



2nd Asia-Pacific Gathering on Human Rights and Extractives Action Statement | Nov. 12, 2021

We are peoples affected by mining and extractive industries across the Asia-Pacific region. Coming from different communities and from assorted and rich ecosystems, we had once lived comfortably from the bounties of nature. We are women, youth, indigenous peoples, farmers, fishers, forest-dependent peoples. We are human rights defenders and stewards of nature and the environment, as we have a deep connection with the land, forests, rivers, seas and biodiversity.

We are frontline witnesses to the devastation brought by mining and extractives and how it has worsened the climate crisis, the social crisis, the economic crisis, the food crisis, the water crisis and this health crisis. There is no doubt in our minds and in our hearts that extractivism is a direct contributor to inequality in the rural-urban linkages and the imbalance of economic and political powers among countries in the region. Extractivism is one of the root-causes of this current socio-ecological crisis.

Our fight against extractivism is a real solution to the climate crisis.

We are communities and organizations raising our voices and standing our ground against these injustices and the greed that that is driving more extractive and destructive activities.

As we assembled last Oct. 21-22, 2021 during the 2nd Asia-Pacific Gathering on Human Rights and Extractives, we recognized serious challenges that we face collectively, resisting the aggressive and hostile mining industry ravaging our land and lives. We saw how mining has destroyed our livelihoods and disrupted our lives and connections. In the midst of the pandemic brought by COVID19, we refute the continued justification of large corporations and even our governments of more destructive mining activities, in the name of “development” or “economic recovery”.

We reject that continuing aggression of mining corporations that claim to bring this “development”, when we start to understand clearly that these extractive activities are driving deforestation, water contamination, land grabs, monoculture plantations, destruction of biodiversity, displacement of indigenous communities and further marginalization of the poor, especially women and youth from the rural areas. We also realize that mining is linked to climate change and possibly a contributing factor to the emergence of this pandemic.

We refuse to accept an uncertain future because of the increased risks and vulnerabilities we face from the impacts of climate change. We will never forget that corporations and authoritarian states are the real drivers of climate injustice brought by more frequent and stronger typhoons, floods, landslides, and forest fires. We know that these risks and vulnerabilities are amplified when mining destroys our lands and forests and poisons our rivers and seas.



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Equally important, we will multiply our struggles as we defend our lands and our lives against regional trends we observed such as shrinking space for civic engagement, rising authoritarianism, unjust trade agreements, massive and deep corruption, inadequate funding and political will for poverty-reduction and climate-change actions, and increased disinformation or fake news.

As environmental rights defenders, we are being harmed and many are even being killed. Our families are being harmed. Our communities are being harmed, irreparably.

These are unacceptable and we will not stand by and simply remain quiet.

We affirm that we need to collectively act and to learn and work with each other. We will organize, strengthen and mobilize ourselves and our communities to resist destructive mining and extractivism. We will study, research and exchange knowledge so that we become more aware of what we can do, how we can do it better and when is the best time to do the right thing. We will advocate for laws, policies and practices that reflect and capture our action agenda, including but not limited to, moratorium on destructive mining and other extractive industries, protection of biodiversity, respect to indigenous rights, local autonomy, gender rights and recognizing and enhancing the rights of nature and putting people at the center of sustainable development.

We will challenge mining and extractivist corporations and their profit-driven greed that destroy our land and our lives. We will hold our governments and corporations accountable and demand that they protect, promote and fulfill all our human rights, especially for us environmental human rights defenders.

In the same light, as community-based organizations and support groups, we value solidarity and partnership, primary among affected communities and civil society organizations. We also recognize the potential of engaging the private sector and state mechanisms that share our mission to protect and enhance nature and the environment for a sustainable future. Solidarity is the only way that we can effectively recover from the COVID pandemic and realistically achieve climate justice targets for the region.

We demand that our government impose effective regulation on mining and extractive operations. Voluntary and self-regulating policies and guidelines within the industry will not be adequate. Governments must now allow extractive companies to capture and influence multi-lateral bodies and multi-stakeholder forums. The space for defining and determining guidelines to regulate industries must be genuinely independent and give preferential treatment to the voices of affected-peoples and human rights defenders, and not corporate interests.



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Lastly, we commit to strengthen this platform of interaction among Asia-Pacific communities and organizations against destructive mining. We will intensify our efforts to increase our awareness, to build our capacities, to enhance our advocacy work and to influence policies and practices that will defend human rights and enhance the environment.

These are the meaningful freedoms we all aspire for. #

Signed by participants from the 2nd Asia-Pacific Gathering on Human Rights and Extractives, this Nov. 12, 2021:

(in alphabetical order, as of Nov. 16, 2021, 6:00 PM Manila Time)

Aid/Watch

Alyansa Laban sa Mina-Mindoro (ALAMIN)

Alyansa ng mga Mamamayan Para sa Kalikasan ng Kasibu (AMKKAS)

Alyansa Tigil Mina (ATM)

Ang Aroroy Ay Alagaan, Inc.

Asian Forum on Human Rights and Development (Forum-Asia)

Bayay Sibuyanon

Baywatch Foundation

BICAMM IP Ancestral Domain (Palawan)

Bileg Dagiti Babbe (BILEG)

Center for Energy, Ecology and Development (CEED)

Convergence of Initiatives for Environmental Justice (CIEJ)

Dhaatri Resource Center for Women and Children's Rights (Dhaatri)

Didipio Earth Savers Multipurpose Association (DESAMA)

Environmental Legal Assistance Center (ELAC)

Focus on the Global South

Homonhon Environmental Rescuers Organization (HERO)

Indigenous Perspectives (IP)

Indonesia Global Justice (IGJ)

Kachin Development Network Group (KDNG)

KRuHA-Peoples Coalition for the Right to Water

KUMASA Na!

Laskar Hijau

Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center (LRC-KsK/FOE-Phil)

LILAK-Purple Action for Indigenous Women (LILAK)

Maporac Aeta Organization (MAO)



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Marian Women Producers Cooperative (MWPC)
mines, minerals & PEOPLE (mm&P)
Nature's Ambassadors of Sibuyan Island (NASI)
Partnership for Rural and Technical Services, Inc. (PARTS)
Philippine Misereor Partnership, Incorporated (PMPI)
Porgera Women's Rights Watch Inc.
Protect Manicani Island Society, Inc. (PROMISI)
Sibuyanons Against Mining (SAM)
Sindikata Aksata
Save Palawan Movement
Social Action Center-Borongon (SAC-Borongon)
Social Action Center-Marbel (SAC-Marbel)
ReSisters Dialogue
Unahin Natin Lagi Ang Diyos-Bito Lake Farmers and Fishers Association (UNLAD)
Women's Action on Mining in Asia (WAMA)

**Last Oct. 21-22, 2021, more than 300 individuals from fifteen countries across Asia-Pacific participated in the online event 2nd Asia-Pacific Gathering on Human Rights and Extractives. This action statement captures the overarching tone and thread of the discussions and interactions among the environmental and women human rights defenders.*

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