



October 20, 2016

Reference: Naida Castro, Chairperson, NEFFCON IE

“In the present condition of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters....” (Excerpt from Pope Francis’ Encyclical Letter Laudato SI’)

The National Ecumenical Forum for Filipino Concerns in the Inland Empire (NEFFCON IE), an organization of people of faith inspired by the Love of God and Service to the People, unite and are in solidarity with the indigenous and Moro peoples in the Philippines in their legitimate struggles for justice, peace, human rights, and integrity of creation. NEFFCON IE condemns police brutality and aggression toward our brother and sister Lumads and Moro peoples, and allies during their peaceful assembly in front of the US Embassy in Manila on October 19, 2016, where protesters were dispersed by inhumane acts of violence resulting in unwarranted injuries and hospitalization of activists.

⁸ Open your mouth for the mute,

for the rights of all who are destitute.^[a]

⁹ Open your mouth, judge righteously,

defend the rights of the poor and needy. Proverbs 31:8-9 (ESV)

NEFFCON IE calls on President Duterte to take immediate actions to protect the human rights and justifiable struggles of the indigenous and the Moro peoples in defending their ancestral land from plunder and heed their lawful calls for demilitarization and peace among their communities.

The LORD is a God of justice, who knows no favorites. Though not unduly partial toward the weak, yet he hears the cry of the oppressed. The Lord is not deaf to the wail of the orphan, nor to the widow when she pours out her complaint. The one who serves God willingly is heard; his petition reaches the heavens. The prayer of the lowly pierces the clouds; it does not rest till it reaches its goal, nor will it withdraw till the Most High responds, judges justly and affirms the right, and the Lord will not delay. Sirach 35:12-14, 16-18