

Joint Statement
Oppose Growing Philippine-Japan Military Cooperation

April 4, 2016

Bagong Alyansang Makabayan / Asia-Wide Campaign-Japan

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (New Patriotic Alliance or BAYAN) and Asia-Wide Campaign-Japan jointly oppose the rapidly growing Philippine-Japan Military Cooperation and the planned Japanese Self Defense Forces' official participation in the US-PHL BALIKATAN exercises.

Japanese Maritime SDF's minesweeper tender Uruga and minesweeper Takashima entered the port of Manila last March 2. In addition, the JMSDF's submarine Oyashio, along with 2 destroyers, arrived at Subic Bay on April 3. It is clearly related to the US-PHL joint military exercises called the BALIKATAN 2016 which will officially start on April 4, 2016.

Since after Philippine President Benigno Aquino's visit to Japan on last June 2015, the Philippines and Japan governments have rapidly developed their bilateral military cooperation. During the PHL-JPN summit, Japan's Prime Minister Sinzo Abe and Philippine President Aquino agreed to the forging of a PHL-JPN visiting forces agreement in the guise of 'maritime security'.

The both governments signed an agreement to transfer defense equipment and technology on February 29, 2016. Japan intend to lend its SDF's airplanes to the Philippines. Japan has also decided to provide its destroyers to the Philippines as a part of the Official Development Aid (ODA).

In addition, it was revealed that Japan plans to join the annual US-PHL BALIKATAN exercises officially and regularly. It will accelerate the US-JPN-PHL trilateral military collaboration in Southeast Asia, coinciding with the U.S. plans to build its new bases in the Philippines under the US-PHL Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement.

These maneuvers are aimed to promote US imperialist interests in the region and to contain the rise of China, the emerging rival of the US. The US and Japan are also guilty of militarizing the region, giving rise to unnecessary military tension. We believe that Japan and the US are only using the dispute in the Spratlys and the South China Sea as a pretext for greater military presence in the region. They are taking advantage of the weakness of countries like the Philippines to promote their imperialist agendas.

Under Japan's new security legislation which was forcibly enacted on last September 19, 2015 and implemented on March 29, 2016, Japan's Abe administration intends to promote the sending of the SDF abroad and expands its military muscle in Southeast Asia and the Asia-pacific region. Through this, Japanese imperialism aims to expand its own military influence in the region where Japan has huge economic interests. The Philippines is the No. 1 target of Japan's military ambition. The ongoing secret negotiation of PHL-Japan visiting forces agreement for Japanese SDF's stationing in the Philippines proves it. At the same time, we should point out that these maneuvers serve the US imperialist 'rebalancing' strategy or the 'Pivot to Asia', consolidating the US-Japan military alliance.

We, people's organizations in Philippine and Japan, expressing solidarity with each other, are

organizing the common fightback against the US and Japan military maneuvers. We oppose the developing US-JPN-PHL trilateral military collaboration, the growing Philippine-Japan military cooperation and the Japan's own militarization. We oppose the holding of war games and the building of new US bases in the Philippines and the consolidation of US bases in Japan. At the same time, we demand Japanese government's implementation of official apology and state compensation to all the victims of past Japanese war of aggression and colonization, including the victims of Japanese army's sexual slavery in Philippines and other areas in Asia. We oppose any military expansion in the region by the big imperialist powers as we aspire for a peaceful and diplomatic resolution of all outstanding maritime and territorial disputes.

Stop growing Philippine-Japan military cooperation!

No to Japan's new security legislation and its militarization!

Resist developing US-JPAN-PHL military collaboration!

No to US-PHL Baliakatan war games!

Down with the U.S. and Japanese imperialism!

Long live the anti-imperialist solidarity of the Filipino and Japanese people!