

## **STATEMENT OF THE ALTERNATIVE LAW GROUPS (ALG) ON THE KILLINGS OF KIAN DELOS SANTOS AND CARL ARNAIZ AND THE CONTINUING THREAT AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATES**

The killings of Kian Delos Santos and Carl Arnaiz by the police and President Rodrigo Duterte's persistent threats against human rights advocates, including malicious attempts to undermine the Commission on Human Rights (CHR), manifest the present government's gross failure to respect human rights and uphold the welfare of the poor.

On the night of August 16, 2017, a 17-year-old boy was shot dead and found in a garbage dump at the end of winding alleys in his neighborhood in Caloocan City. Kian Lloyd Delos Santos, a senior high school student, was just closing their small shop for the night when two policemen dragged him, and eventually shot him dead, according to witnesses and a footage from a closed-circuit television (CCTV). Meanwhile, at around 3 a.m. on August 18, just two days after Kian was murdered, 19-year-old former UP student Carl Angelo Arnaiz was also shot to death by the police after he allegedly held up a taxi driver and resisted arrest.

The Caloocan City Police was responsible for both killings. The police claimed that Kian was a drug courier and that this incident was a part of their anti-illegal drugs operation, a grand scheme of the Duterte administration. Incidentally, they also claimed to have found a packet of shabu and marijuana in Carl's belongings.

Netizens and other media reports argue that Kian should have not endured such a brutal killing as he was just a minor who was not really involved in drugs. Shortly after Carl's murder, police also drew flak for their accusations of hold up and possession of drugs.

The Alternative Law Groups (ALG) asserts that even if Kian and Carl were of age and deeply involved in drugs, their summary executions were not in any way just and fit in the eyes of the law and basic human compassion. It is neither their tender age, nor their innocence, that makes the killing revolting -- it is the very act itself, and the official government policy that makes it possible.

Duterte's drug policies disregard due process, utterly deny access to justice and propagate a culture of violence where the lives of the victims are callously snuffed out by state agents.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution upholds the dignity of every person and guarantees full respect for their human rights as well as their right to due process of law. The Philippines is also a State Party to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and is duty-bound to address the spate of extrajudicial killings in the country.

Duterte's drug policies also continue to taint the reputation of the Philippine National Police (PNP) which have been smudged with lack of credibility for decades. The current developments reverse the PNP's past efforts to reform the institution and gain back the trust of the masses.

It is high time for this administration to start upholding human rights, as it should have been doing in the first place, and start looking at drugs as a socio-economic, education and public health concern rather than a problem that could be solved by strict law enforcement alone.

Kian and Carl are just a couple of the many victims of the violent, anti-poor and unconstitutional drug policies and police violence brought about by the Duterte administration's war on drugs.

A lot of blood has already stained our streets, much more will spill, including our families' and yours, if we do not stand up and put an end to this madness.

Let us not be silenced by fear. Let us band together to uphold human rights and access to justice.  
Manindigan para sa karapatan! Ipaglaban ang katarungan!

### **ALTERNATIVE LAW GROUPS**

Ateneo Human Rights Center (AHRC) Balay Alternative Legal Advocates for Development in Mindanaw (BALAOD-MINDANAW) Children's Legal Bureau (CLB) Environmental Legal Assistance Center (ELAC) EnGendeRights Educational Research and Development Assistance Foundation (ERDA) Humanitarian Legal Assistance Foundation (HLAF) Human Rights Unlimited (HRU) Kaisahan Tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Kanayunan at Repormang Pansakahan (KAISAHAN) Kanlungan Center Foundation Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center-Kasama sa Kalikasan (LRC-KSK) Paglilingkod Batas Pangkapatiran Foundation, Inc. (PBPF) Philippine Earth Justice Center (PEJC) Participatory Research Organization of Communities and Education Towards Struggle for Self-Reliance (PROCESS-PANAY) Rainbow Rights (R-Rights) Project Sentro ng Alternatibong Lingap Panligal (SALIGAN) Tanggapang Panligal ng Katutubong Pilipino (PANLIPI) Tanggol Kalikasan (TK) Tebtebba Indigenous Peoples' International Center for Policy Research and Education Women's Legal and Human Rights Bureau (WLB)