



The members of the Board of Trustees of the Davao Association of Catholic Schools, (CEAP XI) in its regular meeting last March 11, 2021, resolved to support and adopt the statement of the Catholic Educational Associational of the Philippines (CEAP) condemning the killings of activists last March 7, 2021 (DACS-CEAP XI BOT Resolution No. 22, s 2020-2021)



CEAP STATEMENT ON RECENT KILLING OF ACTIVISTS ON MARCH 7, 2021

"Every act of violence committed against a human being is a wound in humanity's flesh; every violent death diminishes us as people... Violence leads to more violence, hatred to more hatred, death to more death. We must break this cycle which seems inescapable" (Fratelli Tutti, 227)

Last March 7, 2021, Sunday, nine (9) unarmed activists were killed by state forces, most of them in their own homes. The massacre happened during simultaneous raids conducted by the police and military to supposedly serve search warrants for loose firearms and illegal possession of explosives¹. The police claim it was a legitimate operation², and yet for an institution that should practice maximum tolerance and restraint in the use of force in dispensing its responsibilities, it is puzzling how such an operation can result in the killing of nine unarmed individuals.

The Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) vehemently condemns the killing of the nine unarmed individuals. We call on relevant government agencies – the Department of Justice, the PNP, the AFP and the CHR – to conduct investigations on this matter and make sure those responsible for the killings are held accountable to law of the land. We must not tolerate impunity. We must reject this growing culture of death and normalization of killings in our society.

This unfortunate event was the consequence of a series of policies and pronouncements from various government bodies that have emboldened rogue elements in enforcement agencies to violate fundamental human rights in the name of cracking down on the communist insurgency. We appeal again to the government, to not pursue the path of force and violence but instead, address the roots of the problem of insurgency like poverty, marginalization, and the denial of basic human needs.

A massacre such as this has no space in our society. The promotion of a culture of death must be vehemently condemned for this is not the way of the gospel, this is not the way of our Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot allow our children to grow up thinking that life is not sacred.

In this time of Lent, may we continue to pray for a stop in the killings, and may the Prince of Peace comfort the grieving hearts of the victims of this tragedy.

¹ <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1404154/chr-asked-to-probe-killings-of-9-activists>

² <https://www.philstar.com/nation/2021/03/09/2082935/palace-government-probe-deaths-9-activists>