

International
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IOSDE Statement on the Murder of Teduray chieftain 'meant to silence lumad struggle for rights'

Mindanao, Philippines; 9 October 2015

It is with deep sadness that we face yet another killing of Lumad life (Mindanao, Philippines), this time of a leader of a Teduray chieftain in Maguindanao province on 2 October 2015. As reported, "Lencio Arig, a member of the Minted sa Inged, or council of leaders of the Timuay Justice and Governance, was shot dead in Sitio Keninan, Barangay Ramongaob, South Upi town by at least two gunmen as he walked home with his wife and young daughter,"¹ the leader was known as someone who "always went out of his way to avoid conflict."²

IOSDE strongly condemns all violence, intimidation, and other acts of human rights violations against Human Rights Defenders, and in particular those living and breathing the front lines for Indigenous Rights and especially in that context traditional healing, leadership, women's roles as revered and sacred, peaceful leadership, traditional territories, and self-determination including true sovereignty, separation from external powers and/or autonomy. Tragically, such violence against Human Rights Defenders is both historic and current with no respite; it is a norm for those defending Indigenous Rights and/or equality. Moreover, it is especially so for those defending rights that whilst confronting States, persons in power, business and authorities directly concerning laws, policies, and actions that are in deepest violation of the fundamental human rights, including true and actualized Indigenous self-determination, traditional leadership, traditional religion and sacred places and lifeways and territorial rights therein.

IOSDE has recognized from its inception that strategic killing of Indigenous Human Rights Defenders as well as their allies, and in particular or persons with deep meaning to their representative collectives for being true, faithful, kind-hearted and genuine in their positions and relations, is a strategic intimidation tactic on the part of the offenders or contractors. We also know that such intimidation tactics will never work as the offender/contractor intends; such tactics only strengthen the commitment of us all - globally, regionally and locally - to persevere all the more in support of the very rights and change those murdered, maimed and otherwise reduced and violated stood and stand for. In fact, IOSDE's very purpose is, in part, to collectively overturn the horrors created by those powers that be that meet human rights equality in action with violence. There are no reasons other than power and greed for violence to meet Human Rights Defenders. In fact, human rights, and Indigenous Rights therein, as well as Women's Rights and others rights, are to be engaged by brilliant minds, spirits and hearts of the world so to create safe and peaceful change for human rights progress.

It is with the attention and empathy of the international communities in the world that these actions will be reviewed and treated as the true genocidal acts that they are. When the citizens of the world come to realize that the very concept of citizenship that they may take for granted is actually a concept of statehood built on the backs of slaves, Indigenous Peoples, women, and desecration of the equality of all peoples and religions, the world will begin to mediate for a more peaceful state of life for all humans, as the collective that we truly are, without such horrors as the murder of Lencio Arig, the Lumads and Human Rights Defenders.

¹ <http://www.interaksyon.com/article/96767/tribe-council-murder-of-teduray-chieftain-meant-to-silence-lumad-struggle-for-rights>

² <http://www.interaksyon.com/article/96566/maguindanao-lumad-leader-killed-in-ambush>

IOSDE: an equal future starts with an equal now