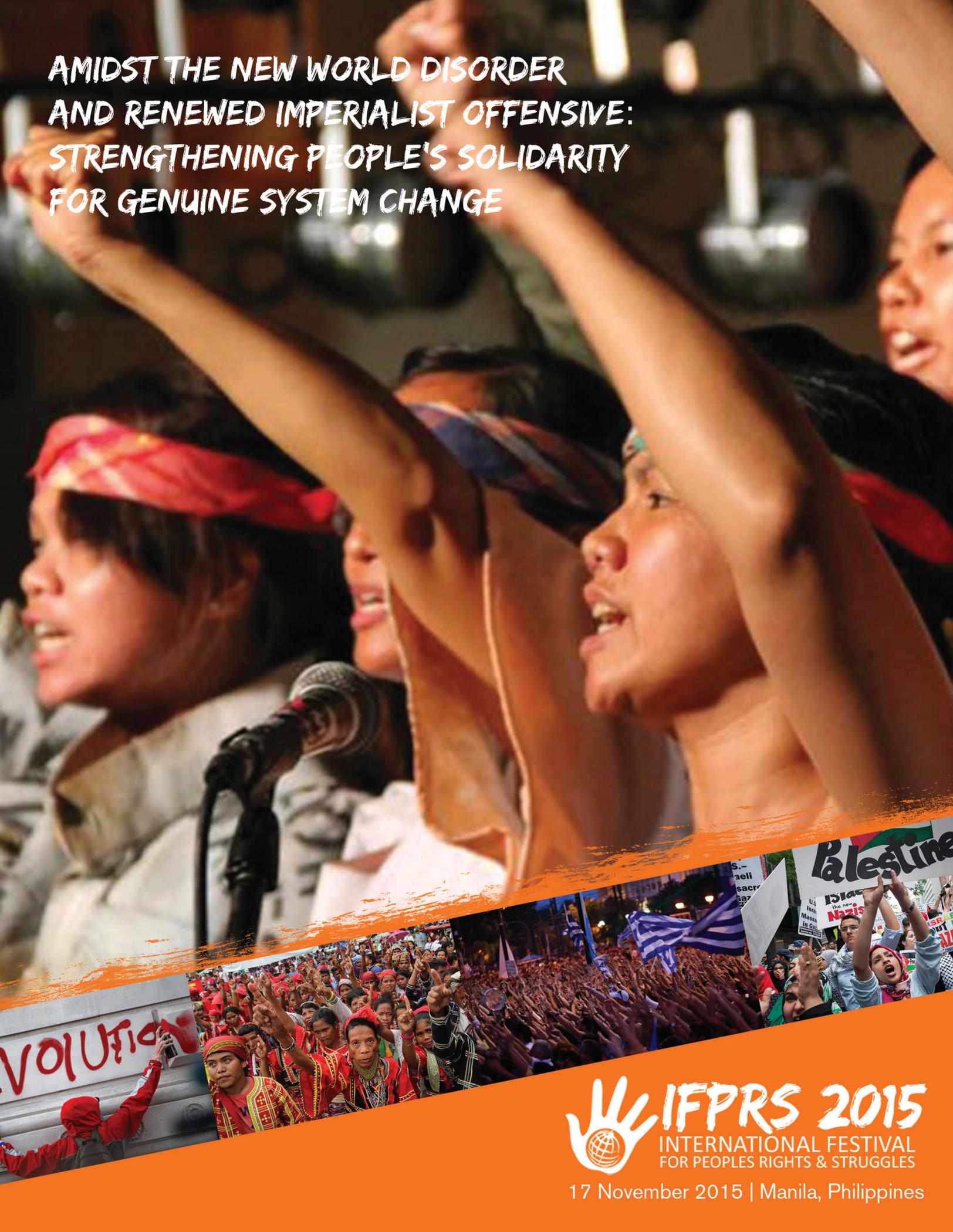


AMIDST THE NEW WORLD DISORDER  
AND RENEWED IMPERIALIST OFFENSIVE:  
STRENGTHENING PEOPLE'S SOLIDARITY  
FOR GENUINE SYSTEM CHANGE



 **IFPRS 2015**  
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL  
FOR PEOPLES RIGHTS & STRUGGLES

17 November 2015 | Manila, Philippines

# FOREWORD

## **Amidst the new world disorder and renewed imperialist offensive: Strengthening People's Solidarity for Genuine System Change**

**Antonio Tujan Jr.**

Director, IBON International



Over the past decades, developing countries continue to bear the impacts of imperialist globalization. Monopoly capitalists continue to expand their markets across borders to secure resources like petroleum, agricultural products and minerals and to find cheap labor. To gain the upper hand, governments of transnational corporations' (TNCs) home countries exert strong political influence by creating measures to ensure favorable economic conditions for their trade and investments. Thus, monopoly capitalists form trade deals that are fashioned to intensify the concentration of resources, wealth and power into their hands, leaving developing countries more vulnerable to job loss and inequality, and become defenseless to the global economic depression.

Corporate plunder has also found its way in the development arena. Just recently, a new sustainable development agenda was formally adopted by world leaders in the presence of TNC executives who represent big business –among the culprits of consigning 99% of the world's population to greater hardship and oppression.

Neoliberal globalization continues to plunder our environment. Worsening environmental degradation and climate change continue to bring intense droughts, stronger typhoons and flooding leaving marginalized communities susceptible to forced eviction and displacements.

Aside from environmental calamities, the ongoing militarization in various regions around the globe is fuelling the number of refugees and asylum seekers. Indigenous peoples and marginalized communities are being driven away from their homeland because of poverty and war.

As the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen, people's movements continue to fight against adversity driven by neoliberal globalization. Global mass movements strengthen and build alliances in order to create the change that they want and deserve. Human rights and democracy are being championed in the international arena by people's organizations and civil society leaders who are pushing for genuine system change that can solve the global crisis.

It is clear that social discontent is rising because of the failure of established government institutions and policies that do not cater to development for

the people. Democratic uprisings and dramatic struggles of people's movements calling for reforms and social change are seen globally.

In Latin America, small-scale food producers and farmers are joined by social movements and civil society organizations to fight the control of transnational agribusiness corporations over their rights to food sovereignty and seed sovereignty.

Protests actions against free trade deals are also seen around the world. Across Europe, thousands of people are rallying in Germany, Bosnia, Spain, Belgium, Austria, and in other areas against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). Demonstrations against the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) deal are also felt throughout the Asia-Pacific region.

Through solidarity, social movements have the power to address a wide range of problems that their governments cannot, or fail to, respond to. It is through the collective power of the people around the world that genuine system change can be achieved.

### **About the International Festival for People's Rights and Struggles**

As the world bears witness to the impacts of the ever-worsening crisis on human rights and people's lives, migrants, workers, peasants, women, indigenous peoples, artists and cultural workers, youth and many other sectors and communities from Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, and North America are invited to gather in solidarity to express their support for people's struggle for rights and genuine system change.

This 17 November 2015 hundreds of participants from around the globe will gathering Manila for the International Festival for People's Rights and Struggles (IFPRS). This is the second gathering of people's movements since it started in 2011 where it offered opportunities for individuals, mass movements and progressive institutions to

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**“Through solidarity, social movements have the power to address a wide range of problems that their governments cannot, or fail to, respond to.”**

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explore solutions, alternatives and address people's struggles around the world.

This toolkit features the activities in the event including simultaneous forums, conferences, workshops, strategy sessions, film showings and exhibits. It will also provide articles of the event organizers and a map around the University of the Philippines–Diliman where the event is held.

IFPRS is organized by the following organizations: Asian Peasant Coalition (APC), Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN), Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD), Center for Women's Resources (CWR), GABRIELA, Global Peoples Surge (GPS), IBON International, International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS), Indigenous People's Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL), International Conference on Progressive Culture (ICPC), International Migrants Alliance (IMA), International Women's Alliance (IWA), Kilusang Mayo Uno, Land is Life, People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS), Philippine Solidarity and Exchange Tours (PSET), RESIST, Salinlahi Alliance for Children's Concerns, and the Urban Poor Resource Center of the Philippines (UPRCPC).

We acknowledge the contributions of all the participants, organizers and secretariat team of IFPRS. Congratulations to everyone who made this event a success. Let us continue to live the legacy brought by the previous IFPRS to be one in the struggle for a better world.

# AMIDST THE NEW WORLD DISORDER AND RENEWED IMPERIALIST OFFENSIVES, THE PEOPLE SHALL PREVAIL!

## Public Statement of the International Festival for People's Rights and Struggles (IFPRS 2015)

The global capitalist system is in deep crisis the symptoms of which manifest in its persistent attempts to reinvent itself through a new wave of neoliberal offensives. Neoliberal policies have now evolved into new trends of profit accumulation brokered through the most secretive of 'free trade deals' and the continuing expansion of corporate power. As millions of the working class increasingly find themselves unemployed and deprived of basic social services, the US, China and other capitalist states have spent hundreds of billions of tax dollars to bail out failed commercial and financial institutions to save the global capitalist system from total collapse.

And despite efforts of leading imperialist economies to feign a semblance of recovery, the doctrine of neoliberal globalization has now become thoroughly discredited in many parts of the world. The rise of the sovereign debt crisis, the age of austerity, the dismal economic outlook and the groundswell of people's resistance from around the world show no signs of abating—all pointing out to a system in terminal decline.

### Celebrating People's Resistance

To showcase and celebrate the growing people's resistance from around the world, hundreds of

participants including migrants, workers, peasants, women, indigenous peoples, artists and cultural workers, youth and many other sectors and communities from all global regions will gather this 17 November 2015 for the second **International Festival for People's Rights and Struggles (IFPRS)** in Manila, Philippines.

The worsening global crisis has stirred greater discontent among peoples and social movements around the world. The onslaught of accumulation by dispossession has devastated entire peoples and their communities through large-scale land grabs. Corporate investors have stepped up efforts to unlawfully secure land rights effectively dispossessing indigenous peoples and food producers whose lives and cultural identities rely heavily on the lands they have been tilling for generations. The failure of governments and international institutions to offer genuine development for the marginalized has intensified the clamor of groups from various sectors of society for system change. This year's theme – **Amidst the new world disorder and renewed imperialist offensive: Strengthening People's Solidarity for Genuine System Change** – resonates this demand.

IFPRS offers a wide range of opportunities for learning and networking with simultaneous forums, workshops, strategy sessions, film showings and exhibits. The Festival features a common opening at the University of the Philippines, Diliman with keynote addresses from IBON International Director Antonio Tujan, Jr. and iconic Palestinian freedom fighter Leila Khaled. Messages of solidarity will be delivered by Prof. Odour Ong'wen of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), Dr. Azra Sayeed of the International Women's Alliance (IWA) and Len Cooper, vice chairperson of the International

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**“The failure of governments and international institutions to offer genuine development for the marginalized has intensified the clamor of groups from various sectors of society for system change.”**

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League of People's Struggles (ILPS). A cultural presentation by Lumad children will also be featured at the opening ceremony.

After the opening program, a media conference will be held featuring high-level speakers who will discuss the most pressing issues affecting the peoples of the Global South. Sulong Katribu nominee Datu Jomorito Guaynon, a Higaonon tribal leader, will narrate the struggles of indigenous peoples including the plight of Southern Philippines' Lumad communities and their struggle to free their lands from militarization and foreign mining corporations. Cooper will discuss the effects of neoliberal policies on workers. Kate Lappin, regional coordinator of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APFWLD), will highlight the grave impacts of investment treaties that allow private corporations to sue government for implementing policies that will affect their profits. Tujan will also be there to talk about the worsening gap between the rich and the poor as the consequence of neoliberal globalization. Finally, Rep. Neri Colmenares from Bayan Muna will highlight the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation's (APEC) destructive policy framework on developing countries.

The festival will host simultaneous workshops around the themes, "People's issues on the new world disorder and renewed imperialist offensive" and "People's resistance against the renewed imperialist offensive." These workshops will serve as venues for various discussions to counteract neoliberal policies and to address issues concerning threats to people's rights, specifically indigenous communities, migrants and contractual laborers.

### Resisting Imperialist Offensives

In line with the upcoming Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Ministerial meeting in Manila, several IFPRS events will focus on APEC and its policies that promote neoliberal plunder and unequal trade agreements. Workshop participants will be engaged in discussions on the intersection of militarism as a key component in the implementation of unequal trade deals that further serve the interest of transnational corporations.

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**"IFPRS is an occasion to draw lessons from people's struggles and to celebrate the victories of mass movements that are making strides in efforts to change the world for genuine democracy and people's rights."**

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As a counterpoint to the discussion on advancing corporate power, a workshop to expose and campaign against TNCs will be conducted to raise international awareness on people's struggles and strengthen solidarity among victims of corporate plunderers.

Organizers will also hold film showings on the struggles of the urban poor, including battles of peasants for land and food sovereignty. Photos and artwork exhibits showcasing people's struggles from various sectors of society including women, children, workers and other marginalized groups will also be assembled at the Bahay ng Alumni, UP Diliman to increase public awareness on the need to resist inhumane socio-economic and political policies and to assert their rights for justice and equality.

The event will be followed by the **People's Campaign Against APEC & Imperialist Globalization (PCAIG)** on November 18-19 where women, workers, indigenous peoples and mass movements will converge in Manila to protest against APEC and its close-door negotiations pushing for public-private partnerships (PPPs), trade and investment liberalization, and deregulation and regional economic integration.

IFPRS is an occasion to draw lessons from people's struggles and to celebrate the victories of mass movements that are making strides in efforts to change the world for genuine democracy and people's rights. IFPRS hopes to leave a powerful message that amidst the new world disorder and renewed imperialist offensives, the people shall prevail.

# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Dates / Time	Event	Organizer	Venue
November 9-10	International Conference on Marriage Migration	International Migrant's Alliance (IMA)	Sequoia Hotel
November 11	2nd International Assembly	International Women's Alliance (IWA)	Casa Pura Hotel
November 12-13	3rd General Assembly	International Migrant's Alliance (IMA)	Sequoia Hotel
November 13	Peasant Anti-Imperialist Solidarity (PAIS)		
November 14-16	5th International Assembly	International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS)	Sequoia Hotel
<b>November 17</b>	<b>IFPRS</b>		<b>UP Diliman</b>
November 18-19	People's Campaign Against APEC and Imperialist Globalization (PCAIG)	Bayan	

# IFPRS PROGRAMME

Time	Details	Venue
08:30-10:30	Opening Program – Renowned activists and thinkers from the different global regions will be invited for welcoming addresses and keynote speeches. A cultural presentation will follow.	Bahay ng Alumni Main Hall
10:30-11:30	Media Briefing	Bahay ng Alumni
11:00-13:00	Workshop Theme 1: Peoples issues on the new world disorder and renewed imperialist offensive.	Seminar rooms around campus
14:00-16:00	Workshop Theme 2: Peoples resistance against renewed imperialist offensives.	Seminar rooms around campus
16:30-18:00	Synthesis and Closing Program – Invited speakers will synthesize the different activities conducted during the IFPRS and deliver messages on moving forward and building people's organized strength for a better world. A cultural presentation and solidarity dance by the indigenous peoples from Cordillera will cap the day.	AS Steps

# WORKSHOPS

Title	Organizer	Venue
<b>Peoples issues on the new world disorder and renewed imperialist offensive 11:00 - 13:00</b>		
Women Trade Unionists speak out	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, Center for Trade Union and Human Rights, Kilusang Mayo Uno	Balay Kalinaw Dining Hall

<b>Title</b>	<b>Organizer</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Youth & Elders Workshop on the Transmission of Indigenous Knowledge and Experiences on the Struggle for the Right to Self- determination	Asia Pacific Indigenous Youth Network, Cordillera Peoples Alliance	Balay Kalinaw Seminar Room A+B
Commodification and exclusion: Neoliberal agenda for migrants and diaspora (Part1)	Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM), International Migrants Alliance, Migrante International	National Engineering Center Seminar Room B
Building Effective Resistance Against the TPP (Part 1)	Asia Pacific Research Network, Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, Pesticide Action Network-Asia Pacific, KARAPATAN, Asian Peasant Coalition, Health Alliance for Democracy	Bahay ng Alumni Main Hall
RTD on Fossil Fuel Investment in Southeast Asia	Center for Environmental Concerns Philippines, Agham, Kalikasan PNE, CPU, Agham Youth	University Hotel Seminar Room 105+106
Peoples' Demands for Paris and Beyond	Global Peoples Surge	Balay Kalinaw Seminar Room C
Wages, Job Security and the Need for Migrant Unionism	Kilusang Mayo Uno, WORKINS, International Migrants Alliance	Bahay ng Alumni Seminar Room
Philippine-Palestine Friendship Association	Philippine-Palestine Friendship Association	Balay Kalinaw Seminar Room D
Cinemaralita: A Film Festival about the Filipino Urban Poor	Urban Poor Resource Center of the Philippines, inc. (UPRCP)	Balay Kalinaw Conference Room
<b>Peoples resistance against renewed imperialist offensives 14:00-16:00</b>		
Commodification and exclusion: Neoliberal agenda for migrants and diaspora (part 2)	Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM), International Migrants Alliance, Migrante International	National Engineering Center Seminar Room A
Building Effective Resistance Against the TPP (Part 2)	Asia Pacific Research Network, Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development, Pesticide Action Network-Asia Pacific, KARAPATAN, Asian Peasant Coalition, Health Alliance for Democracy	Bahay ng Alumni Main Hall
Advancing Peoples' Sovereignty vs. Militarism	Asia Pacific Research Network, Asia Pacific Research Network, Independent and Peaceful Australia Network, Peace for Life	Balay Kalinaw Conference Room
Cine Pesante: A Documentary Film Showing of Peasant Struggles and Initiatives	Asian Peasant Coalition, Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, People's Coalition (APC) on Food Sovereignty (PCFS)	Balay Kalinaw Seminar Room A+B
Art as a form of Women's Resistance	GABRIELA Philippines, Center for Women's Resources, International Women's Alliance, One Billion Rising	Bahay ng Alumni Seminar Room
Indigenous Peoples' Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL), CSO Partnership for Development Effectiveness	Indigenous Peoples, Plunder and War	Balay Kalinaw Seminar Room C
Forging Partnerships for Solidarity Tourism	Peoples' Solidarity and Education Tours (PSET)	Balay Kalinaw Dining Area
Movie screening of "This Changes Everything"	350.org	UP Hotel Seminar Room 105 and 106 Time: 13:30-15:30

# TPP AND THE RACE TO RULE TRADE IN ASIA PACIFIC

by MARJORIE PAMINTUAN



After almost a decade of painstaking negotiations, countries involved in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement have recently finalized the deal during its meeting in Atlanta last October. This trade deal represents 40% of the global GDP or 25.5% of the world's total trade volume under the control of corporations through imposing stricter rules on intellectual property rights, state-owned companies, government procurement, and investment protection.

More than just being a trade deal, the TPP is an important component of the US scheme to maintain its hegemony in Asia Pacific. US President Barack Obama and State Secretary Hillary Clinton made it clear during the APEC Honolulu meeting in 2011 that the TPP serves as the economic arm of the US geopolitical strategy to maintain its political and economic influence in Asia Pacific by creating a region-wide legal regime that serves the interests of and is enforceable by the US and its corporations.<sup>1</sup>

Although the TPP still has to go through some processes including ratification at country level before being implemented, the completion of the TPP deal signals a vital step forward in the protracted US rebalancing in the Asia Pacific.

## The Race to Rule Trade in APEC

The TPP was born out of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) side meetings in 2005 between Brunei, Chile, Singapore, and New Zealand in an attempt to create a trade deal that will further liberalize trade and remove non-tariff barriers in the region. In 2008, the United States started its negotiations with the original TPP countries to join the trade deal. Since then, membership of the TPP expanded to include Australia, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, and Vietnam.

In 2014, the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) proposed the creation of the Free Trade Area of Asia Pacific (FTAAP) to implement WTO standards, as well as solve the complex, overlapping trade rules and standards in the region caused by the multiple FTAs that individual economies have signed. However, the FTAAP did not gain traction due to the reluctance of member economies to create a binding regional trade deal, and also because China and the US cannot agree on the rules and provisions. To move forward, the APEC 2010 conference released a communiqué to announce that the FTAAP will be pursued through building on the regional trade deals such as the TPP and its competitor,

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<sup>1</sup> Kelsey, J. (2013). US-China Relations and the Geopolitics of the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA). Retrieved from <http://www.globalresearch.ca/us-china-relations-and-the-geopolitics-of-the-trans-pacific-partnership-agreement-tp-pa/5357504?print=1>

the China-led Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).<sup>2</sup>

The opportunity to write the trade rules that will control almost half of the world trade and tap a mega region whose share in the global GDP is 57% provides further impetus for the US and its allies to pursue the TPP. During her speech at the seniors officials meeting of the APEC Forum in Washington in 2011, Clinton expressed that the TPP membership should "...grow to include all the APEC economies and that the TPP will provide a foundation for an eventual Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP)."<sup>3</sup>

China's wish to counter the TPP and weaken US economic presence in the region is embodied in the RCEP. At first, China wanted an FTA only with the ASEAN, Japan, and South Korea. However, Japan which wanted to access the vast market of China but at the same time abate China's influence in the region, advocated for the inclusion of India, Australia, and New Zealand, the last two being close US allies like Japan.

The size of RCEP is almost at par with the TPP. Together, its 16 members<sup>4</sup>, which include two major economies in Asia, China and India, account for almost half of the world's population, almost 30 per cent of global GDP and over a quarter of world exports.<sup>5</sup> Its contents are almost similar to the TPP which includes trade in goods, services, investment, intellectual property, (including patents on medicines, copyright, geographic indicators, genetic resources, etc), competition, and dispute

2 IBON International. (April 2015). ASEAN Community 2015.Integration for Whom? <http://iboninternational.org/sites/ibon/files/resources/IBON%20Policy%20Brief%20on%20ASEAN%20integration.pdf> .

3 WTO Center. (March 15, 2011). Clinton Pushes US Free Trade Agenda At APEC ,<http://wtocenter.vn/news/clinton-pushes-us-free-trade-agenda-apec>.

4 China, India, Australia, Brunei, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Vietnam, South Korea, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Lao, Myanmar.

5 Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.<http://dfat.gov.au/trade/agreements/rcep/Pages/regional-comprehensive-economic-partnership.aspx>

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**"...the megaregionals such as the TPP and RCEP enable neocolonization of the region's less developed countries and communities through FTAs and cementing corporate power."**

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settlement except that observers claim that RCEP has less confidentiality requirements than the TPP.

The APEC Manila Economic Leaders Meeting in November is an important event for the supporters of the TPP to attract new members as well as to promote the trade deal to become the building blocks of the wider Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP). With the TPP gaining the upper hand in the race to write the trade rules in the region, the RCEP negotiations started with a renewed urgency during its members' meeting in Busan in October. Reports say the RCEP is expected to be signed during the November ASEAN summit in Malaysia, and to be enforced in 2016.

### **The Bandwagon Continues**

Some weeks after the completion of the TPP, Asian countries have once again expressed their eagerness to join the trade deal. South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand have all previously expressed their desire to be part of the TPP. After a previous announcement that the country will not join the TPP, Philippine President Aquino made a turnaround when he declared that the Philippines, is once again keen to join the trade deal as most of its allies are already part of it and believes that it would boost investment and jobs in the country. Joining the TPP means eliminating restrictions on foreign ownership, mandated by the country's constitution.

After being initially silent about the TPP, President Joko Widodo of Indonesia has announced the desire to join the TPP too, adding to the list of countries wanting to join the trade deal.

***Continued on p. 18 (TPP and the race...)***

# APEC'S GLOBALIZATION HURTS LOCAL SMES

by TEDDY CASIÑO



Among the supposed aims of this year's Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings is getting the little guys – the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) – on board the bandwagon of economic integration.

In particular, APEC is pushing for a greater role for SMEs in the global production and distribution systems of multinational and transnational corporations. Through the SMEs, economic growth is supposed to trickle down to the smallest players in the value chain.

In a sense, this is APEC's way of addressing the highly inequitable distribution of wealth that globalization has fostered. It is an admission that trade and investment liberalization policies pushed by APEC, in connivance with the World Trade Organization (WTO), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB), have benefited mainly the big global firms at the expense of the rest of the world, including the small and medium-sized producers in developing economies like the Philippines.

As host of this year's summit, the Aquino Administration plays a big role in APEC's posturing of concern for the weak and small. The Philippine government has even injected Pres. Aquino's hollow slogan of "inclusive growth" into APEC's mix of feel-good jargons, with the SME sector as one of its poster boys.

## **Philippine SMEs nearing extinction**

But first we have to ask: What impact did three decades of trade and investment liberalization have on our SMEs? And will APEC's newfound advocacy for SME's do any better?

Economic liberalization policies since the late 1980s have caused the demise of our manufacturing sector notably garments and textiles, footwear, rubber products, furniture, appliances, food and beverage, steel, chemicals, drugs and pharmaceuticals, many consumer goods and even agro-industrial products. Left by government to fend for themselves, Filipino manufacturers and farmers have been decimated by the deluge of cheap imported goods and raw materials brought about by government's policy of slashing tariff rates to one of the lowest in ASEAN, not to mention toleration of rampant smuggling.

The numbers bear this out: from 1999 to 2010 alone, around 3,000 manufacturing firms closed shop, resulting in 214,000 jobs lost. At 22.6% average share of GDP, manufacturing is at its lowest levels in 60 years while agriculture, at 10.8% share of GDP, is the lowest in history.

Worst hit and still unable to recover from globalization's disruptive impact on manufacturing since the late 80s are our SMEs that used to produce consumer goods for the local market or supply materials and services for larger, integrated

local industries. Trade and investment liberalization has allowed this traditional role to be taken over by foreign suppliers and their local distributors.

Such problems were not unexpected. In the debates prior to Philippine ascension to the WTO, government officials were insisting that there were adequate “safety nets” for globalization’s victims, namely billions of special funds for competitiveness enhancement measures. However, affected sectors have been constantly complaining that said funds, like the Department of Agriculture’s (DA) Agriculture Competitiveness Enhancement Fund (ACEF) and a similar fund under the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) are not being strategically used for SME development but instead have become notorious sources of corruption and political largesse.

Instead of integrating with local industries or graduating into large enterprises themselves, our beleaguered SMEs have in fact been shrinking into the equivalent of economic microorganisms. An overwhelming majority – 697,077 or 91.5% of Filipino firms – is categorized as micro-enterprises, with a miniscule asset value of Php3 million or less each and having just 1-9 employees. Of these, 51% are into wholesale and retail trade, meaning they don't even produce anything.

This is probably why the Philippines insisted that APEC changed its nomenclature – from SME to MSME (M for micro) – so as to include food carts, cellphone repair kiosks, sari-sari stores, tricycle and pedicab operators, kakanin and pasalubong makers, pasa-load retailers, and the otherwise informal economy that comprise the vast majority of Filipino enterprises.

Unfortunately, these micro-enterprises, which contributed a mere 4.9% of value-added to the economy and whose productivity is a mere 10% of large industries, are too small and inefficient to compete for a piece of the global or even regional value chain. Take note the average life of such businesses is only 3-5 years.

Our real SMEs, which are supposed to benefit from APEC's action plans, are already nearing

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**“Instead of integrating with local industries or graduating into large enterprises themselves, our beleaguered SMEs have in fact been shrinking into the equivalent of economic microorganisms.”**

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extinction, with small firms comprising just 7.6% of all businesses and medium-sized ones accounting for an even lower share at 0.4%. Thus our economy has a hollow middle, with bulk of employment and business activity coming from micro enterprises and large firms.

### **Disjointed industries**

Unlike in other industrialized economies, our SMEs have become orphans in their own country. They have little relation to our large industries, most of which source their equipment, parts and materials from abroad. Thus there are hardly any forward or backward linkages with local SMEs, creating minimal value added to the economy. Such linkages are crucial to maintaining a robust and sustainable SME sector and building a truly industrial economy. Without it, one ends up with enclaves of import-dependent, assembly-type factories; a service sector that serves industries in other shores; and a massive trading sector dumping cheap, often smuggled consumer goods from abroad. This in turn translates to low-paid, contractual jobs, if any.

Any serious effort to strengthen and develop SMEs should be premised on a strategic program of national industrialization, keeping in mind that SMEs are not the end in itself but the means by which to establish large-scale, integrated industries on a national scale. This means focusing on local value chains with SMEs as the building blocks, providing the raw or semi-processed materials, supplies, parts or services needed by large industries. They should serve as a bridge between our largely undeveloped agricultural sector and relatively modern industries. With this role in mind, government should then equip the SMEs with all the credit, technology,

***Continued on p. 18 (APEC's Globalization...)***

# THE GLOBALIZATION OF WAR

by MICHEL CHOSSUDOVSKY



*The world is at the crossroads of the most serious crisis in modern history. The U.S. and its NATO allies have embarked on a military adventure, “a long war”, which threatens the future of humanity. This “war without borders” is intimately related to a worldwide process of economic restructuring, which has been conducive to the collapse of national economies and the impoverishment of large sectors of the World population.*

*The U.S. weapons producers are the recipients of U.S. Department of Defense multibillion-dollar procurement contracts for advanced weapons systems. In turn, “The Battle for Oil” in the Middle East and Central Asia directly serves the interests of the Anglo-American oil giants. The U.S. and its allies are “Beating the Drums of War” at the height of a worldwide economic depression.*

The military deployment of US-NATO forces coupled with “non-conventional warfare” –including covert intelligence operations, economic sanctions and the thrust of “regime change”– is occurring simultaneously in several regions of the world.

Central to an understanding of war is the media campaign that grants it legitimacy in the eyes of public opinion. War has been provided with a humanitarian mandate under NATO’s “Responsibility to Protect” (R2P). The victims of U.S. led wars are presented as the perpetrators of war. Civilians in Ukraine, Syria and Iraq are responsible for their own deaths.

Meanwhile, the Commander in Chief of the largest military force on planet earth is presented as a global peacemaker. The granting of the Nobel “peace prize” in 2009 to President Barack Obama has become an integral part of the Pentagon’s propagand machine. It provides a human face to the invaders; it demonizes those who oppose US military intervention.

The Nobel Committee says that President Obama has given the world “hope for a better future”. The prize is awarded for Obama’s “extraordinary efforts to strengthen international diplomacy and cooperation between peoples. The Committee has attached special importance to Obama’s vision of and work for a world without nuclear weapons.”

The Big Lie becomes The Truth. In turn, upholding The Truth –through careful documentation and investigative analysis of the horrors of U.S. led wars– is casually categorized as “conspiracy theory”.

While Washington wages a “Global War on Terrorism” (GWOT), those who forcefully oppose America’s wars of aggression are branded as terrorists. War becomes peace, a worthwhile “humanitarian undertaking”. Peaceful dissent becomes heresy.

With unfolding events in Ukraine and the Middle East, humanity is at a dangerous crossroads. At no time since the Cuban Missile Crisis has the World been closer to the unthinkable: a World War III scenario, a global military conflict involving the use of nuclear weapons.

### **New Cold War?**

While this renewed East-West confrontation has mistakenly been labeled a “New Cold War”, none of the safeguards of The Cold War era prevail. Russia has been excluded from the Group of Eight (G-8), which has reverted to the G-7 (Group of Seven Nations). Diplomacy has collapsed. There is no Cold War East-West dialogue between competing superpowers geared towards avoiding military confrontation. In turn, the United Nations Security Council has become a de facto mouthpiece of the U.S. State Department.

Moreover, nuclear weapons are no longer considered a “weapon of last resort” under The Cold War doctrine of “Mutual Assured Destruction” (MAD). Nuclear weapons are heralded by the Pentagon as “harmless to the surrounding civilian population because the explosion is underground”. In 2002, the U.S. Senate gave the green light for the use of nuclear weapons in the conventional war theater. Nukes are part of the “military toolbox” to be used alongside conventional weapons.

The “Communist threat” of The Cold War era has been replaced by the worldwide threat of “Islamic terrorism”. Whereas Russia and China have become capitalist “free market” economies, a first strike pre-emptive nuclear attack is nonetheless contemplated.

China and Russia are no longer considered to be “a threat to capitalism”. Quite the opposite. What is at stake is economic and financial rivalry between competing capitalist powers. The China-

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## “...the United Nations Security Council has become a de facto mouthpiece of the U.S. State Department.”

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Russia alliance under the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) constitutes a “competing capitalist block” which undermines U.S. economic hegemony.

In Asia, the U.S. has contributed under its “Pivot to Asia” to encouraging its Asia-Pacific allies including Japan, Australia, South Korea, The Philippines and Vietnam to threaten and isolate China as part of a process of “military encirclement” of China, which gained impetus in the late 1990s.

Meanwhile, war propaganda has become increasingly pervasive. War is upheld as a peace-making operation.

When war becomes peace, the world is turned upside down. Conceptualization is no longer possible. An inquisitorial social system emerges. The consensus is to wage war. People can longer think for themselves. They accept the authority and wisdom of the established social order.

An understanding of fundamental social and political events is replaced by a World of sheer fantasy, where “evil folks” are lurking. The objective of the “Global War on Terrorism” narrative –which has been fully endorsed by the US administration– has been to galvanize public support for a worldwide campaign against heresy.

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*Michel Chossudovsky, The Globalization of War. America's Long War against Humanity, excerpt from the book, Global Research Publishers, 2014.*

## VALUE MIGRANT LABOUR, VALUE MIGRANT RIGHTS

by ENI LESTARI



Last April I was selected to speak at the United Nations to discuss the content of the sustainable development goals. As a child, I couldn't dream of even visiting the UN. But nor did I dream that I would become a migrant domestic worker and suffer exploitation and abuse.

Instead, I shared the aspirations of most young people – I hoped to complete my education, get a fulfilling job, contribute to my community and live a life of dignity.

Growing up in Indonesia, my dreams were crushed by the Asian financial crisis.

Indonesia was directed to adopt austerity measures. As a result, families like mine lost our livelihoods, were forced into debt and sold off land, left with no access to medical care, no education and no employment opportunities.

I left for Hong Kong to be employed as a domestic worker, knowing little of my rights. I found myself basically a slave: my passport taken away, working 18 hours a day, my wages deducted for high agency fees, underpaid and suffering other maltreatments.

After I left my employer and stayed in the Bethune House Women's Refuge and met fellow migrant domestic workers, I realised that the abuse I suffered was widespread.

Unfortunately, I couldn't work legally while fighting the case and I started to organize migrant domestic workers. From local organising, I began engaging at the regional and international level. Now I chair the International Migrants Alliance and am able to support and fight for rights alongside many others.

Once again, it is proven that the strong movement of empowered migrant domestic workers and the strong support of the local community in Hong Kong was the key factor in the fight for justice for my fellow Indonesian, Erwiana Sulistyaningsih, who endured torture and slavery. Erwiana's case is not an isolated one. What is rare is that the employer was held to account.

Sharing and learning from my fellow migrants from different parts of the world, I realised that our situation is not an accident of a few bad employers or the country I work in. Our whole economic system is built on cheap exploitable labour, of garment workers in Bangladesh, construction workers in Dubai or domestic workers like me.

Domestic work itself is often de-humanising and exploitative because it is not regarded as work. We domestic workers take the place of what is considered

a woman's "natural obligation" to provide care in the home – not highly valued and not regarded as skilled.

Our economies rely on women's care labour at home to support labour in the fields, factories and offices. How could an economy function if someone wasn't looking after children or the elderly, wasn't cooking, cleaning and caring?

When I spoke at the UN, I told governments that sustainable development can only be delivered if we dismantle the global economic system that kills local economies and replaces our small enterprises with multinationals, that forces governments to privatise the services that we are entitled to as human beings like health and education and water and energy, that reduces labour rights and trade union rights and that force women to migrate as cheap, exploitable labour.

It's clear that a tiny minority of people are benefiting from a system where we produce and consume too much. We need to value all labour – paid and unpaid – redistribute both paid and unpaid work, reduce hours of work and make economies work for people, rather than the other way around.

And the biggest contradiction of all in these negotiations is that countries that promote gender equality, such as the US, the EU and Australia, are the countries that promote policies that impoverish

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**“These development goals may be the last chance governments and the UN has to show us that international consensus and agreements can work. If they fail we, the people, will have no choice than to look for solutions that don't involve governments.”**

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countries, cut services and promote cheap labour – all of which violate women's rights.

I ended my speech at the UN by saying “I hope that by coming here and speaking to you directly you can honour not just my request but the demands of millions of women like me.

These development goals may be the last chance governments and the UN has to show us that international consensus and agreements can work. If they fail we, the people, will have no choice than to look for solutions that don't involve governments.

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*Eni Lestari is an Indonesian domestic helper and migrant rights activist who has been working in Hong Kong since 1999. She is the current chairperson of the International Migrants Alliance (IMA).*

# THROUGH A HAIL OF BULLETS AND A STORM OF SOLDIERS, A LITTLE LUMAD SCHOOL STANDS STRONG

by LEON DULCE



A diminutive school carved out of the wilderness of Lianga, Surigao del Sur south of the Philippines. Such was the humble atmosphere of the Alternative Learning Center for Agricultural and Livelihood Development, or ALCADDEV, a multi-awarded alternative learning system established for and by the indigenous Lumad people in the region of CARAGA in Mindanao. The school is known to be alternative due to its beginnings and management—Lumad people themselves and volunteers who endeavored to bring literacy to their far-flung areas that are barely reached by any government service or official. The school also classifies itself as an alternative to the basic education provided by government, for it goes beyond the rudimentary formal education to teach the Lumad to develop their agricultural livelihood, promote health and sanitation in their underserved areas, uphold their basic human rights and care for the environment—all that would enrich their culture.

But these days, ALCADDEV is known for its dead.

Emerito Samarca, ALCADDEV's executive director endearingly known to many as 'Tatay Emok', was murdered last September 1, 2015 by elements of the Magahat-Bagani, a paramilitary group attached to the 36th Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army.

The narrative from rights group Karapatan's documentation of the murder is heartrending. Throat slit open, stomach stabbed, and face bruised almost beyond recognition, Samarca was last seen alive in the custody of armed Magahat and military personnel, his hands, feet, and neck all tied up.

Within the day, the rampaging soldiers and paramilitary goons had also killed Dionel Campos, chairperson of MAPASU, the partner indigenous people's organization of ALCADDEV, and MAPASU member Datu Aurelio Sinzo, in a public execution in front of community members, in front of children.

Such was the bloody crescendo of the military's heightened militarization in the municipality of Lianga. Children and community members relate to various national media outfits how armed men illegally occupied the function hall and school grounds of ALCADDEV, threatened the community with massacre, and burned down the community cooperative store of MAPASU.

The military's atrocities triggered the massive evacuation of the Lumad communities, a humanitarian crisis that has at present displaced more than 3,000 people who have evacuated to Tandag City, all in desperate need for food, water, and sufficient sanitation and shelter.

### Mining as motive for mayhem

What did the Lumads ever do to spark the murderous ire of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and its equally murderous paramilitary groups? The clues are on the ground—and also below it.

ALCADEV, the Little Lumad School That Could, stands not only on fertile soil, but on highly mineralized land as well. The entire region of CARAGA, infamous as the mining capital of the Philippines, holds the largest nickel and gold deposits in the country upon which 23 different large-scale mines currently operate. The largest foreign and local ‘comprador’ miners in the country such as Philex, Anglo American, Nickel Asia, Sumitomo, Marcventures, BHP Billiton are leading this miner’s rush, some of them armed to the teeth with militias in their payroll.

The country’s largest coal reserve is also said to be found in CARAGA’s Andap Valley Complex in which the town of Lianga is situated. As of 2012, nine (9) coal operating contracts cover 58,000 hectares of lands in the region.

Aside from mines, greedy corporations have their eyes trained on monocrop plantations, with current areas and expansions of oil palm and banana plantations covering a massive 50,700 hectares.

The Lumad schools present a unique challenge to the entry of these big mines and other ‘development aggression’ projects. These widely acclaimed learning institutions are situated in the midst of these areas contested by different corporations.

But more than being a physical impediment to the entry of mining infrastructure, the cultural pride and social consciousness that ALCADDEV’s brand of education brings to the countryside are empowering young Lumads in opposing big mining’s land grabbing and environmental destruction.

By building the capacity of young Lumads to sustainably utilize their lands for agriculture and alternative livelihood, they are in fact asserting their right to determine how their ancestral domain will be utilized.

For this, it is being met with a hail of bullets and a storm of soldiers from the military “investment defense forces” and their paramilitary augmentations—mining is the apparent motive to the military’s mayhem. Indeed, militarization is the bloody pill that the Aquino administration has always been prescribing to mining-related conflicts over its entire administration.

The unwavering struggles of ALCADDEV’s students, staff, and supporters have been brought to Metro Manila, to the doorstep of Malacanang to raise awareness over their current plight. While in the rest of the country, thousands upon thousands of Filipinos in protest actions and people’s barricades, collectively struggle and successfully oppose mining plunder and destruction.

We owe it to Tatay Emok, Dionel, Aurelio, and many other fallen environmental defenders before them, to continue demanding for the pull-out of military investment defense forces and the disbandment of paramilitary groups. We must persist in our calls to immediately arrest and prosecute the murderers in the Magahat-Bagani and their superiors in the Philippine Army.

We must dedicate our lives, as the martyrs of Lianga did, to defending the people and environment from the relentless assault of plunderers and polluters.

The little Lumad school carved out of the wilderness in Lianga, Surigao del Sur still stands, despite its community cooperative and parts of a room that were burned down the day Tatay Emok was killed. But it is, for now, empty. It finds temporary dwelling in the evacuation center of the Lumad people, where the children’s education continues. Where it will continue to teach agriculture, health and sanitation, defense of human rights, care for the environment—all that would allow for the Lumad culture and life to persist.

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*Leon Dulce is the campaign coordinator of the Kalikasan People’s Network for the Environment, and the spokesperson of the Task Force – Justice for Environmental Defenders. This article was originally published in the Manilatoday.net website last September 26, 2015.*

**TPP and the race... (Continued from p. 9)****Rewriting trade rules for whom?**

Critiques have rightly pointed out that the megaregionals such as the TPP and RCEP enable neocolonization of the region's less developed countries and communities through FTAs and cementing corporate power. These agreements will funnel the region's wealth and resources to the hands of the 1% controlling the corporations that will benefit from the greater trade liberalization and greater IPR protection and greater investment protections that will be awarded to them to the likes of Chevron, Abbott, Cargill, Kraft, etc.

The competition between China and the US for political and economic dominance in the region is fuelling existing tensions and militarism in the region. The conflict over the small island territories in the West Philippine Sea is being used by the US as pretense to increase its military presence in the region. The military buildup in the region is quite alarming. Aside from increased military presence from both the US and China, other countries in the region such as Australia, Singapore, and Japan are also beefing up their arsenal.

In this tug of war, the real concern for the people is not about which side should win. Neither the TPP nor the RCEP, neither the US nor China and their host of corporations can address the long standing people's aspirations for trade that is just, fair, and responds to their needs.

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**APEC's Globalization... (Continued from p. 11)**

research and development that they need; facilitate their access to local and global markets; reduce red tape and the cost of doing business.

It was APEC's globalization agenda, zealously implemented by previous and present administrations, that caused the mass destruction of our SME sector and discouraged the development of large-scale, integrated Filipino industries. Now here comes APEC again, claiming to provide yet another false solution to our problem of joblessness, mass poverty and underdevelopment. It is time we wised up and pursue an alternative way of developing our SMEs and Philippine industries as a whole.

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*This article was originally published in [www.teddycasino.wordpress.com](http://www.teddycasino.wordpress.com) an abridged version of which also came out in the Commentary section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer's Oct. 30 issue.*





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