

Oral Statement

Interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights

- July 1st, 2024

Ana María Suárez Franco

Thank you Mr. President

KATARUNGAN - Movement for Social Justice and Agrarian Reform, FIAN International, and the Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR) welcome the Special Rapporteur's report highlighting the issue of focusing on GDP growth as the main socio-economic progress indicator. This focus fuels profit-driven corporate ventures that often disregard human rights and environmental protection, promoting land capture by corporations and landowners supported by government policies. This contributes to the erosion of Commons and deprives rural communities of their human rights, particularly the right to food sovereignty, the right to land, and the right to food and nutrition.

In the Philippines, agrarian reform aimed to address historical injustices and promote equitable land distribution, can enhance productivity and income among farmers. However, peasant communities claiming land rights and resisting land grabbing face violence, evictions, false charges, imprisonment, and deepening poverty due to litigation costs. Their lives, freedoms, and dignity are compromised in the name of economic growth. Even successful reforms are often reversed by contradictory state laws, leaving beneficiaries landless and undermining their right to housing and livelihoods.

A just transition from an economy focused on growth and profit maximization to one that protects people and the planet is imperative. A post-growth future should ensure a fair distribution of land and resources to local communities, provide universal public services in health, education, energy, water, and sanitation, and reduce material and energy use to ensure wellbeing within planetary boundaries.

Thank you.