

Line

Petition #15 - New

IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE FILIPINO PEOPLE, ENSURING OUR U.S. TAX DOLLARS ARE NOT FUNDING THE WORSENING HUMAN RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

RESOLVED, that the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United Methodist Church affirms that every life is sacred. And in that spirit joins the call to support the Philippines Human Rights Act (H.R.1433), which would suspend military aid to the Philippines until the Government Republic of the Philippines has made certain reforms to the military and police forces. We urge our congressional leaders in Washington State and Idaho to support the Philippine Human Right Act (H.R. 1433). And, in the same spirit, urges our congressional leaders to oppose the Philippine Enhanced Resilience Act (S.4097).

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, we pledge to continue efforts to educate our members on the existing conditions of the Filipino people, share the findings, evidence, and verdict of the International Peoples Tribunal 2024, monitor the ongoing human rights crisis and its impacts as much as possible with our Methodist siblings, and advocate for a just and lasting peace as requested by the Filipino people themselves.

THEREFORE IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED, the Pacific Northwest Annual Conference asks Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth to share a copy of this resolution with all three active Bishops in the Philippine Central Conference and the Philippine Central Conference General Board of Church and Society as a show of our support and solidarity.

Explanation:

Our United Methodist Revised Social Principles (2024) states, “We reject governmental use of threats, extortion, unlawful detentions, extrajudicial killings, and other forms of coercion to silence political opponents and those objecting to unlawful or immoral government policies and practices. In keeping with international laws and ordinances, we vehemently protest the use of torture, slavery, genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and crimes of aggression by any government and call for the strictest international sanctions to be imposed in such cases.”

The United Methodist Church Resolution #6118 Philippines: Democratic Governance, Human Rights and the Peace Process states in part “[what is] very alarming and disturbing is the increasingly militarized approach of both the Philippine and US governments to the economic development of and humanitarian crises in the Philippines.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line

Petition #12 cont.

1 In 2024, four members of the Pacific Northwest Conference of the United
2
3 Methodist Church recently traveled to Brussels to observe the 2024 Inter-
4 national Peoples Tribunal, a quasi-judicial forum that aims to investigate
5
6 and address alleged war crimes and violations of international humanitarian
7 law committed by the US-supported Government Republic of the Philip-
8 pines, and
9
10 There has been an ongoing civil war between the security forces of Govern-
11 ment of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Demo-
12 cratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) for over 50 years, and
13
14 In 1998, a series of goals were agreed upon for a peace process hosted by the
15 Royal Norwegian government including the signing of the Joint Agreement
16 on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and the Comprehensive
17 Agreement on the Respect for Human Rights and International Humani-
18 tarian Law (CAHRIHL). The Government of the Republic of the Philip-
19 pines, and its Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National
20 Police have been found to regularly violate the above-mentioned agreements
21 (JASIG and CAHRIHL).
22
23 The Philippine government has red-tagged Rev. Glofie Baluntong, a United
24 Methodist district superintendent and minister in Mindoro. In 2019 she
25 was charged with attempted murder. The charges were later dropped as she
26 was presiding over a funeral the day of the accused crime. After the charges
27 were dropped, she was charged again around the same incident violating her
28 due process in late 2022. The new case remains open.
29
30 A retired United Methodist Deaconess Marites Pielago was arrested on the
31 10th of August 2022 on charges of attempted murder while being treated in
32 a hospital in Camarines Sur, and since has been denied medical treatment
33 for long-term medical issues.
34
35 Evidence presented at the 2024 International Peoples Tribunal established
36 that the US government placed enormous resources at the GRP's disposal,
37 making the latter the largest recipient of US military aid in the Asia-Pacific,
38 with \$1.14 billion worth of equipment and training since 2015, more than
39 \$1 billion in weapons sales, and another \$128 million set aside to build US
40 military facilities.
41
42 The Philippine Enhanced Resilience Act (S.4097) would commit an addi-

RECOMMENDATIONS

Line

Petition #12 *cont.*

1 tional \$2.5 billion over the next 5 years to continued U.S. military aid, em-
2 powering the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to continue carrying
3 out US wargames in the archipelago at the expense of the Filipino people,
4 and further boost counterinsurgency against activists.

5
6 The United Methodist Church Resolution #6118 Philippines: Democratic
7 Governance, Human Rights and the Peace Process calls for “any military
8 appropriations and official development assistance to the Philippine govern-
9 ment to be withheld unless the Philippine government demonstrates strict
10 adherence to international laws and standards of human rights and good
11 governance and thereby supports the development and use of benchmarks
12 that will guide and measure its adherence to these standards.”

13
14 **Submitted by:** Beacon United Methodist Church Crossroads Ministry,
15 Nica Sy, Cecille Corsilles-Sy, Michael Alcantara, and Robert Gavino