**STRENGTHENING HUMAN RIGHTS COMPLIANCE MONITORING**

The State passed several legislation protecting human rights—the latest being Republic Act No. 10353 (Anti-Enforced and Involuntary Disappearance Act) and Republic Act No. 10368 (Human Rights Victims Recognition and Reparation Act)—and ratified a number of UN human rights treaties—International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; Convention Against Torture and Other Degrading Treatment or Punishment; International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; Convention Against Racial Discrimination; Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Families; Convention on the Rights of the Child; and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Despite these treaties and local legislation aimed to protect human rights, “remedies from these laws [are] very negligible and do not result in the adequate protection of rights” (Asian Human Rights Commission, 2012).

Although there is decrease of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances when President Aquino assumed office in 2010, according to Human Rights Watch, human rights violations in the form of harassment and violence, committed against political activists and journalists, by the State, still continue.

The real challenge therefore lies not in the enactment of laws and change in leadership, but in the implementation of these laws/rights (Asian Human Rights Commission, 2012).

“Human rights monitoring can play a key role in supporting States to effectively implement” human rights treaties and local legislation, and “empower ... persons to become increasingly aware of their rights, therefore bringing out positive change” in the lives of these people (United Nations Human Rights, on Monitoring the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) is mandated to check on the government’s compliance to human rights treaties signed and ratified by the State and to monitor and evaluate the judicial, executive, and legislative branches’ performance on human rights-related issues and/or concerns.

Comprehensive Monitoring is seen by CHR as a tool for monitoring government compliance with human rights treaties in its three government branches’ exercise of functions, systems, and processes, “with the end in view of harmonizing them with the standards and principles of human rights and recommending appropriate measures and actions.”

Human rights compliance monitoring can ensure accountability to basic human rights of all government instrumentalities. With a right-based lens, such monitoring ensures the primacy of the people, especially the marginalized, hence supports people empowerment.

In order for the CHR to effectively implement comprehensive monitoring and meet the challenge of protecting the rights of the people, a charter for the CHR must be passed.

CHR and human rights organizations must work together and capacitate the people in charge of monitoring human rights compliance.

Tripartite monitoring must be performed by the government, CHR, and CSOs.

CSOs and concerned government agencies must be enabled to take an active part in streaming human rights into people’s consciousness to engage them as empowered citizens to monitor human rights compliance on the ground.

We, the undersigned, hereby support this resolution and call on appropriate authorities and actors to respond swiftly and appropriately on the proposed actions articulated therein.

Signed on this 19th day of November 2014 during the National Conference on Strengthening Accountability to Sustain Reforms held at Astoria Plaza Hotel, Escriva Drive, Ortigas Business District, Pasig City.

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**Sources:**

* Asian Human Rights Commission (2012)
* Commission on Human Rights Charter
* United Nations Human Rights, on Monitoring the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
* Operational plan for Comprehensive Monitoring on Human Rights
* Human Rights and Social Accountability (World Bank)