Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 1644

Introduced by
Representatives FERDINAND R. GAITE,
CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE, EDCEL C. LAGMAN,
JOSE CHRISTOPHER Y. BELMONTE, EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
ARLENE D. BROSAS, FRANCHE L. CASTRO,
and SARAH JANE I. ELAGO

RESOLUTION
URGING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES THROUGH THE COMMITTEE
ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDEMN AND INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, THE KILLING OF NINE (9) AND ARREST OF SIX (6) ACTIVISTS
IN SIMULTANEOUS POLICE OPERATIONS IN SOUTHERN TAGALOG

WHEREAS on March 7, 2021, the Police Regional Office 4-A (PRO4A), Criminal Investigation
and Detection Group (CIDG) Regional Field Unit 4A, CIDG National Capital Region, Special
Action Force, SAF Air Unit with the 202nd Brigade, 2nd ID and the Philippine Army conducted
simultaneous implementation of search warrants against activists and leaders of progressive
organizations in different areas in Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, and Rizal;

WHEREAS, based on police reports, the operations ended in the killing of nine (9) activists and
the arrest of six (6) others;

WHEREAS, the fatalities that have been identified are:

1. Emmanuel “Manny” Asuncion, BAYAN Cavite Coordinator
2. Chai Evangelista, member of Ugnayan ng Mamamayan Laban sa Pagwawasak ng
Kalikasan at Kalupaan (UMALPAS KA);
3. Ariel Evangelista, member of UMALPAS KA;
4. Mark “Makma” Bacasno, member of San Isidro Kasiglahan, Kapatiran at Damayan para
sa Kabuhayan, Katarungan at Kapayapaan (SIKKAD-K3) in Montalban, Rizal;
5. Michael "Greg" Dasigao, member of SIKKAD-K3 in Montalban, Rizal;
6. Puoy Dela Cruz, indigenous Dumagat from Tanay, Rizal;
7. Randy "Pulong" Dela Cruz, indigenous Dumagat from Rizal;
8. Abner Damas Mendoza Esto, member of SIKKAD-K3 in Rodriguez, Rizal; and
9. Edward Damas Mendoza Esto, member of SIKKAD-K3 in Rodriguez, Rizal

WHEREAS, those who were arrested are:
1. Elizabeth "Mags" Canoral, BAYAN-Laguna spokesperson and former president of F-Tech union;
2. Esteban “Steve” Mendoza, Executive Vice President of Olalia-KMU;
3. Nimfa Lanzanas, paralegal aid of Kapatid-Timog Katagalugan;
4. Eugenio Eugenio, member of Confederation for Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (COURAGE), and President of their employees union ARROWS in Antipolo City Government where he is employed;
5. Joan Ignacio Eiren, resident of Sitio Lukutang Malaki, Brgy. San Isidro, Rodriguez, Rizal; and
6. One (1) unidentified individual.

Though not present in their residences, the homes of Lino Baez, coordinator of Bayan Batangas, and peasant leaders Moises Braganza and “Dodong Bagsik” were also raided by police where firearms/explosives were found.

WHEREAS, initial information and testimonies of witnesses of the incidents run contrary to and casts doubt on the authorities' narrative of “nanlaban” or that police officers acted in self-defense when they shot the victims. This is evident in the killing of Emmanuel “Manny” Asuncion, whose office, the Workers Assistance Center in Dasmariñas City, was subject to a raid but was located several kilometers away from the location indicated in the search warrant;

WHEREAS, this is not the first simultaneous police operations for the implementation of search warrants that resulted in mass killings and mass arrests of activists and members of progressive organizations. Other similar simultaneous police operations include the following:
1. Last December 30, 2020, nine (9) Tumandok indigenous leaders were killed in their own homes while sixteen (16) others were arrested after Synchronized Enhanced Managing of Police Operations (SEMPA) were jointly conducted by police, military, and CIDG operatives to implement search warrants against alleged communist rebels. The victims were identified to be locally-recognized indigenous leaders and barangay officials who were active in campaigns against the construction of dams in ancestral lands.
2. In another incident, on December 10, 2020, seven (7) activists including six (6) unionists and one (1) journalist, were arrested over charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives after police served search warrants in simultaneous operations in Metro Manila. Two (2) of those arrested, journalist Lady Ann Salem and trade unionist Rodrigo Esparago, were released on March 5, 2021 after the court cleared them of the charges filed against them;
3. In December 2018, six (6) were killed while sixteen (16) others were arrested in
simultaneous police operations in different areas in Negros Oriental.

WHEREAS, the search warrants used by police in the operations in Southern Tagalog were issued by Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 4 Judge Jose Lorenzo dela Rosa, the same Judge who issued the search warrants that led to the massacre of nine (9) indigenous Tumandok in Panay on December 30, 2020.

WHEREAS, human rights organizations have urged the Supreme Court to probe the questionable issuance of search warrants by lower courts that led to the raids, mass arrests, and killings of activists;

WHEREAS, the raids, arrests, and killings of activists in Southern Tagalog happened a day after the pronouncement of President Rodrigo Duterte for government forces to kill suspected rebels without regard for human rights, in a speech before the National Task Force - Regional Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict in Northern Mindanao in Cagayan de Oro City;

WHEREAS, the raids, arrests, and killings are part of the implementation of Executive Order 70 which mandated a whole-of-nation approach in ending the armed conflict, and targets not just the armed communist movement but also people’s organizations that have been tagged by military and civilian officials, especially those belonging to the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC), as part of the “legal political infrastructure” of the CPP-NPA;

WHEREAS, left unchecked, the raids, arrests, and killings, being part of an ongoing crackdown against progressive organizations, is expected to continue and would worsen the already dire state of human rights in the country;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives, through the Committee on Human Rights, condemn and investigate, in aid of legislation, on the killing of nine (9) and arrest of six (6) activists in simultaneous police operations in Southern Tagalog.

Adopted,

REP. FERDINAND R. GAITE
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. EDCEL C. LAGMAN
Albay, 1st District
REP. JOSE CHRISTOPHER Y. BELMONTE
Quezon City, 6th District

REP. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT
Bayan Muna Partylist

REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS
Gabriela Women's Party

REP. FRANCIS L. CASTRO
ACT! Teachers Partylist

REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Partylist