



Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines

Remembering with Anguish and Pain

A CALL FOR JUSTICE FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE MAGUINDANAO MASSACRE

“Blessed are those who work for peace, God will call them His children.”
Matthew 5: 9

We, the 1,290-member schools, colleges and universities of the **Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP)**, in solidarity with the relatives and friends of the 58 Mindanao martyred women and media people who were massacred in Maguindanao on November 23, 2009, join all other peace-loving Filipinos in remembering with anguish and pain the death of the 58 Mindanao martyrs. We demand that justice be served without fear or favor at the earliest possible time.

We remember how the peaceful act of filing a certificate of candidacy (COC) in pursuit of a democratic process was met with violence of the most gruesome type against the innocent women, journalists and even passersby. The inhuman act, committed in broad daylight, was done with utter disregard for the moral, ethical, and legal precepts on which our free and democratic society is founded. We deplore that dastardly and cowardly act of self-serving individuals who, in violating the most basic principles and values we uphold as a people, ruthlessly abused the power they wielded and trampled upon our moral standards.

Life is sacred, and killings especially of that magnitude and motivation should never be tolerated. **We commend the witnesses** who despite fear for their lives and risks to their families have opted to come out and tell the truth. We **encourage others who have personal knowledge** about the heinous crime committed to come out, testify and tell the truth, **for truth, shall surely liberate them.**

We lament the fact that nearly a year after the massacre, the case is not progressing substantially and needless to say there are indications that at the rate it is going justice is not forthcoming. We therefore call for a **speedy and fair trial** - delay of justice is a denial of justice; for **vigilance** so that people, organizations and institutions can monitor the progress of the case; and for **transparency** of the case so that the public may know.

We reiterate our earlier demand for our **government to apply the full force of the law** against those responsible for the brutality. All responsible government agencies must exhaust all legal means to mete the corresponding punishment for the perpetrators of the heinous crime and to **dismantle private armies and put an end to the anarchy of clans in the region.**

For our part we **commit ourselves anew to intensify efforts in all our schools to form our students in the Christian way of charity, truth, justice and peace**, informing them of the history and causes of the problems now faced by the peoples of Mindanao, acknowledging that all of the Philippines share in the responsibility of building a culture of peace. **We pledge to form our students in the appreciation of**



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democratic structures and of the social imperatives of living in a multi-religious, multi-cultural free society.

We continue to **pray for and extend our deepest sympathies and solidarity to the families of the victims**, and to all the others whose loved ones have suffered similar injustice in the past. The brazen use of power must stop.

We enjoin all citizens to be vigilant in protecting the sacred principles and values upon which our society is anchored. We should never allow the death of the Mindanao Martyrs to be in vain. **Let us remain steadfast in our commitment to the protection of life, to peace, and to freedom.**

CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES
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