Shifting from Armed Struggle to Non-Violent Action in Indigenous Communities in Mindanao

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Overview

• Philippines and the Indigenous Peoples in Mindanao
• Root causes of conflict and the role of the State and the communist insurgency
• Pillars of support
• Shift from violent resistance to non-violent action
• Current efforts of Indigenous Communities
Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines

• The IPs in the Philippines comprise of 10% of the country’s total population.

• Majority of the IPs live in geographically isolated areas (‘GIA’)

• They are considered among the poorest and most marginalized sectors of society.

• They have suffered a long history of oppression and their need for basic social services continues to be neglected by the government.
History of colonization in the Philippines
Situation of the Indigenous Peoples in Mindanao

• Discrimination and marginalization
• Dispossession of lands
• Harassment by armed groups
• Lack of delivery of basic services

Driven from home, Philippine indigenous people long for their land

Rina Chandran

MADAUM, Philippines (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - As Philippine military battalions closed in, shutting down schools, rounding up men and harassing women, Tungig Mansumuy had to make a tough decision: stay and protect their homes, or flee to save their lives and risk losing their land.

Killings, land grabs threaten Filipino indigenous peoples

(Philstar.com) - August 9, 2016 · 2:54pm

BAGUIO CITY, Philippines – At least a hundred indigenous women and men in their traditional attire braved the monsoon rains here as they marched down Session Road to mark World Indigenous Peoples Day and to call attentions to life-threatening issues affecting Filipino IPs.
Effects of Armed Conflict

• Loss of source of livelihood and ancestral domains
• Child and youth recruitment to armed struggle
• Closure of schools in communities
• Displacement of IP communities

Davao City (CNN Philippines, October 8) — The Department of Education (DepEd) has ordered the permanent closure of 55 schools for indigenous peoples in the Davao region, four months after their permits to operate were suspended for allegedly teaching “left-leaning ideologies.”

“It is with regret to inform you that all schools under the Salugpungan are hereby ordered closed,” DepEd Davao regional office spokesperson Jenielito Atillo said in a media briefing on Tuesday.

He said this was the result of an investigation on schools operated and owned by Salugpungan Ta’ Tanu Igkanigon Community Learning Centers.
Pillars of Support

STATE

- Psychological Factors (Social categorization)
- Presence of security forces and paramilitary groups
- Material resources
- Laws and policies
From armed struggle to non-violent resistance

- Recognition of their right to self-determination.
- Right to their Ancestral Domains (AD)
- Non-involvement in ongoing conflict
- Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)
Current efforts

• Conventional politics
• Protest and Rallies
• Non-violent constructive programs


Mark Engler & Paul Engler, *This is an Uprising: How Nonviolent Revolt is Shaping the 21st Century* (New York, 2016) 92.


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