

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Quezon City

**SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS**  
Second Regular Session

**HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1549**



-----  
**INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVES**

**ARIEL B. CASILAO**

**CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE, EMMI A. DE JESUS, ANTONIO L. TINIO,  
ARLENE D. BROSAS, FRANCE L. CASTRO, AND SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**

-----

**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN  
INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SPATE OF HUMAN  
RIGHTS ABUSES AGAINST FARMERS AND OTHER SECTORS IN NORTHERN  
SAMAR PERPETUATED BY THE ELEMENTS OF ARMED FORCES OF THE  
PHILIPPINES (AFP) IMPLEMENTING THE COUNTER-INSURGENCY PROGRAM  
OPLAN KAPAYAPAAAN**

**WHEREAS**, the Northern Samar Small Farmers Association (NSSFA), that supports poor, landless farmers and farm workers in the province on their agrarian problems, as well as, opposing human rights abuses perpetrated by elements of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) who are launching massive military operations in farmer communities, as implementation of the counter-insurgency program Oplan Kapayapaan;

**WHEREAS**, the various human rights abuses continue to threaten the lives and livelihood of farmers and other sectors in the province;

**WHEREAS**, NSSFA and the human rights group Katungod - Northern Samar, documented the various cases of human rights abuses against farmers and other sectors committed by the AFP under the guise of "peace caravans," "humanitarian missions," intelligence-driven programs and others:

- elements of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 43<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army (IBPA) conducted military operations disguised as "peace caravans" from May to August 2017;

- elements of the 43<sup>rd</sup> IBPA and 20<sup>th</sup> THS Tactical Helicopter Squadron dropped 2,500 copies of leaflets in the hinterlands of Northern Samar calling for surrendered, which is essentially red-tagging farmer villages, triggering distress among residents;
- the 20<sup>th</sup> IBPA partnered with various government agencies for tree-planting, land titling, livelihood projects, scholarship and intelligence-driven programs, on which beneficiaries such as of the scholarship program from Catubig, Mapanasa, Pambujan and Palapag towns were being commissioned by AFP as intelligence agents against the New People's Army (NPA);
- 20<sup>th</sup> IBPA engages in military indoctrination operation in infiltrating several schools for an outreach program in partnership with SM Foundation such as distributing school supplies, Youth Leaders' Summit and feeding programs in Taylor Elementary School, Youth Organization of Pambujan and other, which are violation of the Section 22 or "Children as Zones of Peace" of the Republic Act No. 7610 Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act;

**WHEREAS**, cases of illegal arrest and detention, physical assault of farmers and human rights advocate perpetrated by the elements of the 20<sup>th</sup> IBPA were documented by Katungod - Northern Samar and NSSFA:

- in Brgy. Osmeña, Las Navas, thirteen (13) farmers including a barangay official were illegally detained by the elements of the military without warrant;
- on November 24, 2017, three (3) farmers namely Richard Avino, Teny Gerbon and Arnel Aquino from Brgy. Osmeña, Palapag, Northern Samar were abducted by elements of 20<sup>th</sup> IBPA;
- on November 26, 2017, Sargie Macallan, human rights activist and coordinator of Katungod - Northern Samar was physically assaulted and strangled by Lieutenant Colonel George Domingo, commanding officer of the Civil-Military Operations (CMO) Battalion inside their detachment at the Brgy. Opong, Catubig, when the victim was seeking a dialogue on the location of abducted three farmers;

**WHEREAS**, cases of illegal search, illegal arrest and detention to farmers and military encampment in peasant communities:

- on June 26, 2017, farmers of San Jorge, Northern Samar complained for military checkpoints and illegally search their belongings;
- reports from Alyansa san mga Parag-uma Kontra-Kagutom san Las Navas (APKLAS) that in Brgy. San Isidro, Las Navas, military men encamped inside the peasant communities;
- in Brgy. San Miguel, Las Navas, military men occupied the barangay hall and barangay health center which disrupted barangay sessions and health services;

**WHEREAS**, cases of illegal arrest, brutal interrogation and red-baiting of minors has been documented:

- APKLAS also reported that, a child named Jimboy Obiado was illegally arrested by the elements of 803<sup>rd</sup> IBPA and was labelled as “NPA child warrior;” the boy was only in errands instructed by his parents to bring sacks of rice in Brgy. Tubang, Las Navas;
- a 16-year old boy named Joshua from Brgy. Perez, Las Navas was accosted and brutally interrogated by a certain Sgt. Tados for more than an hour who accused the victim as a member of the NPA;

**WHEREAS**, Katungod - Northern Samar reported that military encampment in schools and harassment was documented that threatens the lives of the students and the teachers, which are clear violations of the Section 22 or “Children as Zones of Peace” of the RA 7610:

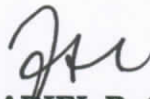
- last May to August 2017, elements of 20<sup>th</sup> IBPA headed by Colonel Noli Lapizar encamped in Las Navas National High School and occupying school buildings that drove several classes to be held in makeshift tents;
- on June 5, 2017, San Isidro Farmers’ Association for Human and Environmental Protection (SIFA - Protect), a local environmental organization, reported elements of the AFP with high-powered firearms, disrupting classes and enticing children into becoming spies;
- a barrio teacher from Brgy. San Miguel, Las Navas was harassed and stalked by a drunk soldier to her classroom and threatened her and her pupils;

**WHEREAS**, it was reported in the news that, last November 6, 2017, members of APKLAS along with residents, progressive group leaders and human

rights advocates confronted the 20<sup>th</sup> IBPA to immediately leave farmer communities in Brgy. San Miguel, Las Navas and other villages of Northern Samar; an army official Staff Sargeant Sevillano responded that he will consult the issue to his commanding officer who was not present during the dialogue;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Human Rights to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the spate of human rights abuses against farmers and other sectors in Northern Samar perpetuated by the AFP implementing the counter-insurgency program Oplan Kapayapaan.

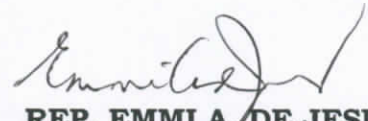
Adopted,



**REP. ARIEL B. CASILAO**  
ANAKPAWIS Party-list



**REP. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**  
BAYAN-MUNA Party-list




**REP. EMMI A. DE JESUS**  
GABRIELA Women's Party



**REP. ANTONIO L. TINIO**  
ACT Teachers Party-list



**REP. ARLENE D. BROSAS**  
GABRIELA Women's Party



**REP. FRANCE L. CASTRO**  
ACT Teachers Party-list



**REP. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**  
KABATAAN Party-list