



University Council  
University of the Philippines Diliman

## **NO to historical revisionism, uphold the UP tradition of militant activism**

(Statement of the UP Diliman University Council)

On August 25, 2018, Imee Marcos's Kabataang Barangay (KB) held its reunion at the UP Ang Bahay ng Alumni. Photos of the same event featured UP President Danilo L. Concepcion addressing the audience of this KB reunion and flashing the V-sign of the Marcoses.

The Imee Marcos-led KB was created on May 1, 1975 through Presidential Decree No. 684. As part of the infrastructure of Martial Law, the KB functioned as the ideological campaign center of the Marcoses to consolidate the youth, to counter those who were then already mobilizing against the Marcos dictatorship—the unstoppable rise of Kabataang Makabayan (KM/Patriotic Youth) which was founded in 1964 to mobilize the youth on a national scale toward an understanding and practice of revolution in a semi-feudal and semi-colonial setting and the Samahang Demokratiko ng Kabataan (SDK/Democratic Association of Youth) which was established in 1968.

The struggle between fascism and resistance shaped the lives of the youth, and the best and bravest among them fought the Marcos dictatorship. In one of KB's fora held on August 31, 1977 at Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, Archimedes Trajano (then 21), a student of Mapua, questioned Imee Marcos's appointment as Chair of the KB. He was subsequently seized and dragged by her bodyguards. On Sept 2, 1977, Trajano's dead body was found with torture marks. Trajano is just one among the many Filipino youth who were martyred for heeding the call of the times.

Any distortion of the discourses on academic freedom, pluralism, and the use of public space of the University to deodorize the stinking record of the Marcoses for their political revival is unacceptable. The Marcoses have yet to pay for their crimes. The Filipino youth still suffers from the consequences of the Marcos plunder, cronyism, human rights violations and impunity.

UP faculty, students, and alumni fought and died in the resistance against the fascist Marcos dictatorship. The late UP President Salvador Lopez used the authority and prestige of his office to stand off the military from campus grounds. Former UP President Emerlinda Roman honored the martyrs of Martial Law memorialized at the Bantayog ng Mga Bayani, calling on the UP community to remember them "with deepest respect and admiration."

It behooves us to remind President Danilo L. Concepcion of the role and power of history. Now, more than ever, we hold fast to the lessons of our peoples' resistance to the Marcos dictatorship because the same atrocities are now being repeated by the Duterte administration. While academic leaders from various colleges and universities have made public their opposition to the current actions of the Duterte administration, the deafening and unjustifiable silence of UP's official leadership on important national issues is very palpable.

We, the University Council of UP Diliman (UPD), register our strongest objection to President Concepcion's attendance in the reunion of the KB at the Ang Bahay ng Alumni, and his tacit support for the current political whitewashing of the Marcoses' accountability through his overt behavior during the occasion. We likewise condemn the UP Alumni Association Board's decision to allow the KB reunion within the UP premises despite the event's offensive implications and ramifications in dishonoring the thousands of martyrs who fought the Marcos dictatorship.

President Concepcion's attendance at a Marcos event is dangerous and will be misconstrued as UP's official stance towards the current attempts at historical revisionism and political whitewashing of the Marcoses. He ought to be reminded that his public actions and words reflect on the University. Thus, it is our duty to draw the line and assert our claim on academic freedom: UP is not a marketplace of politicians' interests, certainly not in these dark times.

We say NO to reinstating the Marcoses! We say NO to the return to authoritarian rule!

We resolve to:

1. Develop additional General Education (GE) courses, electives and other forms of learning that tackle and integrate the lessons from Martial Law such as standing against fascism and authoritarianism and find ways to creatively integrate it in other courses;
2. Build monuments and memorials to commemorate and honor UP's role in the struggle against the Marcos dictatorship and to highlight the University's continuing stand against fascism and authoritarianism such as a establishing inside UP a people's museum embodying and showcasing peoples aspirations and struggles for freedom including and especially during the dark days of Marcos strong rule;
3. Organize and institute activities that would commemorate and celebrate the Diliman Commune, as the UPD community's courageous stance against authoritarianism and fascism and reclaim the symbolic meaning of the "Diliman Republic" as a haven for responsible free speech and deliberative democracy;
4. Designate September 21 as UP's special day of remembrance of the Filipino people's unity in the fight for freedom against tyranny;
5. Encourage and support the UP community's involvement in preserving and enhancing democracy and the people's welfare;

We express our strongest disapproval of the UP President's overt actions in the KB reunion, and hope that such unconscionable acts will be avoided in the future. Such acts, intended or not, are inappropriate for a UP President, who as the highest official of the university, is mandated to hold its values in high esteem, uphold its hallowed tradition of activism, lead in UP's role as social critic, and to always serve the national interests. We are also reminding the alumni association and all other private institutions and organizations affiliated with UP to strictly uphold these same values and principles.

The UP community will join the United People's Action Against Dictatorship on September 21, 2018 at 11:30 am starting at Quezon Hall, to stand against the continuing attacks on people's rights and freedoms.

*This statement was approved by the University Council at its meeting on September 3, 2018 at the School of Statistics Auditorium, UPD. The University Council is composed of regular faculty members with ranks of Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professors.*