

Madame President,

I speak on behalf of 19 national and international organisations focused on the Philippines. The lethal war on drugs continues with the number of victims rising again in the past six months.

The human rights situation on the ground continues to deteriorate.

The root cause of the atrocities we have witnessed since 2016 – the now-entrenched structural violence and permissive environment for circumventing laws and arbitrarily ending life – emanates from the Philippine President's pursuit of hard-lined and violent policies.

The Joint Human Rights Programme, which the GRP is now lauding as compliance, may respond to long-standing issues in Philippine law enforcement and accountability institutions. But it does not address the root cause of the high number of killings for the past five years. These mass killings were unleashed by presidential pronouncements which intentionally enabled and encouraged a police force already prone to violence and shortcuts.

Last year, the Council failed to respond adequately to recommendations made by the High Commissioner. We are deeply concerned that the Joint Programme and corresponding nominal accomplishments of the Philippine Government shall further establish a false perception of sufficient action while atrocities continue as routine. The situation urgently requires direct accountability action by the Council.

That the ICC Prosecutor, after a four-year process, has called for a full investigation into the Philippines confirms the severe gravity of the situation. The ICC only has jurisdiction on Philippine cases dating before the country's official withdrawal for the Rome Statute in March 2019. Thus, it is incumbent on the Council to look into the severe injustices that have continued past this date.

We urge the Council to launch the long-overdue independent and transparent investigation.

Thank you.

## **Signatories:**

### National:

1. Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA)
2. Families of Victims of Involuntary Disappearance (FIND)
3. Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP)
4. Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP)
5. In Defense of Human Rights and Dignity Movement (IDEFEND)
6. Karapatan Alliance Philippines (KARAPATAN)
7. National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP)
8. National Union of Peoples Lawyers (NUPL)
9. Ecumenical Voice for Human Rights and Peace in the Philippines (EcuVoice)

### International:

1. Franciscans International
2. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
3. Amnesty International
4. Human Rights Watch
5. CIVICUS
6. Harm Reduction International
7. Fastenopfer
8. World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT)
9. Geneva Forum for Philippine Concerns (GFPC)
10. International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
11. Aktionsbündnis Menschenrechte - Philippinen
12. Dominicans for Justice and Peace