

WHO IS SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA?

Philippine Senator Leila M. De Lima is the most vocal and staunchest critic of the “drug war” killings and other anti-human rights policies of President Rodrigo Duterte. Starting at the very early days of her term in July 2016, undeterred by the



threat of Duterte that he would destroy her and that she will rot in jail, De Lima proceeded to introduce a Senate Resolution to probe the spate of killings, delivered privilege speeches urging for a stop of mayhem, and, as Chair of the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights, launched the investigation into the rising number of extrajudicial executions of mostly poor Filipinos.



In retaliation, De Lima was unseated as Chair of the said Committee and subjected to public vilification and demonization in unprecedented proportions, including slut-shaming by congressmen during kangaroo hearings at the Lower House. She is in unjust detention for 1,000 days on 20 November 2019, since her arrest on

24 February 2017 on trumped-up drug-related charges based mainly on fabricated testimonies of self-confessed drug felons.

Even in detention, she continues her work as a legislator and her advocacies as a human rights defender, as she regularly issues handwritten dispatches or commentaries on burning issues of the day, files bills and resolutions mostly in the areas of human rights, democracy and rule of law, and sends out messages and speeches on globally and nationally important occasions -- including letters to the members of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to dispatch a team of investigators to the Philippines, and an urgent message to the

Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) for the conduct of investigation into the atrocities.

A true vanguard of the democratic opposition in the Philippines and a leading voice of dissent who refuses to be silenced, Senator Leila De Lima has been called by the regional newspaper Asian Correspondent as *"the flagbearer of human rights in the Philippines and beyond"* and has been cited by then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Raad al-Hussein as an *"exemplary leader"* and *"a sample of the real store of moral courage and leadership that exists among us today"*.

Amnesty International has adopted Senator De Lima as "prisoner of conscience", while Human Rights Watch has called her a "political prisoner." She was listed in Time Magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the



World for 2017. She was named as one of the world's "50 Greatest Leaders" in 2018 by Fortune magazine. She is the honoree for the prestigious Liberal International's 2018 Prize for Freedom. She won for two (2) years in a row (2016 and 2017) the Global Thinker award from Foreign Policy magazine.

In its Opinion in November 2018, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD) of the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) has concluded that Senator De Lima is a victim of arbitrary detention caused by her personal convictions and public statements against extrajudicial killings in the Philippines.

Many inter-governmental bodies and global organizations are likewise sympathetic to Senator De Lima. Fellow parliamentarians and different parliaments have either introduced or adopted resolutions voicing their grave concern for the detained Senator.

There is a growing clamor globally for the immediate release of Senator De Lima and the dropping of politically motivated cases against her.

Stand by Leila de Lima. Stand by the Filipino people in their struggle for dignity, freedom and equality.

#FreeLeilaNow