



BRIEFER ON THE REBELLION CASE AGAINST NORTHERN LUZON 7 **06 February 2023**

Last January 30, 2023, Jennifer “Jen” Awingan-Taggaoa, member of Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) Research Commission was arrested at her residence in Baguio City by a composite team comprised of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

Along with 6 other activists, she is named in a January 24, 2023 Warrant of Arrest issued by Abra Judge Corpus Alzate for rebellion or insurrection. The charges were based on a January 3, 2023 Resolution issued by Deputy Provincial Prosecutor Gerardo Tagura based on a complaint filed by the Abra Provincial Field Unit of the PNP’s Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) regarding an incident last October 27, 2022 in Brgy. Gacab, Malibcong, Abra where 2 members of the 24th IB, 7ID Philippine Army died in an alleged ambush by the New People’s Army (NPA). No bail was recommended.

She was immediately brought to the Baguio City Police Office (BCPO) in the afternoon and committed to the Abra Provincial Jail after she was presented to the Abra Regional Trial Court.

The other 6 activists charged in the same case are Windel Bolinget, Steve Tauli, Sarah Alikes and Lulu Gimenez of the CPA, and Nino Joseph Oconer and Florence Kang of Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) – Ilocos and Ilocos Center for Research, Empowerment, and Development (ICRED), respectively.

The human rights defenders named in the said case are collectively referred to in our campaign for justice and due process of law as the **Northern Luzon 7**. All of them have been subjected by the Philippine government, especially through the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC), to political vilification, surveillance and harassment prior to the filing of the rebellion case. Alikes and Bolinget faced trumped-up criminal charges that were dismissed due to the glaring lack of merit and evidence filed in courts since 2017. Tauli was a victim of abduction and torture in 2022. The redtagging campaign against all of them by State security forces and their agents did not spare even their families.

In a letter to the Supreme Court submitted last May 18, 2021 to the Philippine Supreme Court, Bolinget and other activists all over the country subjected to various human rights violations underscored that, “Red-tagging has been generally described as the act of linking persons and groups to the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People’s Army to make it appear that they are engaged in armed rebellion. As guilt by association without presenting any credible, competent and admissible proof is alleged, red-tagging violates the fundamental right to due process. This practice also contravenes the basic principle of distinction between armed combatants and civilians under international humanitarian law. Public vilification through red-tagging as well as the spread of disinformation against these groups and individuals lay the political predicate for further attacks such as the filing of trumped-up charges, procuring and serving of search warrants based on fabricated statements of false or coached witnesses and even outright extrajudicial killings.”

In the January 3, 2023 Resolution, Deputy Provincial Prosecutor Gerardo Tagura claims that Jen and the six other activists “are members of an armed group rising publicly against the government as shown by the structure of the organization presented by an Intelligence Officer of the Philippine Army. As such, they are beyond the reach of the process of subpoena.” This allegation denied them due process of law to answer the complaint before it was filed in court.

OUR CALLS:

We appeal to friends, family, colleagues and the general public to join us to with us in our calls to:

- **Free Jen Awingan-Taggaoa!**
- **Immediately and unconditionally drop the trumped-up charge against the Northern Luzon 7 activists!**
- **Assert due process and the rule of law!**
- **Stop the weaponization of the law against legal and legitimate political dissent!**
- **Stop the Filing of Trumped-up Charges! Stop Political Persecution!**
- **Abolish the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict!**
- **Prosecute and hold the Duterte and Marcos governments accountable for its human rights violations!**

The following are some of the ways that you may express solidarity for the NL7:

- **ISSUE STATEMENTS AND OTHER FORM OF PUBLIC SUPPORT** via different platforms for the swift release of Jen Awingan-Taggaoa, and the immediate and unconditional dropping of the trumped-up charge against the 7 Northern Luzon activists
- **USE THE FF HASHTAGS ON SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS** for wider reach of the campaign:
#FreeJenAwingan
#DefendNL7
#DefendTheNorth
#StopTheAttacks
- **Extend FINANCIAL SUPPORT** for the expenses needed for the welfare and legal defense of the NL7 through:

RCBC

Account Name: Cordillera Peoples Alliance, Inc.

Account Number: 001326723548

GCash:

Casselle Jannica Ton

09978191460

Message: “For NL7”

- SEND LETTERS OF CONCERN TO THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS OF CONCERNED GOVERNMENT AGENCIES:

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