build an additional 16-23 guerrilla fronts, with the majority having an NPA company. We are

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An NPA unit takes time to improve their communication skills in Filipino, the national language. Here, they study Filipino poetry and later recite a poem to an appreciative audience. philippinerevolution.net



... Fr. Salas, page 4, col 3

also working to develop the coordination and assistance between close-knit guerrilla fronts through subregional military areas that use the favorable terrain, wide and consolidated mass bases, and sustainable economy for the war.

RS: In your opinion, what are the main obstacles – internal and external to the revolutionary movement in the region – you will need to overcome in order to contribute to the achievement of the five-year goal of strategic stalemate?

FSS: One of the internal obstacles we are overcoming is developing and training cadres and those who will follow them in comprehensive work and particular lines of work at various levels.

There is also the effort to overcome the remaining influences of military conservatism and “guerrillaism”. We are also working to steadily raise the level of the ideological and political consolidation of the cadres and members of the Party, NPA and all revolutionary forces.

Regarding external obstacles, we foresee hardships if the enemy will push for troop buildups and intensified military operations. On the other hand, we could make the best of an otherwise bad situation by intensifying guerrilla warfare against an increased number of targets.

RV: The reactionary state will be conducting national and local elections this coming May. How will this affect the revolutionary work in the region? Can the people and the revolutionary movement reap any advantage or benefit from this type of exercise?

The revolutionary movement regards any reactionary election as a time to strengthen itself and further weaken the ruling system.

There is no real benefit for the people from such an exercise. But the splits among the reactionaries can be taken advantage of to isolate and defeat the most reactionary. Meanwhile, the people can intensify their mass struggles during this time to win the most favorable benefits and concessions, while remaining conscious that such are ephemeral.

The coming elections will furthermore expose the utter rottenness and bankruptcy of the ruling system, and can win over many to the revolutionary cause especially because of the expected massive fraud and power grab by the Arroyo regime. ■

Cagayan Valley to build guerrilla bases and local government in next 5 years

By Roselle Valerio

[*Second of a series. Interview with Salvador del Pueblo, Spokesperson of the NDFP in Cagayan Valley Region, in northern Philippines.]*

Roselle Valerio: The government of Gloria Arroyo has boasted of defeating the revolutionary movement led by the Communist Party of the Philippines by the end of its term in June 2010. How far has it gone in terms of achieving this goal? In the region, how much damage has the Arroyo regime’s national security program Oplan Bantay Laya wrought against the people’s army, the local organs of political power, the mass movement and the people’s livelihood?

Salvador del Pueblo: The Arroyo regime, in its desperate attempt to weaken or crush the revolutionary forces before June 2010, has resorted to carrying out the dirtiest and cruelest attacks against the people. The regime’s national security program has inflicted havoc on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people in the region. It has claimed the lives of many innocent civilians.

In Baggao, Cagayan, the opening barrage of the regime’s OBL 2 thrust in the province was the 17th IB’s machine gunfire directed at four innocent teenagers who were on their way to a picnic in July 2006. In the manner reminiscent of the US Operation Phoenix in Vietnam, the regime regarded every progressive citizen and even simple civilians as enemies of the state. Every legal progressive organization of the people, and every resident of suspected revolutionary barrios, was branded as “terrorist”. To weaken the people’s resolve and instill fear among them, the Arroyo regime, thru its death squads, murdered 16 peasant leaders and masses, imprisoned more on the basis of trumped-up criminal charges, and harassed hundreds of members of people’s organizations.

In the course of numerous protracted military operations of the 5th Infantry Division in the region, no less than 426,300 individuals (246,600 in Cagayan province; 71,100 in central Isabela; 57,600 in Quirino province; 51,000 in south Isabela) suffered countless violations on their human rights, such as enforced disappearances, physical abuse, forced evacuation, food blockades, grave coercion, harassment, desecration of remains, hamletting, indiscriminate firing and sexual abuse.

The regime has apportioned billions of pesos of funds, training and personnel for the purpose of launching the filthiest psychological warfare against the revolution. In the region, the Civilian-Military Operations Battalion commanded by Lt. Col. Loreto Magundayao, Jr. led a persistent smear campaign against the New People’s Army, its commanders and fighters alike, in an attempt to vilify the people’s army. It concocted outrageous untruths and consistently drummed up lies regarding the NPA’s alleged weakening or defeat in the region, like how the NPA’s Benito Tesorio Command in southern Isabela was crushed in 2008.

The NDFP in Cagayan Valley is one with the rest of the revolutionary forces in the country in the analysis that Arroyo’s national security program has achieved nothing significant, except furthering the regime’s isolation, exposing the present

Cagayan Valley, page 6, col 1 ...



... Cagayan Valley, page 5, col 3

system's worsening bankruptcy, and magnifying the correctness of the people's armed revolution.

RV: Do you think that the enemy is still capable of launching massive military operations against the armed revolutionary movement before June 2010? In the region, which units of the Arroyo regime's security forces are most responsible for launching brutal attacks against the people and the revolutionary movement?

SP: It is certain that the enemy will make every effort to sustain massive military operations, especially in the last months of Arroyo's frantic and hopeless rule, and with the reactionary elections at hand. But as it is, the enemy is overly stretched, careless and extremely detested by the masses.

In the region, the 17th Infantry Battalion in Cagayan – led by its most aggressive officers like Lt. Johnny Calub, Lt. Col. Lawrence Mina, and Lt. Col. James Joven – has been the most vicious in its attack against the people. Their Special Operations Team has been terrorizing peasants in Zinundungan Valley for two straight years, committing numerous human rights violations including the murder of three peasant leaders and the enforced disappearance of two more.

The 5th Infantry Division based at Upi, Gamu, Isabela led by Major General Melchor Dilodilo, thru the 52nd Reconnaissance Company which served as the main force in OBL2's Task Force Amiya in Cagayan, was responsible for the murder of five peasant leaders in the province, the arson of community radio Radyo Cagayano in 2006, and the ransack of the peasants' multipurpose cooperative in Baggao, Cagayan.

In Isabela, the 45th IB led by Col. Marcos, Col. Malillin and the 52nd Reconnaissance Company has been primarily responsible for launching massive military operations, also committing grave abuses against the people.

RV: Have US military forces been involved in counter-revolutionary activities in the region?

SP: There have been no obvious activities involving US military forces in the region.

RV: Despite the vicious attacks of the Arroyo regime, the revolutionary movement has managed to advance significantly in the last 10 years. What were the major victories achieved in the region within the last decade? How would you compare the



Firearms, ammunition and communications equipment collected from the enemy after a successful ambush by a unit of the New People's Army. The US and the Armed Forces of the Philippines are the biggest arms supplier of the revolutionary movement. philippinerevolution.net

revolutionary movement of today to that of 10 years ago?

SP: Within the last decade, the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines has firmly and correctly led the New People's Army and the whole revolutionary forces in the region. At the start of the decade, it successfully combated conservatism which existed among its ranks from 1994 until 1999. As a result, we have decisively defeated every counter-revolutionary campaign of the ruling class. In the 1999 Regional Party Conference, there were only 92 full-time NPA fighters and just one active Local Party Branch. Now, these numbers have greatly increased.

Land reform program was carried out and has benefited more than 400,000 peasants in the region. Land rent, rent of farm implements and usurious debt interests were lowered by an average of 50% in 11 towns of the two biggest provinces in the region. Prices of farmers' crops such as palay, corn and banana increased; so did farm workers' daily wages. This anti-feudal campaign in the region for the past decade has been acknowledged as one of the most successful in the country.

This achievement has directly resulted in more victories and further advancement for the people's war. Platoon-size formations of the NPA were built up at the early years of the decade, steadily strengthened and are now reaching company-size formations.

Of course, all these were possible because the Party leadership at all levels continued to resolutely strive in strengthening its

ranks ideologically, politically and organizationally in the last decade.

RV: In its statement marking the 41st anniversary of the re-establishment of the Communist Party of the Philippines on 26 December 2009, the Party's Central Committee declared that the people's war should advance from the strategic defensive to the strategic stalemate within the next five years. How have the people and the revolutionary mass movement in the region reacted to this declaration?

SP: Cadres and members of the Party, officials and fighters under the NPA-Cagayan Valley Regional Command and all revolutionary forces in the region hailed the declaration. It inspired cadres and ordinary Party members to be more enthusiastic in performing revolutionary duties. All the more, we optimistically look forward to more victories for the people's war and resolve to contribute to its realization.

RV: Do you think that this target is achievable in the next five years, given the objective situation and the condition of the revolutionary forces in the region?

SP: Definitely, the present conditions in the entire country and the accumulated strength of the revolutionary movement were decisive in the central leadership's declaration.

The revolutionary forces in the region are relatively weak and may be the weakest in the country. If it were up to the region's strength, it would be impossible to achieve

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... Cagayan Valley, page 6, col 3

stalemate. But the cumulative force of the revolutionary forces in the whole country is the decisive factor in determining the stage of the people's war. There are many advanced regions that can and will determine the over-all advance.

Even as we are still weak, we firmly grasp essential lessons necessary for advancing the revolution at a faster pace – undertaking agrarian revolution, building the people's militia and self-defense corps, and intensifying tactical offensives. All these will bring about advances in the region and will contribute to achieving stalemate.

RV: What are the targets that have been defined for the region, in order to contribute to the achievement of this five-year strategic goal? Please illustrate what targets have been set in the region for advancing the land reform program, the revolutionary mass movement and the local organs of political power, and the armed struggle against the armed counter-revolution.

SP: In keeping with the Party's 5-year goal and basing on the concrete conditions in the region, the CV Party Committee has set a particular five-year plan that will ensure the region's contribution. It sets forth the tasks of further consolidating all revolutionary forces, primarily those in the people's army and full-time forces deployed in non-army work.

We aim to develop more than ever the capability of Party cadres, in increasing numbers, in leading revolutionary work at all fields. In five years, to achieve a qualitative leap, we shall build a number of relatively stable guerrilla bases as well as set organs of political powers that span numerous barrios in areas of operation.

By steadily increasing the number of NPA recruits, we plan to achieve more company-sized guerrilla fronts, with units of the people's militia expanding to at least five unified commands in the multi-barrio level per guerrilla front, and one unified command in the multi-municipal level. We aim to build a platoon-sized NPA formation to serve as the region's center of gravity; as well as platoon-sized units as centers of gravity per guerrilla front.

We shall strive to launch tactical offensives on a more extensive scale, aiming to launch at least three annihilative attacks per NPA platoon against the enemy every year.

RV: In your opinion, what are the main obstacles – internal and external to the revolutionary movement in the region – you will need to overcome in order to contribute to

Bourgeois elections and the revolutionary movement

By **Bagani Dong-ilay**

On May 10, 2010 bourgeois elections are going to be held in the Philippines. To be elected are officials from the national to the municipal levels. These elections are expected to be marred again by widespread cheating, vote-buying and violence.

Whoever is elected as president of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) will most likely follow the policies of previous presidents designed to preserve the position and privileges of the local ruling classes of big compradors and landlords under the moribund semi-colonial and semi-feudal ruling system.

But a new element in the coming elections is the fact that two progressive candidates from the national democratic mass movement – Satur Ocampo and Liza Maza – are running for the upper house of Congress, the Senate. They come from the progressive party-list groups Bayan Muna and Gabriela Women's Party that have consistently topped the party-list elections in the

lower house of Congress in the past several years. Together with six other progressive party-list members of parliament, they have espoused and fought for the interests of the toiling masses and other democratic sectors within the reactionary institution that is dominated by representatives of compradors and landlords.

Ocampo and Maza are running as guest candidates under the Nacionalista Party whose candidate for president Manuel Villar has adopted a platform that promises to promote national industrialization, genuine land reform and justice to victims of human rights violations under the previous regimes. This is the reason why the two progressive candidates agreed to run under his party. The other presidential candidates keep to the traditional mold of promising "clean government" and a vague promise to solve poverty. It remains to be seen, however, if Villar will keep his promises once elected to the presidency.

The Philippine revolutionary movement has a clear policy with regards to reactionary elections. These elections do not con-

Elections, page 8, col 1 ...

the achievement of the five-year goal of strategic stalemate?

SP: Internal obstacles can be overcome by strengthening the composition of Party committees deployed at revolutionary work in the cities within the region; improving revolutionary work in the youth sector; and overcoming conservatism at seizing opportunities in military work.

External obstacles include the enemy's intensive efforts to infiltrate the revolutionary committees and organizations, and the damage enemy assets may inflict on our ranks.

RV: The reactionary state will be conducting national and local elections this coming May. How will this affect the revolutionary work in the region? Can the people and the revolutionary movement reap any advantage or benefit from this type of exercise?

SP: The revolutionary forces in the region firmly uphold the revolutionary principles regarding the Party's tasks in the reactionary elections. Because of this, we are confident that the revolutionary movement will maximize all possible opportunities of strengthening its ranks before, after and especially during the course of the elections. We are now geared for participating

in the electoral struggle in various means.

The armed movement acquired arms, finance and logistics from political allies and even class enemies during elections. No matter what lies the reactionary government spins, the truth is that the revolutionary government in the countryside exists and national-democratic forces are a political strength to contend with.

The people have long proven that they can reap numerous benefits by advancing their democratic interests during the elections. In 2004, peasants successfully advanced their anti-feudal demands and launched confrontational protests with landlords who were also running for office, or close allies of politicians.

Also, the masses took advantage of the reactionary elections to overthrow the Dy dynasty in Isabela in 2004. When the revolutionary forces led the masses in this campaign, the prestige of the people's legal and clandestine revolutionary movement increased. More than a million people participated in that popular movement and proved that the masses' initiative, daringness and unity are more powerful than any despot in history. ■

... Elections, page 7, col 3

stitute real democratic exercises. These are political contests decided by guns, goons and gold among candidates who represent the interests of the local ruling classes and subservient to the interests of US imperialism. According to one famous revolutionary, bourgeois elections are held every four years or so to determine who among the ruling classes are going to oppress the people for the next four years or so.

It is a fairly recent phenomenon that progressive candidates have won seats in the reactionary Philippine parliament. They have won mainly because of the support from the mass base of the national democratic movement.

Because of the strength accumulated by the revolutionary movement in terms of its mass base, political influence and armed strength, even reactionary politicians from the national to the local levels seek out the movement in times of elections for various reasons ranging from vying for its support, to getting some guarantee that they can freely campaign in areas under the control of the revolutionary movement.

Dual political power exists in the country today. Revolutionary power exists in many parts of the Philippines with organs of political power exercising governmental functions within revolutionary areas.

The revolutionary movement allows reactionary elections to take place even within its areas of control and influence inasmuch as the masses can still gain something from these elections while the revolution has not yet won nationwide victory. But the movement enforces certain policies and issues guidelines on the conduct of reactionary elections within the revolutionary areas.

These policies are meant to ensure that the people's rights and interests are not violated, and campaigning and the elections themselves are held in an orderly and peaceful manner. Armed goons, military and police escorts are forbidden from accompanying candidates. Cheating and bribery to win votes are not allowed to prosper. Candidates must coordinate with duly constituted organs of the revolutionary government to facilitate their mobility in the area and to prevent possible untoward incidents. Violent acts among candidates are thus prevented.

Representatives of the people's government take advantage of the opportunity to discuss with candidates campaigning inside the revolutionary areas regarding some problems of the people and what can be done to pro-



(Top photo) "Distribute Hacienda Luisita to the farmers!" Participants to the march demand implementation of genuine agrarian reform. Above, a poster indicating the routes and meeting points of the nationwide march.

... Lakbayan, page 9, col 3

great havoc and displacement among hundreds of thousands of the peasant masses. It has committed grave human rights violations with impunity. Especially targeted by the military are peasant leaders and members of mass organizations who openly oppose the anti-people policies of the US-Arroyo regime.

US monopoly capitalism and the local reactionary ruling classes have mired the Philippines deeper in a semifeudal and agrarian quagmire. Neoliberal policies of denationalization, liberalization, deregulation and privatization dictated by US-led institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization have caused the rapid economic decline and the land monopolization by a few.

Foreign monopoly capitalists and their local lackeys use mechanisms such as production for export, pasture lease, reclassification and conversion of agricultural land into industrial and commercial, real state development, forest management and mining concessions to deprive the people of their land. Furthermore, they prioritize cash crops for the global market over rice and other food products needed by the people. Hunger, poverty, displacement are the fate that befalls the peasantry.

The solution to the land problem is the main content of the national democratic revolution. Revolutionary forces are continually organizing the peasantry in their numbers to wage the agrarian revolution. Lowering of land rent, raising of farm wages, eradication of usury, building of cooperatives, raising of the farmgate price of produce and distribution of land are victories that the peasants continue to achieve in their struggle for land and justice. ■

mote the people's interests and welfare. In so doing, the movement can develop some degree of cooperation and alliance with candidates who may be well-meaning in serving the interests of the people.

On the other hand, the revolutionary movement reserves the right to prevent the entry of candidates who have been proven guilty of serious crimes against the people and the revolutionary movement. Blatantly corrupt government officials, officials publicly known to have instigated serious human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings, disappearances and torture, known counter-revolutionary warlords, drug lords, and so on, are not allowed entry into the revolutionary areas.

The revolutionary movement explains to the people that they cannot rely on reactionary elections to have meaningful change. At the same time, since the revolutionary movement cannot yet prevent reactionary elections from taking place, the movement carries out certain measures to ensure that the people can gain some tangible benefits and that their rights and interests are not violated. ■

By Isah Antonio

Peasant marchers demand land and justice, call for genuine agrarian reform

They traversed thousands of kilometres under the scorching heat of the sun and the pouring rain. Though coming from the different regions of the Philippines, they came in unity to bring to the very seat of the local ruling classes their demand for Land and Justice. Known as *Lakbayan ng Anakpawis para sa Lupa at Katarungan 2010* (March of the Toiling Masses for Land and Justice 2010), it was the first ever nationwide peasant caravan.

The Lakbayan was also launched to commemorate the 23rd anniversary of the Mendiola massacre. On 22 January 1987, peasants and their supporters marching to Malacañang Palace in Manila and calling for then President Corazon Aquino to implement genuine land reform were met with bullets by the military guarding the presidential palace. Thirteen farmers were killed and scores were wounded on that day of infamy against the peasantry.

This time, more than 30,000 peasants, farm workers, fisherfolk, and members of sectoral organizations such as women, youth, church, indigenous, health and professionals participated in the Lakbayan. Starting on 12 January in southern Philippines and culminating on 22 January in Manila, the massive mobilization was spearheaded and organized by the Kilusan ng Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP-Peasant Movement of the Philippines) and AnakPawis (Toiling Masses) party list.

The Lakbayan kicked off in Davao City, more than 960 km south of Manila, and was participated by peasants from 12 regions: Ilocos, Cordillera, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Southern Tagalog and Bicol regions in Luzon; Panay region, Central Visayas and Eastern Visayas; and Central Mindanao, Southern Mindanao and Northern Mindanao. The march culminated in Metro Manila with protest actions held in Mendiola, near the presidential palace, and in front of the Department of Agrarian Reform in Quezon City.

In a vain attempt to halt the people's march, the military and police set up barricades and checkpoints in various points of the march, and threatened the participants with arrests and detention. But the marchers were undeterred and encouraged by the presence of the masses listening to their plight and experience, cheering them on, giving food and shelter for the night.

The Lakbayan also received messages of solidarity from overseas Filipino workers from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Hong Kong, Italy,



Peasant marchers from all over the country converged in Manila on 22 January to press their demand for genuine agrarian reform. They were joined by thousands of workers, the urban poor, and other progressive sectors. Arkibong Bayan.

Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Taiwan, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States. In a unity statement issued by Migrante International the migrants stated: "The Filipino migrant community believes that the government's labor export program is not the solution to the economic crisis, and the landlessness experienced by farmers in the communities we came from and in which our families back home are still struggling to survive.

"We salute the Filipino peasantry for undertaking this long march for land and justice. We urge the government to heed their calls, as well as ours, that only genuine land reform and national industrial development will uplift the Filipino people from poverty and address the roots of forced migration. Indeed, only genuine land reform and national industrial development has the potential to reunite us with our families and enable us to truly offer our lives and labor in service of the country."

The marchers were always vigorously and warmly welcomed by the masses who eagerly awaited the arrival of the marchers in every stop of the Lakbayan. Waving banners and flags and blazing torches were common scenes in welcoming the arrival of peasants from other regions, thus swelling the ranks of the people's march.

Along the way, public meetings, discussions and cultural presentations depicting the situation and struggle of the Filipino peasant masses were held. These illustrated the national panorama of the peasantry and the need for a united struggle against the ruling classes of landlords, big compradors, monopoly and bureaucrat capitalists.

Danilo Ramos, chairperson of KMP, stated at the start of the march: "The Filipino peasantry will deliver their strongest indictment of the anti-peasant, fascist and corrupt Gloria Macapagal Arroyo regime. They will express their disgust over the failure of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), the deceptive nature of its extension and the worsening conditions of the farmers all over the country."

A farmer leader from Compostela Valley, Jimmy Saypan, stated that farmers from Mindanao aim to bring their voices to Malacañang where Arroyo continues to play blind and deaf to the real situation of the farmers, while the farmers suffer from landlessness, hunger and the militarization of their communities.

Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL, Operation Guarding Freedom, the Arroyo government's so-called counter-insurgency program), according to Saypan, has created

Lakbayan, page 8, col 3 ...

By Isah Antonio

Series of disasters expose incompetence and corruption of US-Arroyo Regime

Even as a new typhoon threatens the Philippines, the Filipino people continue to cope with the devastation and destruction caused by two previous severe tropical storms, Ondoy and Pepeng, that besieged the country in the last month. The two successive typhoons resulted in the worst typhoon disaster in 40 years.

More than 1,000 people were killed and millions more victimized when homes, schools, office buildings, factories, farms and other structures were destroyed by flooding and landslides. A big majority of the victims were from the most vulnerable classes and sectors of society – the toiling masses of workers, peasants and the urban poor.

The last minute opening of the San Roque, Pantabangan and other dams in northern Philippines caused raging waters to submerge thousands of communities, homes, farms and fishing grounds especially in the provinces of Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Bulacan in Central Luzon and provinces of La Union, Pangasinan and Cagayan Valley in Northern Luzon. To add insult to injury, government officials blamed the people for not abandoning their homes earlier when the warning was given too late, if a warning was given at all.

While the Filipinos' spirit of bayanihan (helping one another) surfaced to the fore with the people's engagement in the relief, rescue and rehabilitation efforts and the outpouring of material, financial and moral support for the disaster victims, the Gloria Macapagal Arroyo regime, on the other hand, even turned the disaster into an opportunity for further corruption when it issued a directive centralizing all donations to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), a known milking cow of the corrupt regime. It then threatened to confiscate any donations not intended for the DSWD.

Arroyo and her clique's corruption and thievery eroded the calamity fund from P2 billion for the year to a mere P24 million before Typhoon Ondoy struck. Thus her government's disaster relief infrastructure and efforts were utterly inconsequential in the face of widescale destruction.

The inutility and incompetence of the Arroyo regime even gave the US an opportunity to strengthen its military presence in the Philippines. To further justify its increasing and permanent presence in the country, the US deployed more of its military troops to the Philippine countryside, under the guise of rescue and relief operations.

Meanwhile, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) issued a directive to the New People's Army to suspend tactical offensives in the Ilocos-Cordillera, Cagayan Valley and Central Luzon regions, to enable Red fighters and revolutionary forces to assist in the people's rehabilitation efforts. Units of the Party and the people's army as well as local revolutionary organizations promptly responded to the CPP's call and assisted in the evacuation of people to safer grounds and rescue those caught in the floods and landslides.

... Corruption and thievery eroded the calamity fund from P2 billion to P24 million before the typhoons struck. Government's disaster relief efforts were utterly inconsequential in the face of widescale destruction ...

Arroyo regime is culpable

The Arroyo regime cannot escape culpability in the series of disasters no matter how hard it tries to wash its hands of any responsibility. The CPP stated that the series of disasters is a direct result of the plunder and devastation of mountains, forests and watershed areas, as well as the siltation and destruction of lakes and rivers by foreign mining corporations, commercial loggers and pollution-spewing establishments. Overlogging and overmining in the Sierra Madre and Cordillera mountain ranges have destroyed the mountains' capacity to hold rainwater. Highly-silted rivers and lakes can no longer retain the rush of water from denuded mountains.

A case in point is the death and destruction caused by mud and landslides in the mountainous region of Benguet province in Northern Luzon. The open pit mining and large-scale block mining methods used by Benguet Mining Corporation in Itogon and by Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company have stripped the soil of supportive vegetation and undermined the foundations of

entire settlements and communities.

“The people hold the Arroyo regime responsible for opening the doors wide open for the plunder of our natural resources and destruction of our environment... These plunderers generously lined the pockets of Arroyo and her cabal of insatiable officials. The greed for profit of these imperialists, big compradors and big bureaucrat capitalists knows no bounds. The people are left to suffer the deleterious result of their plunder and destruction.”

“The widespread destruction of agricultural lands, fisheries and livestock has dealt a great blow on the already impoverished peasant masses. The disaster wrought by the floods and landslides amplify the poverty and hunger of the peasantry who have long suffered from various forms of feudal, semifeudal and imperialist exploitation.”

The CPP called upon the people to “intensify their national democratic revolutionary struggle in order to smash the social system that makes them victims of imperialist, feudal and bureaucratic exploitation, oppression and disregard, and renders them vulnerable to natural and man-made calamities. More than ever, the peasant masses need to vigorously wage agrarian revolution. The CPP and the revolutionary forces under its leadership will assist in every way to organize the peasant masses in their demand for a greater share of their produce, for a halt in usury and for higher farmgate prices.”

“At the same time, the revolutionary forces are rallying the proletarian and semiproletarian masses and the middle classes in Metro Manila and regions affected by the recent disasters in their struggle for jobs, living wages, livelihood, humane conditions, decent living quarters, lower prices of basic commodities, and for relief and social services.”

Declaring that the Arroyo regime must be made to pay for its responsibility in the widespread devastation, the CPP stated that the revolutionary forces and the people do not lose sight of the pressing need to intensify the revolutionary struggle. They are preparing to launch bigger political and military offensives in order to make the rotten Arroyo regime pay for its corruption and crimes, and the disasters it has caused, and heighten the struggle to put an end to the sufferings of the Filipino people perpetuated by a brutal, corrupt, unjust, oppressive and exploitative ruling system. ■

... *Help Haiti, page 1, col 3*

ter response, the people have had to rely on themselves for getting much needed water and emergency supplies.

We salute the Haitian people for helping each other. We also praise the various private organizations and institutions who have been able to extend whatever help on an international scale. At the same time, we direct our strongest denunciation against the US government for deploying military forces in Haiti instead of the personnel of US civilian agencies that are trained and equipped for rescue and relief aid.

The US government's first prolonged reaction to the earthquake was to send in the US Marines and the Army's 82nd Airborne Division. This is the notorious force unit that had invaded Vietnam, the neighboring Dominican Republic in 1965, Grenada in 1984, Haiti in 1994 and Afghanistan. Under the preposterous pretext of providing security to the devastated nation, the US landed and deployed army soldiers instead of civil rescue personnel and equipment, water and food.

The US military took control of the airport and blocked private relief organizations in order to make way for the flights carrying soldiers and military cargo in the crucial first week after the earthquake. Professional rescue teams from many countries were compelled to stay in neighboring Dominican Republic or elsewhere, because they were not given landing slots.

A French plane, carrying a fully-equipped field hospital, was prevented from landing by the US military. The aircraft of the UN World Food Programme was also blocked from landing food, medicine and water for three days, because the US gave priority to flights ferrying US troops and equipment and evacuating Americans and other Westerners.

More than ever, the earthquake disaster in Haiti exposes the social vulnerability and devastation caused by two centuries of colonial slavery, debt bondage and modern imperialism. The capability of the people of Haiti to surmount the dire results of such a natural disaster has been undermined and debilitated by man-made disasters, inflicted by foreign debt, US military interventions and occupation, and US-imposed "free market" policies.

Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere where 80% of the population live in poverty. At its peak in 2008, the country's total foreign debt was at US\$1.4 billion, about 40% of its GNP. It has been spending more in debt service than on medi-

Migrants get the heat from Europe's boiling crisis

By Pingkian

Mainstream mass media described the unrest as a "riot", after angry migrants, mostly from the African continent, took to the streets in the southern town of Rosarno in the Calabrian province of Italy in January this year. The migrants were denouncing the shooting by the local youth of several migrant farm workers who were returning from work to their shanties.

As if to rub salt to an already festering wound, the right-wing Italian government ordered the closure of migrant centers and proposed further measures "to curb the influx of migrants" into the country, and further curtail and trample on the rights and welfare of migrants and immigrants.

The anti-migrant and racist provocations by the Italian government early on were most likely the reason that encouraged the small number of local youth to attack the migrant workers.

This deplorable incident only highlights what has been an ongoing trend in European politics of late. Right-wing politicians together with other ruling conservative parties have ganged up on migrants and their rights.

Across Europe, especially in countries reeling from the financial and economic crisis, migrants and migration issues have become the main menu in the political agenda of right-wing and conservative politicians. The issue of migrants and migration have become issues that could either make or break a politician and his party.

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cal services to the people. Worse still, about 80% of the debt was incurred during the corrupt dictatorship of Francois and Jean-Claude Duvalier. Ruling under the strings of the US government, the Duvaliers plundered and repressed Haiti, stashing millions of dollars in their private bank accounts abroad.

Haiti is currently occupied by UN troops and controlled by a puppet government installed after the US military kidnapped democratically-elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004.

Decades of "structural adjustment" programs, under the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, have robbed the nation of the capacity to provide social services, produce enough food from the land and develop national industries. Since the late 1970s, these US-dictated programs have ejected tens of thousands of small farmers from the land and driven them to the overcrowded urban slums. A nation previously self-sufficient in grains and sugar is now importing rice and sugar, chiefly from the US.

It is utterly absurd and perverse for the US to invoke security as pretext for landing its military forces on a country which has long been laid prostrate by imperialist plunder and which has just been devastated by the earthquake. Natural disasters have become one of the major pretexts for US military intervention and occupation in various parts of the world. It is the dastardly policy of the US government all over the world to militarize its every pretense at aid and relief

assistance, to gain extraterritorial rights and to make propaganda for the acceptance of its military forces.

The ILPS calls on its member-organizations, its allies and the people of the world to extend their solidarity and support for the people of Haiti. Emergency support and relief activities by non-military organizations must be given full play, to help ease the suffering of those most affected. Long-term rehabilitation of Haiti must eventually be mapped out together with the Haitian people, in conjunction with respect for their national sovereignty and self-government.

The ILPS reiterates its call for the withdrawal of all US and other foreign military forces. We call on the American people to demand an end to US military occupation and intervention in Haiti and help reverse the course of US-Haiti relations. We can best help Haiti recover from the devastation of the 12 January earthquake by supporting the Haitian people's struggle for national self-determination against foreign military occupation and economic plunder.

[Friends from the western hemisphere highly recommend sending donations for the Haitian people to:

Haiti Emergency Relief Fund. <http://www.haitiaction.net/About/HERF/HERF.html> or send inquiries to East Bay Sanctuary Covenant, 2362 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, CA 94704, USA.

Partners in Health. <http://pih.org;youcando/donate.html>] ■

Prof. Sison wins vs. EU "terrorist" listing, fights for Dutch residency

By Ed Ladera

Communist Party of the Philippines founding Chairman Prof. Jose Maria Sison won a landmark legal victory on 30 September 2009 when the European Court of First Instance in Luxembourg nullified decisions and a regulation of the Council of the European Union which unjustly put Prof. Sison on its terrorist blacklist since 2002.

It was a brilliant legal victory also for Prof. Sison's international team of lawyers led by Atty. Jan Fermon of Belgium. The other lawyers in the team were Hans Eberhard Schultz and Wolfgang Kaleck of Germany, August Comte from France, Dundar Gurses from The Netherlands, and Romeo T. Capulong of the Public Interest Law Center in the Philippines.

The international team of judges was composed of N.J Forwood (Rapporteur), President, D. Svaby and E. Moavero Milanese, Judges.

This victory marked the climax of more than seven years of struggle against the EU terrorist listing and persecution, instigated by the US and implemented by the Council of the EU and the government of the Netherlands, with the collusion of the Philippine government of Ms. Gloria Arroyo.

However, the struggle of Prof. Sison to secure his fundamental rights continues. In his statement after the legal victory, he said that the ECFI judgment paves the way for him to: 1) claim back the social payments for living allowance, housing, health insurance and old age pension which have been withdrawn since 2002; 2) render professional services with remuneration or seek gainful employment; 3) secure legal admission as a refugee and a residence permit; 4) to travel freely without restrictions; 5) be free from being demonized and stigmatized as a terrorist; and 6) to claim moral and material damages.

In connection with Prof. Sison's continuing struggle for the recognition of his civil rights, the International Committee DEFEND has recently launched a campaign urging the Netherlands government to grant Prof. Sison permanent residence.

In a petition letter addressed to the Dutch Prime Minister and Minister of Justice, DEFEND declares that "it is a matter of justice that he must be allowed to normalize his life and to enjoy and exercise his basic

human rights and fundamental freedoms. For more than two decades, Prof. Sison has suffered from false accusations, unjust persecution and inhumane treatment for his political beliefs and opinions."

International Committee DEFEND further argues, "Prof. Sison should be granted permanent residence because a) he does not pose a danger to the security of a Member State, b) he has not been convicted of a serious crime, and c) he does not constitute a danger to the community of that Member State.

"He has lived continuously for 23 years in the Netherlands lawfully and peace-

fully since 1987. He is a political refugee as defined by article 1A of the Geneva convention. He was recognized as such by the Raad van State in 1992 and again in 1995, by the Dutch government in 1996 and by Rechtsz eenheidkamer in 1997. And it was established by the judgment of 30 September 2009 that he has not been investigated, prosecuted or convicted for any act of terrorism and that the aforementioned Dutch court decisions cannot be used to hold him liable for such.

"Prof. Sison must be allowed to practice his profession as a teacher of political science and contribute his best as chief political consultant of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines in peace negotiations with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines."

The petition is available for signing online, at <http://www.petitiononline.com/JSdefens/petition.html>. ■



(left to right) Prof. Sison, lead counsel Jan Fermon, and NDFP Chief International Representative Louis G. Jalandoni, at the European Court of First Instance in Luxembourg. josemariasison.org

... Migrants, page 11, col 3

In the Netherlands for example, politicians and political parties such as Geert Wilders and his Party for Freedom promote xenophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments among the Dutch populace. The mainstream mass media in the country have been the staple sources of racial profiling and terrorist labeling since the September 2001 attacks in the United States.

In most other European states, particularly France, Spain and the United Kingdom, measures have already been adopted and implemented to curb further migration to their countries. They have since institutionalized the criminalization of undocumented migrants and political refugees.

Indeed, the timing of the enactment of the European Return Directive by the European Parliament some two years ago was apparently in line with the European imperialists' design to mitigate the financial and economic crisis brought about by capitalism's own unresolvable systemic crisis. It targets the criminalization and deportation of

around 12 million undocumented migrants in Europe.

The recourse is not only to use the people's money to bail out failing and bankrupt monopoly banks and enterprises, but also to agitate for war-spending and wars such as in Iraq and Afghanistan. European states encourage deep cuts in workers' jobs, salaries and benefits, and then blame migrants and refugees for the woes that cut the privileges and ostentatious lifestyle of the few capitalist rich.

But not all is silent on the migrant front. Progressive migrant and refugee groups and advocates continue to organize, educate and mobilize migrants and refugees about their rights, welfare and long-term interests. They might not win the politicians and parties over to their side, but with the correct political orientation and determination, they are sure to win over the teeming ranks of migrants and refugees displaced by wars, poverty and imperialist-instigated underdevelopment, together with their advocates among the European working class and people. ■