



Contributing to the Realization of a Truly Just, Independent, and Peaceful Philippines

NDF-US Vision Statement

National Democratic Front in the US

Declaration

1.) We, members of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, residing in the US, inspired by the proud heritage of our people's struggles against foreign and local domination, resolute in our support for national liberation and democracy in the Philippines, and determined to participate in the struggles of Filipinos as well as peoples in the US for justice and equality, in order to assist in creating a new democratic order that can realize peoples' aspirations for a just, peaceful, and sustainable world, hereby declare who we are, what we believe in, and what we hope for.

Who we are

2.) We are Filipinos, Filipino-Americans, peoples of the US. We are in the US for different reasons -- many have come for professional advancement; others have come to immigrate; some of us have been forced out of our country into exile; others have chosen to be in exile; most have come in search of a better life. We have come at different times -- before martial law, during martial law, after martial law. We are nurses, doctors, lawyers. We are construction workers,

secretaries, clerks. We are engineers, professors, business people. We are bartenders, domestic helpers, unemployed. We are artists, students, religious. Many of us are exiles, undocumented, retirees. We have come from the width and breadth of the Philippines. We are city folk, rural folk. Rich and poor.

3.) We are as different as the languages we speak; as varied as our dreams. We are as unique as our origins; as distinct as our classes and social status. But there is one conviction we share: we believe in the peoples of the Philippines, in their dreams for freedom, equality, and solidarity; in their hopes for justice, peace, and self-determination. While some of us are socialists, others are members of faith communities, others non-believers, still others communists, we all call ourselves national democrats because we are bound by a common vision of national democracy for the Philippines. We share and accept a common responsibility and obligation placed on us by the national democratic revolution, and by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) which is its clearest, most visible expression: to participate in giving "birth to a new democratic order that can realize our peoples' aspirations for a just, independent, sovereign, and prosperous nation."

4.) Above all, we are a movement, a peoples' movement, a bridge between past, present, and future. We are pilgrims in time and space, borne by the past, called by the future, embodied in the present. We are a community of women and men; of different ethnicities, cultures, sexual orientations, peoples.

5.) We recognize that those who, in the past eighteen years since the NDF was founded, have dared to make sacrifices -- even the ultimate sacrifice of their lives -- have contributed in no small measure to the creation of this movement. We remember those who have been slain by the enemy -- the nameless, faceless, victims who have fallen. We acknowledge those who have died at the hands of fellow comrades during anti-enemy infiltration campaigns within our ranks -- friends, sisters, brothers, *kasamas*. We also recognize those who continue to bear quietly the hardships, indignities, even injustices, in the name of our revolution -- especially the mothers, the wives, the children. We pause now, to salute these comrades -- martyrs in every way -- even as we remember those whom they left behind. Every single one irreplaceable! Every single one a part of us! So let the whole world know that their memory will forever be enshrined in our history. And that we will honor them by carrying forward the revolution they loved so much and served so well, even as we endeavor not to repeat our past mistakes and to learn from them.

6.) This revolution -- this struggle for freedom, equality, and solidarity -- did not begin twenty years ago. Nor was it one struggle. It was an anti-colonial struggle against the European conquistadores; it is an anti-imperialist struggle against the US and other foreign entities; it is an anti-feudal struggle against local despotic landlords; it is a struggle against patriarchy and gender oppression; it is a struggle against national chauvinism. Nor was the struggle only in the Philippines. Already in the early part of this century, many Filipinos travelled from our homeland to the US. Many became farm workers on the West Coast, others immigrated to other parts of the US. Many became involved in the struggle to create for themselves an identity and culture based on their hopes for a just and peaceful future. Many struggled against racism and exploitation in order that, paraphrasing Carlos Bulosan, a new world could be born, a world that would demand less sacrifice and agony from the living, which the old world did.

7.) We in the US are linked to this dual legacy of struggle and hope: the struggle in the homefront and the struggle in the US. These two strands of the revolutionary tradition are part of who we are. We are linked not only by our race, our language, our "preferential option for the poor," but through our participation in the struggle. At the same time, many of us belong to a later generation whose inspiration for struggle was shaped decisively by the national democratic struggle in the Philippines. We are a support movement for the national democratic revolution in the Philippines. At the same time, we believe ourselves to be the embodiment of that revolution in the US. Our location causes us to honor both traditions.

8.) Whatever our perspective, whatever our location, we represent and symbolize the plurality, the multidimensionalities, the differences not only of Philippine society and culture, but of Philippine society and culture in the US. We celebrate these differences. We are like the *tapis*, the *malong* -- a woven tapestry of peoples and cultures, of dreams and visions, of fears, deep hurt, and insecurity, but most of all, of joy, hope, and struggle.

Our Historic Tasks

9.) We reaffirm the three historical tasks in the US which were entrusted to us by those who have gone before us. These tasks are indivisible dimensions of our overseas revolutionary work.

10.) We reaffirm the task of developing a broad solidarity movement for the Philippines among US peoples, striving to win their respect and trust, seeking their widest, broadest, and strongest support. This is our primary task in the US.

At the same time, we reaffirm that the goal that the leadership of such a broad solidarity movement, encompassing peoples of color, progressive movements, organizations, and individuals, must be shared equally and freely, as among colleagues and friends. We reaffirm this task, even as we recognize that our commitment to the national democratic revolution requires of us a commitment to acknowledge and support the needs and concerns of our US friends.

11.) We reaffirm the general direction of our work with Filipinos in the US, to arouse, organize, and mobilize them for actual and direct participation in the national democratic revolution, even as we affirm the challenge to deepen this task by involving ourselves in their struggles -- and the struggles of peoples in the US: for justice and self-determination, against racism and gender oppression, against exclusion. We carry out this work in the Filipino community in the spirit of our primary task of building a broad solidarity movement in the US. Our work in the Filipino community is also reinforced by the belief that the rights of all migrant Filipinos require protection, and the problems of the Filipinos abroad need to be addressed. We also support those who have chosen to focus their work on effecting social and political change in and for US peoples.

12.) We reaffirm the task of developing friendly relationships with governments, political parties, international organizations, institutions, and movements which have offices in the US. Such representation work is aimed at winning recognition and support for the national democratic revolution, in general, and for the NDF, in particular. We believe, moreover, that the recognition of the NDF will depend on each one of us representing the movement in the places in which we live, work, and play, at levels appropriate to and consistent with the strategic goals of the NDF.

Our Hopes And Aspirations

13.) As members of the NDF in the US, and as comrades in a larger revolutionary project, we commit ourselves to the following agenda, which we believe to be decisive in the years ahead.

Peace

14.) We believe that the national democratic struggle, at its heart, is a struggle for peace. Not simply the absence of armed conflict, peace involves the resolution of the basic problems that breed armed conflict, and the persistence in building and consolidating the structures of social life based on justice, equity, sustainability, and democracy. Peace, in fact, is the strategic goal of the national

democratic revolution. Thus, we seek not only the cessation of hostilities but insist on the dismantling of the structures and processes that destroy human life: unequal ownership of land, domination of national capital by global capital, poverty, gender and cultural oppression, militarization, and ecological degradation. For as long as these structural evils remain, there can be no just and enduring peace; neither will we cease to struggle, to seek ways toward a politically negotiated solution to the conflict, and, if necessary, to defend the struggle with the weapons of peoples' war.

Democracy and Pluralism

15.) We believe that the soul of the national democratic struggle is democracy and pluralism. Therefore, we welcome all initiatives for dialogue and common action among groups and individuals committed to peace, justice, and freedom. We believe in the creation of a broad united front to carry forward the nationalist and democratic agenda of our people. And while we insist that no progressive government can be established without the participation of the NDF, we believe we cannot and must not do it alone. Also, as committed as we are to democracy and pluralism, we will have no part in alliances or compromises with anti-democratic, reactionary forces. More importantly, we welcome not only the widening, deepening, and broadening of the political process in the name of the peoples of the Philippines who are excluded from participation and decision-making; but insist that democracy and pluralism must also inform civil society: the relationships between women and men, the home, and economic life, indeed, of everyday life. For democracy and pluralism go beyond politics and governance; they go to the totality of human life.

Sustainable and Equitable Development

16.) If peace is the heart of the national democratic revolution, and democracy and pluralism are its soul, then a sustainable and equitable development is our revolution's commitment to future generations -- to our children and our children's children. Human and natural resources are inseparably linked. Social and political life rests on the profound interplay of humanity and nature. The earth and everything in it is our home. To destroy it is to destroy human life. Land, as our comrade Macliing Dulag reminds us, is the source of life. Even as we draw from the earth to feed, clothe, and sustain our generation, even as we look to the earth to meet our basic needs, it is our obligation to nurture and preserve it for future generations. Therefore, to be committed to peace and democracy means working for sustainable and equitable development. Peace, democracy, and development are indivisible.

National Independence and Peoples' Sovereignty

17.) We believe that the national democratic revolution is a struggle against imperialism, neo-colonialism, and other forms of domination. We are proud to be among the nations and peoples of the world, particularly of the countries of the South, who continue to struggle for national independence and peoples' sovereignty. Even as we recognize the growing interdependence of the world, of the fundamental transformation in the socialist and capitalist orders, and of the globalization of social and political life, we affirm that, for many peoples and states, national liberation remains a constitutive, inspiring vision. We affirm once again this vision of national independence, even as we reaffirm that it cannot be isolated from the indigenous peoples' struggles for sovereignty. Indeed, national independence and peoples' sovereignty, far from simply being historical moments along the pathway of socialist revolution are the very passion that moves the struggle, the articulation of a peoples' identity and the affirmation of the creation of a new community.

Gender Justice and Equality

18.) We believe that the struggle for gender justice and equality is constitutive of the national democratic revolution. Without it, the national democratic revolution is nothing more than a patriarchal illusion. Gender justice and equality require that discrimination against women in all areas of social and political life be redressed; that women's rights be recognized and institutionalized; that their contributions to the political, economic, and cultural development of our people be promoted and defended. But gender justice and equality also require that we attend to the more subtle forms of patriarchal and gender oppression: discrimination based on sexual orientation and the separation between public and private, between the personal and the political.

International Solidarity

19.) We believe that our struggles in the US are part of the national democratic revolution in the Philippines which, in turn, is part of the international struggle against imperialism, neo-colonialism, and other forms of domination. This struggle has been inspired by national liberation movements worldwide; it has been shaped by anti-imperialist movements and animated by socialist visions. Thus, we are committed to creating the widest and broadest support for the national democratic revolution in the Philippines by reaching out to colleagues, friends, and comrades outside the Philippines, and supporting their own

struggles for justice, freedom, and liberation, knowing that their eventual victory will be ours, just as our victory will be theirs. We are especially committed to engaging in struggles in the communities in which we live and work, seeking to support these local struggles and working to develop linkages between these and our peoples' struggles in the Philippines.

A Fundamentally New Community and Identity

20.) Finally, we believe that the struggle for national liberation and democracy is a struggle for discovering, creating, nurturing who we are as peoples -- not only subjects of our own histories, but participants in the creation of a fundamentally new and better community of peoples who are also citizens of the world. The hopes and aspirations we have outlined above make sense only within this struggle for community and identity. For us this means recognizing, affirming, celebrating our different histories, particularly our gender-, class-, and nation-structured histories. It also means that where these differences are used to oppress others, it is our responsibility to correct, and be corrected, and to insist on being held accountable to our commitment to revolutionary justice, compassion, and love.

21.) We pledge ourselves to these tasks, mindful of our limitations, attentive to the needs and claims of others, profoundly committed to the peoples from whence we came, and with the people with whom we now live, work, and play. These tasks are formidable, our resources limited. Yet we are confident that our cause is just, and the peoples whom we seek to serve, the peoples of the Philippines, we know to be noble and heroic, patient and enduring, increasing, and rejoicing. We reiterate our faith in them, believing in their wisdom and capacity to carry forward the vision we share. We proclaim once more our commitment to join them as they struggle and resist, work and play, sing and dance, laugh and cry, suffer and persevere, and love and wage the armed struggle; even as we pledge ourselves to each other, as friends, and comrades, offering to each other our lives, our resources, and our integrity.