

A Call to the Philippine Government to Secure the Future of All Filipino Children

Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia) appeals to the Philippine government to secure a future for Filipino children, wherein their rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled.

We would like to remind the President of the Philippines of his promise during his campaign that he would fight for the children whose futures are being stolen because the government does not have the courage to protect them.¹ We would like to reiterate his statement that children are the ones who get trapped in the country's mess.²

We appeal for the future of all children, including children in conflict with the law. We call for an end to the legislative move that aims to lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility from 15 years old to 9 years old. Instead, we call on the Philippine government to strengthen the implementation of the existing Juvenile Justice Law. We ask the government to replicate good practices, such as the full operation of Davao City's Children's Village, pursuant to the existing law.

We appeal for the children affected by the "war on drugs". We ask the government not to condone police operations and vigilante activities related to the drug trade that lead to the deaths and injuries of children. No child should be shrugged off as "collateral damage". There must be enforcement of precautionary measures to ensure that some children do not end up offering their lives and health so that other children can enjoy the promise of a better future. We must also ensure that children who have been injured or orphaned because of the "war on drugs" be given adequate care and protection by the government. We urge the government to make sure that this "war on drugs" does not breed further violence because a violent community is not an enabling environment for our children.

Lastly, we ask the Philippine government to always bear in mind its commitment to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) to protect children against all forms of violence. Consider the principles of the UN CRC and the action points of the ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Children in all the efforts to secure a better future for Filipino children.

Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia) is a regional network of child rights and human rights organizations working to uphold, promote, and mainstream child rights and welfare into national, regional, and international policies, plans, and programs.

Members of CRC Asia include the NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child (Cambodia), Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights, Sahabat Perempuan dan Anak Indonesia, Yayasan KKSP – Center for Child Rights Education and Information (Indonesia), Yayasan SEJIWA (Indonesia), Protect and Save the Children (Malaysia), Equality Myanmar, Mindanao Action Group for Children's Rights and Protection (Philippines), The Life Skills Development Foundation (Thailand), and Vietnam Association for the Protection of Children's Rights.

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¹Duterte, R. (2016) Bata [Political Advertisement]. Retrieved from:

<http://www.rappler.com/nation/politics/elections/2016/126482-duterte-children-political-ads-tampang-malasakit>

² Ibid.

