

EDITORIAL

# Solidarity with the indefatigable struggle of the Palestinian people

**E**xactly one year ago, the Zionist state of Israel commenced its ruthless bombing, invasion and occupation of the Gaza Strip, a Palestinian enclave. With the support of US imperialism, Zionist forces have intensified the genocide of the Palestinians, employing tons upon tons of bombs to pound the entire Gaza.

No fewer than 41,000 people, including 27,000 women and children have been killed in the repeated massacre of entire families and communities. Almost the entire 2.1 million population of Gaza has been displaced. The bombings deliberately target commercial and residential buildings, hospitals, schools, energy plants, the water system, roads and others. The people of Gaza are suffering gravely due to hunger and disease, lack of drinking water, destruction of sanitation and collapse of the health system. Israeli forces

have not spared even the media and international agencies bringing aid.

The Zionists, the US and its allied imperialist countries, make grossly foolish justification of the war. They insist that the relentless bombing of Gaza are part of "Israel's right to defend itself," when its targets are the defenseless population. The bombing of Gaza is a brazen violation of international hu-

manitarian law and constitute heinous war crimes.

The terrorist war of the Zionist Israel in Gaza is a disproportionate response to the armed uprising of October 7, 2023 of various resistance fighters for Palestinian liberation. On that day, they staged an armed offensive against Israel's military forces and facilities, and took prisoners. This was launched by a broad array of resistance groups in Palestine, including Islamic forces (Hamas), the People's Front for the Liberation of Palestine, as well as other democratic, armed and unarmed revolutionary forces.

The uprising, known as the Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, aimed to resist the escalating oppression and political repression by Zionist Israel against Palestinians in Gaza and the occupied West Bank. It

now forms another historic chapter in the continuing struggle of the Palestinian people for national liberation and their right to self-determination.

More than 75 years ago, Zionist or Jewish ultra-nationalist forces, supported by US and British imperialism, unleashed massacres and various forms of violence



to drive more than 700,000 Palestinian people from their homes and land and pave the way for the establishment of the Jewish state of Israel. The Al Nakba (or The Catastrophe) forced Palestinians to flee to Jordan (West Bank) and the Gaza Strip (in the border with Egypt), or seek refuge in different parts of the world. Since 1967, the Zionist Israel has occupied the West Bank and imprisoned Palestinians in fenced off communities. The Gaza Strip has since been an open air prison, constantly under watch and under siege by Israeli forces.

The ruthlessness and barbarity of 75 years of Zionist and imperialist oppression have been matched only by the ardent and relentless resistance of the Palestinian people. They have manifested their determination to resist through wars and Intifadas, characterized by the heroism and selfless sacrifice of countless martyrs. The armed offensives on October 7, 2023, by the Palestinian resistance fighters marked a new milestone in their historic struggle to free their people from the shackles of

oppression. The Zionist Israeli state is fully supported by the US and its allied imperialists. In addition to annual \$3.8 billion military aid, the US Congress extended at least \$12.5 billion in military assistance to Israel since October 2023 in the form of more than 10,000 tons of bombs used in the slaughter of Palestinians. It has ignored worldwide condemnation of the genocide in Gaza, as profits of American arms manufacturers have skyrocketed. The Biden government's call for a ceasefire is hypocritical and merely aims to obscure its role in the genocide. The real aim


of US imperialism is continue using Israel as a foothold to maintain and strengthen its hegemony in the Middle East in order to secure its interests in the vast oil reserves and other resources.

With tacit US support, Israel has escalated its war in the Middle East through attacks against Lebanon, Yemen, Syria and Iran, whose people and resistance fighters have supported the Palestinian people's resistance to the genocide by Israel. The missile attacks on residential areas in Lebanon killed over 500 civilians, while assassinating key leaders of the Hezbollah movement. As US proxy, the Zionist state of Israel aims to provoke a wider war in the Middle East, targeting countries which have firmly defended their sovereignty, especially Iran, which the US has openly declared hostilities. Provoking a wider conflict and the war obsession of Israel and the US are clear manifestations of the bankruptcy of imperialism.

Across the world, millions have expressed strong indignation against the genocide in Gaza, as well as in the occupied West Bank. Despite attempts to suppress their protests, like in the US and other countries, they are undeterred because they draw inspiration from the boundless determination of the Palestinian people and their revolutionary forces to continue their resistance.

The Filipino people must extend boundless solidarity to the Palestinian people and their indefatigable struggle for national liberation and their right to self-determination. The fight of the Palestinian people is firmly linked to the struggle of the Filipino people and all the oppressed peoples, and countries defending national sovereignty, against imperialist intervention and wars. Victory of the Palestinian people, will be victory of all oppressed peoples of the entire world.






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# Unwavering struggle for Palestinian liberation

A year after the US and Zionist Israel launched a brutal genocide against the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, various Palestinian organizations continue to wage a valiant struggle to frustrate the attacks and attain complete freedom from occupation. The Palestinians' weapons are armed resistance, mass movements in other countries supporting their struggle, linking with international courts, and other similar undertaking.

## Armed resistance

In the past year, Palestinian armed groups in the Gaza Strip have continuously staged attacks against invading Israeli Defense Forces (IDF). According to reports, at least 715 Israeli officials and soldiers, majority of whom were aboard armored vehicles such as tanks, have been killed in these attacks. These attacks are led by the Izz ad-Din al-Qassam Brigades, the armed wing of the Palestinian Hamas group, with the support of other armed groups in Gaza and in the occupied West Bank.

These operations are part of Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, which began on October 7, 2023, against Israeli terrorism. It started with the firing of nearly 5,000 missiles targeting Israeli military bases and forces. According to Hamas, the attack was a defensive armed action

in response to 75 years of suffering of their people.

The al-Qassam Brigades uses guerrilla tactics, combined with their mastery of the terrain and advanced military equipment including exploding drones and anti-tank missiles, to hit the Israeli occupying forces in the Gaza Strip.

In support and recognition for Palestine, groups like the Houthi in Yemen, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and others have also launched armed attacks to weaken Israel's military capabilities and stop the flow of military aid to the Zionist regime.

## Stop the genocide

Amid Israel's brutal bombing of the Gaza Strip, international support poured in to call for an end to the genocide and for the complete liberation of Palestine from occupation. Calls for a ceasefire to save

civilians are relentless.

These includes massive rallies, such as the 300,000-strong demonstration in the United Kingdom in November 2023; student camps in at least 130 universities in the United States, France, Australia, Japan, and others; the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) campaign against corporations supporting Israel's genocide, and other forms of action.

In the Philippines, national democratic groups led by Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and the Philippines-Palestine Friendship Association have launched protests in support of Palestine and calls for an end to the US-Israel genocide there. On October 5, Bayan again launched a protest near the US embassy to commemorate one year of the genocide in Gaza. Networks of organizations supporting Palestine have also been formed in many parts of the country. Some groups have also provided shelter and support to Filipinos and Gazans who were forced to move to the Philippines from the Gaza Strip.

Even the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the primary judicial organ of the United Nations (UN), has repeatedly issued decisions calling for an end to the attacks and the "immediate withdrawal" of IDF forces from Palestinian territories.

The brutalities in Gaza have also pushed the UN Security Council to endorse a resolution on June 11 for the immediate implementation of a ceasefire in Gaza. The plan was initially pushed by the US and received 14 votes in the council with one abstention.

Hamas supports an immediate ceasefire but insists that it should lead to Israel's permanent withdrawal from their land. In contrast, Zionist Israel strongly rejects such an agreement and instead continues to intensify its attacks.



# Makabayan Coalition challenges dynasties and traditional politicians in 2025 elections

During its national convention at the San Andres Sports Complex in Manila on September 28, the Makabayan Coalition formally announced its platform, senatorial candidates, and nominees for party-list groups that will run under its banner in the 2025 elections. The event was attended by nearly 3,000 coalition supporters and members.

In his speech, Ka Paeng Mariano, peasant leader and one of the coalition's chairpersons, shared that their campaign will focus on the people's struggle for national democracy, for urgent relief, and the country's sovereignty.

The coalition is aware that the election is dominated by political dynasties and traditional politicians who represent the interests of oligarchs, landlords, and foreign exploiters.

The coalition will field 11 senatorial candidates and four progressive party-list groups that represent women, teachers, youth, and other democratic sectors.

The coalition's senatorial candidates are Teacher France Castro, Rep. Arlene Brosas, Jerome Adonis, Liza Maza, Ronnel Arambulo, Teddy Casiño, Danilo Ramos, Jocelyn Andamo, Mody Floranda, Mimi Doringo, and Amirah Lidasan. Atty. Neri Colmenares will be the first nominee for the Bayan Muna Party-

list, former Rep. Sarah Elago for the Gabriela Women's Party, former Rep. Antonio Tinio for the ACT Teachers Party-list, and Atty. Renee Co for the Kabataan Party-list.

In the gathering, senatorial candidate Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan sent a message of solidarity. The newly formed Health Workers Party-list expressed its full support for the coalition's candidates. The party's first nominee is Robert Mendoza, a midwife and Alliance of Health Workers national president.

The convention was formally closed by Ka Satur Ocampo, one of the coalition's pillars and its president emeritus, and Rep. Raoul Manuel, one of the newly elected chairpersons of Makabayan.

The Makabayan senatorial candidates filed their certificates of candidacy on October 4.

**Local Elections.** The coalition will also field candidates in local elections. On September 30, Makabayan-National Capital Region

(NCR) announced its six candidates for councilor in Caloocan District 1, Marikina District 2, Valenzuela District 2, Muntinlupa District 1, and Taguig District 1. They were introduced at the regional assembly in Sta. Mesa, Manila.

According to Makabayan-NCR, the 2025 elections are an opportunity to highlight the people's issues in the region. "From the Senate to the council, let the people win!" is the group's rallying cry.

## Marcos and Duterte Candidates

In stark contrast to the Makabayan ticket, the Marcos regime introduced its senatorial bets for the 2025 elections in a political rally on September 26 in Pasay City. The administration's 12 senatorial candidates include representatives of landlords, comprador bourgeoisie, and bureaucrat capitalists from political dynasties.

Marcos' bets are under the newly formed "Alyansa para sa Bagong Pilipinas" (Alliance for a New Philippines), composed of five parties. The Partido Federal ng Pilipinas (PFP), Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats (CMD), Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC), Nacionalista Party (NP), and National Unity Party (NUP) all joined forces to form the notorious coalition.

The alliance shows how these political parties have come together in bowing to Marcos, but the CPP expects it to break apart soon like Marcos's "uni-team" with the Dutertes in 2022. All those in the alliance are driven by self-interest to partake in the benefits of corruption and privilege, and will eventually go each other's way to pursue their own political interests.

Meanwhile, the Duterte faction will field no less than four candidates for senator under the PDP-Laban party.



# Farmers demand irrigation and compensation

From Ilocos to Bicol, farmers share the same concerns about the Marcos regime's incompetence and neglect amid widespread damage to agriculture caused by consecutive disasters that struck the country.

In Bulacan, farmers from Malolos City, Plaridel, and Calumpit held a dia-

logue with the National Irrigation Administration on September 26 to demand the immediate rehabilitation of irrigation systems damaged by El Niño and La Niña. They said the damaged irrigation infrastructure has caused repeated flooding during high tide, excessive damage to their crops, and saltwater intrusion into their farms

They said while rehabilitating infrastructure is long-term solution, the government should immediately provide the necessary equipment, such as motor pumps and deep wells, to address the urgent production need.

In Ilocos Norte, damage to

crops had reached 87 million, including an additional 385,000 loss in livestock due to Typhoon Julian, which hit on October 2. The province is still recovering from the consecutive effects of El Niño and recent disasters, including flooding during Typhoon Carina and monsoon rains, which severely affected the agricultural sector.

The farmers are demanding ₱25,000 in production subsidies, ₱15,000 in subsidies for fisherfolk, and ₱10,000 in financial assistance for those affected by the typhoon and flooding.

In Bicol, farmers from Libon, Albay, and Nabua and Bato, Ca-



marines Sur are also demanding subsidies and compensation. Almost 400 hectares of rice fields remain submerged in floodwaters. Most of these were ready for harvest in September. The floodwaters typically take one to two months to recede, and the water level can reach as high as 6-7 feet. Crop damage is estimated at 90-100% in the flooded areas. The farmers demand the construction of dikes, assistance for buying farm inputs, and capital for land preparation and planting. AB

<div data-bbox="95 1198 638 1285" data-label="Section-Header"><h2>NPA-Western Samar launches snipe and counter-attack</h2></div> <div data-bbox="95 1305 656 1542" data-label="Text"><p>AMID INTENSE COMBAT and siege operations by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) units in barangays in Samar, the New People's Army (NPA)-Western Samar (Arnulfo Ortiz Command) were able to launch snipe and counter-attack operations.</p></div> <div data-bbox="95 1542 656 1741" data-label="Text"><p>On September 16, Red fighters fired at 87th IB elements who were camping in Barangay Canvais, Motiong, Samar. According to initial reports from villagers, the military trooper on guard was wounded.</p></div> <div data-bbox="95 1741 656 1981" data-label="Text"><p>On September 14, Red fighters were able to fire first when they encountered an operating unit of the 46th IB in Barangay Dugungan, Jiabong. One 46th IB soldier was killed in the encounter, while another was reported seriously wounded.</p></div> <div data-bbox="95 1981 656 2300" data-label="Text"><p>On September 11, a unit of NPA-Western Samar thwarted an attack by the 46th IB against their camp in Barangay Salvacion, Jiabong. According to the NPA, the soldiers wore civilian clothes and pretended to be Red fighters to deceive the masses. The Red fighters seized the initiative in the battle and actively defended against the enemy.</p></div>	<div data-bbox="808 1198 1472 1285" data-label="Section-Header"><h2>52nd anniversary of martial law marked with coordinated protests</h2></div> <div data-bbox="756 1305 1528 1502" data-label="Text"><p>LED BY NATIONAL-democratic organizations and other progressive groups, various sectors commemorated the 52nd anniversary of Ferdinand Marcos Sr's declaration of martial law with protests in and outside the country. The protests were spearheaded by the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan).</p></div> <div data-bbox="756 1502 1528 1702" data-label="Text"><p>"This year, we remember the anniversary of Ferdinand Marcos Sr's declaration of martial law with indignation over the continuing violations against human rights, civil liberties, and international humanitarian law under his son Ferdinand Marcos Jr," the groups said.</p></div> <div data-bbox="756 1702 1528 1981" data-label="Text"><p>"The atrocities continue, in collusion with those in positions of political and economic power supported by the US government." They said, just like during the martial law era, the fascist machineries such as the NTF-Elcac, laws like the Anti-Terrorism Law, and the bloated military and police are suppressing the people's aspirations for democracy, social justice, human rights, and peace."</p></div> <div data-bbox="756 1981 1528 2140" data-label="Text"><p>Protests were held in Metro Manila, Laguna, Daraga and Legazpi City in Albay, Baguio, Iloilo City and Capiz in Panay, Cebu, Bacolod, Tacloban, and Davao. Overseas, protests were held in nine cities in the US, led by Bayan-USA.</p></div> <div data-bbox="756 2140 1528 2300" data-label="Text"><p>Aside from rallies, they also held film showings, religious masses, cultural performances, and candle-lighting ceremonies to honor the anti-dictatorship martyrs and to look back at the movement that ousted Marcos Sr.</p></div>
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# Attacks against farmers in Masbate, Palawan, and other areas worsen

The terrorist campaign of repression by the US-Marcos regime in collusion with landlords against the rural peasant masses continues to intensify. In recent weeks, cases of killings of farmers in Masbate, arrests in Palawan, and land grabbing and eviction in Bataan, Cavite, Laguna, Cebu, and Iloilo have been recorded.

**Killing.** Soldiers of the 2nd IB killed two farmers in Purok 3, Barangay Simawa, Uson on September 26. The victims, Roger Clores and Ronnel Abril, were the 34th and 35th victims of the 2nd IB's killings in the province.

The village-folk refuted the military's report that the two victims were killed in an encounter, even claiming that various firearms were seized. They testified that Clores and Abril were their neighbors.

**Arrest.** Sefriano Liabres, organizer of the Samahan ng mga Magsasaka at Katutubo ng Mindoro, was illegally arrested in Taytay, Palawan on October 1. He was undergoing medical treatment when police apprehended him.

**Land Grabbing.** Thugs of Hacienda Borromeo repeatedly fired at the farmers of Barangay Pandacan, Pinamungahan, Cebu on September 23. The members of Baybay II Farmers Association are opposing their eviction. They have been tilling the land for several generations.

In Iloilo, nine farming families in Barangay San Jose, San Miguel were forcibly evicted from their homes on October 2 by Communities Iloilo Inc, a subsidiary of Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc, owned by the Villar family. The Villars are notorious for grabbing agricultural lands and converting them into subdivisions.

In Laguna, peasant residents of Barangay Casile, Cabuyao protested against the fencing of the 24-



hectare land in the barangay on September 23 by the Emirates Security Agency and Santa Rosa Realty Development Corporation, owned by the Yulos. The fencing and threats from the guards prevented the farmers from tending to their crops. The Yulo family is one of the largest landowners in the province.

In Cavite, over 100 police and military personnel under the Task Force Ugnay of the 202nd IBde again attacked and attempted to enter Lupang Ramos in Dasmariñas, Cavite on September 26. For one month prior to this, state forces have repeatedly attacked the farm to break the unity of the farmers. **AB**

## Nexperia union wins demands

THE NEXPERIA PHILS. Inc. Workers Union-National Federation of Labor Unions-Kilusang Mayo Uno successfully pushed the management of Nexperia Philippines to respect the union and the workers' rights to job security. In an agreement reached on September 18, the company promised to reinstate the terminated workers, expand benefits, and increase the separation pay of workers before October 7.

The union also pushed the management to promise a moratorium on layoffs until the end of the year and a resumption of negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement. Because of these, the union temporarily withdrew its plan to go on strike, which workers earlier voted for in July.



**Impeach Sara, demanded.** National-democratic groups picketed in front of Congress on September 23 to demand the ouster of Sara Duterte as Vice President. According to Bayan, Duterte deserves to be impeached due to her anomalous use of confidential and intelligence funds allocated to her office in previous years. This constitutes a "betrayal of public trust," which can be a basis for filing an impeachment complaint against her in Congress.

**Two-day jeepney strike against phaseout, successfully mounted.** Piston and Manibela successfully conducted a two-day transport strike on September 23-24 to protest the jeepney phaseout and demand the return of individual franchises. The strike paralyzed up to 90% of major routes in Metro Manila for two consecutive days. Driver and operator groups erected 11 strike and protest centers during those days.

Simultaneous strikes and protests were held by groups in Calabarzon, Baguio, Bicol, Negros, Panay, and other regions. Local groups called on their respective local governments and agencies to junk the local public transport route plan, the local version of the PTMP.



# AFP's RCSP torments masses of Masbate and Mindoro

From Luzon to Mindanao, the Retooled Community Support Program (RCSP) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) continues to ravage rural areas. This program is under the Development Support and Security Plan of "Oplan Kapayapaan" initiated by the Duterte administration, but continued by Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

The RCSP is essentially the same as the Special Operations Team of the 1990s' Oplan Lambat Bitag. This was also called "Community Organizing for Peace and Development" and "Community Support Program" under the Oplan Bayanihan of the Aquino administration. This is part of the counter-revolutionary strategy to deprive the revolutionary armed movement of its "physical and psychological base" through intense militarization of indigenous and peasant communities. In the past eight years, these accompanied focused military operations involving hundreds to thousands of military forces.

## RCSP violence in Masbate

The 22nd IB and 96th IB placed at least 58 barangays in 12 towns and cities in Masbate island under RCSP operations since January. During this time, 36 cases of human rights violations were recorded in these areas. At least eight farmers were killed by soldiers.

Barangay officials in areas under RCSP are often summoned by the military. Also summoned are those who were forced to become "surrendered" since 2021. The military also forms various fake organizations and forces residents to participate in sham peace rallies against the revolutionary movement. Residents are threatened with charges if they refuse to admit being active in an organization or having links with the people's army.

To make people accept the RCSP, local agencies conduct pro-

motion seminars, sports tournaments and provides other "services". They also screen videos vilifying and red-tagging progressive organizations.

Residents strongly detest the military for promoting gambling and vices such as drinking and other anti-social activities to gather information and spy on them. They also force the masses to join paramilitary groups or become military assets.

## RCSP in Mangyan communities

In Mindoro, aside from dozens of military camps, RCSP forces from the 203rd Brigade and PNP-MI-MAROPA occupied hundreds of indigenous communities. They usually set up camp in the center or outskirts of villages of farmers and Mangyan people since 2019.

The military targeted four adjacent barangays in the boundary of Oriental Mindoro (Bulalacao) and Occidental Mindoro (San Jose and Rizal). These towns host quarry operations and mining, and the Tamaraw Reservation Expansion Project, which will cover over 100,000

hectares of ancestral land.

Soldiers have imposed curfew and other restrictions. They force the Mangyans to join combat tracking operations for ₱300 per day and ₱500 when tracks are found. Even minors are being recruited as spies.

One of the longest-running RCSP camps is in Sitio Mantay, Barangay Monteclaro, where soldiers have been stationed since 2019. People who come and leave the community, even residents, are required to sign a logbook.

The soldiers enslave the Mangyan to buy and carry supplies. Rape and sexual abuse of women are rampant.

Military operations cause a lasting impact on the mental health of the Mangyans. The elderly and children experience trauma from bombings. Violent interrogations, accompanied by threats under guns or machetes, also cause trauma to the victims. Since 2019, intense torture and psywar during the interrogations drove six Mangyan-Buhid people to take their own lives.



**18,000**

**farmers in Bicol** adversely affected by four consecutive typhoons in September are demanding state subsidies and compensation for them to replant in the next crop season.



**500+**

unions of **Starbucks** baristas have been established through successful assertion of their union rights and other benefits.

**160 PARTIES**

including **41 new ones**, will participate in the **2025 elections** to vie for **63 party-list seats in Congress**.

This is less than the 177 partylist groups in the 2022 elections, of which 40% are controlled by political dynasties

**25%-400%**

**parking fee increases at the national airport, including overnight parking which skyrocketed from ₱300 to ₱1200.**

This was after the government allowed bourgeois-comprador Ramon Ang to increase fees after having sold him the airport.

**3**

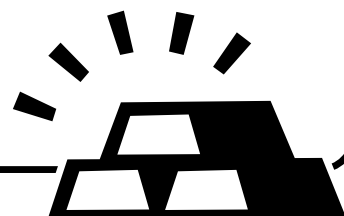
**congressmen only** out of 288 voted against Marcos' ₱6.352 trillion budget for 2025.

The **Makabayan** bloc opposed the budget because it is anti-poor and laden with presidential pork barrel funds.



**24.95 TONS**

of gold sold by the Central Bank in the first half of 2024, the world's highest, which pulled down Philippines gold reserves by 15.69%



**23 MILLION KILOS OF RICE**

worth **₱500 million** were deliberately kept by greedy merchants at the port to control supply and keep prices high.

**11,000**

**Filipino migrants**, mostly domestic workers, are in Lebanon facing life-threatening danger due to the bombing by Zionist Israel that started in September.



# Andap Valley Complex: Riddled with destructive mining operations

Along with the proliferation of military detachments come the entry of numerous mining companies in Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Sur, primarily in the mineral-rich Andap Valley Complex. These mines are owned by the largest comprador bourgeoisie, in partnership with large foreign companies.

According to the Mines and Geosciences Bureau in August, national and local governments have granted at least 13 Mineral Production Sharing Agreements to companies to mine in different parts of Agusan del Sur and Surigao del Sur. These have also granted four exploratory permits, three small scale mining contracts, two people's small scale mining contracts, one special mines permit, and one mineral processing permit.

Companies with the largest operations include Marcventures Mining and Development Corporation (covering 9,659 hectares), CTP Construction & Mining Corporation (8,452 hectares), Ludgoron Mining Corporation (2,062 hectares), Kafugan Mining, Inc (1,186 hectares), Philsaga Mining Corporation (8,548 hectares), Philex Gold Philippines, Inc. (6,207 hectares), and Consolidated Ores Philippines, Inc (1,953 hectares). Marcventures and its partner Bright Kindle Resources & Investments, Inc. are part of RYM Business Management Corporation, owned by the family of House Speaker Martin Romualdez.

In July, Benguet Corporation, also owned by the Romualdez family, submitted an additional application to mine coal in the municipalities of San Miguel, Marihatag, and Tago. It applied for a license to cover 12 "coal blocks" in the area, equivalent

to 12,000 hectares. The Romualdez family has controlled Benguet Mining since the time of Marcos Sr's dictatorship and is now partnered with the American company Rothschild Investment LLC.

Philex Mining, owned by big bourgeoisie Enrique Razon, is partnered with the Australian company Medusa Mining Limited. Philsaga Mining, owned by former soldiers and paramilitaries, is partnered with another Australian company Ten Sixty Four Limited.

Benguet Corporation is one of the companies that benefited from, and even pushed for, the intense militarization of the Andap Valley Complex. Other companies include Abacus Coal Exploration and Development Corp, and its partner Oriental Vision Mining Philippines (ORVI) Corp, owned by the Zamora family. ORVI and Abacus' application covers 5,000 hectares of forestland in the area. Other

companies include Great Wall Mining and Power Corp, a Chinese company; ASK Mining and Exploration Corp, which was granted a permit for exploration in 2009; and Coal-Black Mining Corp.

The Andap Valley is home to one of the largest coal reserves in the world, covering the adjacent municipalities of San Miguel, San Agustin, Marihatag, Cagwait, Tago, and Lianga in Surigao del Sur.

The strong resistance of the Lumad people and their refusal to give their free and prior informed consent have long held off the plunder by these companies in the Andap Valley. Since 2015, San Miguel, San Agustin, Marihatag, Cagwait, Tago, and Lianga have been subjected to brutal military rule to suppress the resistance of the Manobo and Mamanwa people and force them to give up their rights to their ancestral lands.

Among the military's crimes are the massacres in Lianga in 2015 and 2021. The first massacre killed Emerito Samarca, executive director of the Alternative Learning Center for Agricultural and Livelihood Development (Alcadev); Dionel Campos, leader of the local peasant organization Mapasu; and member Datu Juvello Sinzo. The massacre forced 3,000 Lumad to evacuate. The second massacre killed two Lumad farmers and a 12-year-old student.

In the following years, multiple evacuations of residents took place due to relentless killings and militarization. Under the orders of the Duterte regime, the military targeted Lumad schools run by local communities. Eventually, the schools were forced to close and have since not reopened.



# International Congress against Fascism and Neo-Fascism held in Venezuela

At least 1,200 delegates, including 500 individuals from 95 countries, attended the first ever "Congreso Mundial contra el Fascismo, el Neofascismo y Expresiones Similares" (International Congress against Fascism, Neo-Fascism and Similar Expressions) held in Caracas, Venezuela on September 10-11. The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) was one of the invited and attending organizations.

From Venezuela, social and political leaders from 23 states and 3,900 councils of communes (local governing bodies based on community organizations) attended. Also present were mass movement leaders, social activists, academics, and intellectuals from Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, the United States and Canada. Diplomatic representatives from the governments of Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia, the People's Republic of China and the Federal Russian Republic were also present.

"The NDFP welcomed the invitation of the anti-imperialist government of Venezuela because it provided an opportunity to interact and fraternize with governments, national liberation movements, and mass organizations fighting against US imperialism and its allies, who were also delegates to the congress," the NDFP representative in the gathering narrated. In recent years, the Venezuelan government has regularly linked with the NDFP and has always ensured its representation in activities held in the

country.

The NDFP's attendance was also a show of solidarity with the Maduro government against the continued attacks of US imperialism.

Along with Cuba, Venezuela is one of the main forces in Latin America fighting against US imperialism. US imperialism has long failed to overthrow the anti-imperialist state through various forms of aggression, including coup attempts, assassinations, crippling economic sanctions, and interference in elections. The US aims to reverse the nationalization of Venezuela's key industries, particularly the oil industry. The US also wants to dismantle other pro-people policies implemented by former President Hugo Chavez, which are being continued by the current government of Nicolás Maduro. The Maduro government plays a crucial role in building a broad united front against US imperialism in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The congress was held amid the ongoing struggle of the Venezuelan people against US intervention in

the last election, in which Maduro won for the third time. In this struggle, the Venezuelan people once again demonstrated their determination to defend their sovereignty and rights against foreign intervention.

"A major resolution of the congress was the understanding that US imperialism and its allies are the common enemy of the people worldwide," the NDFP representative said. "It was agreed that there is a need for the exploited and oppressed people to fight against the global trend of fascism bred by the crisis of imperialism."

The International Anti-Fascist Front was established, which will serve as a new global alliance to focus on the fight against fascism. Its goal is to unite the efforts of different countries and communities to combat the threats of extremist ideologies.

"The delegates will launch an international campaign against imperialist intervention and repression," the representative said. "The exposure of and fight against US imperialism is mutually beneficial to the Venezuelans and Filipinos. Apart from mutual political support, other forms of cooperation can also be developed."

While in the country, the delegates visited communes that oversee production in agriculture, handicrafts, and electronic gadgets. This showcased Venezuela's ability to increase local production of consumer goods amid crippling US and EU sanctions.

Many Venezuelans and congress delegates warmly received the NDFP. "Some expressed admiration for the Communist Party of the Philippines," the representative said.

