

HOLDING MONSTERS TO ACCOUNT:

*The Role of Global Instruments of Justice in Ending the
Climate of Impunity in the Philippines*

By:

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Republic of the Philippines
Senate

**Shattering the Consensus of Silence:
*Let's Take Urgent Actions Against Impunity in the
Philippines***

HON. LEILA M. DE LIMA
Senator

*Message at the side events of the 39th United Nations
Human Rights Council (UNHRC) Session,
Geneva, Switzerland | 13 September 2018*

Where do a brutalized people go when domestic legal systems fail to provide them redress and remedy? Where can they turn to when, at home, they are turned away from the courts of justice and the corridors of power?

One preambular clause in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights emphatically proclaims that “[i]t is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that **human rights should be protected by the rule of law.**”

But, in my country, the Philippines, the rule of law itself is a major cause of concern. It has been seriously undermined and largely subverted by different functionaries and officials of the government itself. So, how can human rights even hope to survive, much more, to flourish?

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“Thus, as high officials and agents of government themselves are involved in this spate of killings and attacks against our people, can we honestly expect the wheels of justice to turn? At the domestic level, can prompt and independent investigation of the crimes be conducted, and the prosecution and punishment of offenders be ensured?”



Photo by Dondi Tawateo



Photo by Raffy
Lerma

A photograph of Rodrigo Duterte, President of the Philippines, wearing a white shirt and a blue and red sash. He is holding a black assault rifle. The background is dark and out of focus.

“ I will protect you. I will not allow one policeman or one military to go to jail. ”

RODRIGO DUTERTE
during the 250th Presidential Airlift Wing (PAW) anniversary | September 17, 2016

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The ABS-CBN News logo is displayed in a red banner at the top of the page.

Duterte tells troops in drug war: 'I will protect you'

ABS-CBN News
Posted at Sep 17 2016 05:42 PM

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A photograph showing President Duterte in a green jacket, surrounded by military officials in blue uniforms. They are all smiling and raising their right fists in a gesture of solidarity. The background shows a large crowd of people in a hall.



Human rights, you are preoccupied with the lives of the criminals and drug pushers. As mayor and as president, I have to protect every man, woman, and child from the dangers of drugs. **The game is killing...I say to the human rights, I don't give a shit with you. My order is still the same. Because I am angry.**

Rodrigo Duterte

President of the Philippines

Photo STAR/File

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GLOBAL

UP PROFESSOR JOHN MOLO

“Four days before Christmas, people woke up to the chilling video of a policeman killing a mother and her son in front of their neighbors in Tarlac.

After thousands of deaths over the past four and a half years, I wondered what made this one trigger national indignation. The video gave a clear answer. Broad daylight. Several people watching. A crying mother hugging her son. The policeman clinically pulls out his gun. Shoots her point blank. Then he shoots her son. He shoots them again, then walks away.

All of this as his young daughter watched. The public wasn't prepared to deal with a video that displays in full view the monster that the past four years have created—an emboldened and unaccountable police force.

FLAG (Free Legal Assistance Group) and IDEALS

- In a preliminary study released in April 2018, human rights lawyers' organization FLAG observed that the documents they reviewed on 29 cases showed a lack of genuine effort to investigate, particularly on the matter of identifying and arresting the assailants.
- In a study involving 400 cases of extrajudicial killings in the drug war, lawyers' group IDEALS revealed that only 32% underwent initial police investigation, and of this number, 98% went no farther than this first step, and for 58.5% of this set of cases, the families of EJK victims had not been given any information whatsoever.

Sen. De Lima, the Philippines
“**fightingest**” Senator, who,
while not known to many is
actually one of the earliest who
submitted a Communication to
the ICC.



“But, more than the appeal to actions from governments and inter-government bodies, there is cogency in the call for international solidarity and mobilization of public support to uphold, defend and protect human rights in the Philippines and elsewhere. We, the people, cannot afford to stay silent and depend passively on governments. We, the people ourselves, have to move – move with utmost urgency and in solidarity with each other.

With political leaders themselves demonizing their own people and instigating human rights violations, the need for all of us to stand together and fight for the basic values of human dignity and equality of everyone everywhere has now become absolutely urgent.”





Leila de Lima

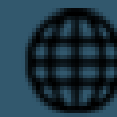
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