

STOP THE KILLINGS. UPHOLD THE RULE OF LAW.

Statement of the University Council of the University of the Philippines Diliman

As faculty members of the University of the Philippines, the national University, we uphold the rule of law, the respect for human rights as enshrined in the Philippine Constitution --especially the right to life and liberty, due process, the right against arbitrary arrest and detention-- and other civil liberties necessary for the regular functioning of our democratic institutions.

We are deeply concerned about the mounting number of unresolved and unexplained cases of killings related to the ongoing war against drugs. We express our strongest indignation over the recent murder of Kian Loyd de los Santos, Carl Angelo Arnaiz, Reynaldo De Guzman, and other minors and poor people whose deaths are a reflection of the brutal method that our law enforcement uses, emboldened and encouraged by the President's protection and rhetoric that perpetuate impunity and the climate of fear.

The so-called "war on drugs" is supposed to stop and prosecute the source, often protected by narco-politics interests and powerful individuals, being the big business behind the drug trade and drug abuse. The campaign against drugs should not be a bloody war against the poor who have little or no capacity to protect themselves both from the onslaught of the drug crime and the predominant social corruption.

We express our serious concern against the erosion of democratic principles and creeping authoritarian rule in our country, palpable in the spate of killings following President Duterte's declaration of a total war against drugs and the extension of martial law in Mindanao. We denounce any justification of the killings as "necessary evils," and stand firm in condemning martial law and the increasing disregard for our civil rights.

Our University must be a beacon against disrespect for human rights and the growing authoritarianism of the present administration. We urge our fellow educators to stand united, hold fora, discussions and teach-ins for our students and the general public, to assert the value of human rights, respect for civil liberties, and resist strongman rule.

We, as UP faculty, must be critical voices to remind the government of its avowed allegiance to service, promotion of public good, and the protection and well-being of all citizens.

We strongly call upon the government to stop the killings and uphold the rule of law!

This statement was approved by the University Council at its meeting on September 4, 2017. The University Council is composed of regular faculty members with ranks of Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors.