

**2025**

**THE 1SAMBUBUNGAN**

**Indigenous Peoples' Agenda**

**STATE VIOLENCE IN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES  
COMMUNITIES: STOP THE CRIMINALIZATION OF IP  
STRUGGLES AND REFRAME STATE-IP RELATIONS**

## **FRAMING THE IP ELECTORAL AGENDA**

Indigenous Peoples and communities in the Philippines are under attack.

The IP struggle for identity, ancestral domain, social justice, and human rights was violently pushed back, demonized, and criminalized by an authoritarian government that views Indigenous Peoples and communities as enemies of the State.

Indigenous lands have become battlegrounds of conflict, pitting communities against powerful forces that aim to grab these lands and resources to advance their political and economic interests in support of a national development agenda that is driven by corporate greed. Dispossession and displacement of IP communities from their ancestral lands continue unabated despite the recognition of IP rights in national as well as international human rights law.

The political landscape has become increasingly unstable following the election of Ferdinand “Bongbong” Marcos Jr. as president and Sara Duterte as vice president, despite reports of electoral irregularities. This shift has deepened the country's crisis. Consequently, a change in regime during the upcoming 2025 midterm elections remains essential to prioritize the needs of marginalized sectors over the political ambitions of those in power.

The urgent task for the next administration is to stop the attacks against Indigenous communities, bring the perpetrators to justice, initiate a process of genuine peace dialogues between the State and Indigenous political structures, and support efforts to assert and advance their development plans. These are the crucial and necessary steps to begin the process of restoration and healing needed in the IP communities.

The full realization of Indigenous Peoples rights as enshrined in both national and international laws remains at the heart of the agenda and the overarching goal of Indigenous Peoples across the country. The struggle for IP rights is grounded on the realization of rights to our ancestral domain, identity, and culture, the fulfillment of social justice and human rights, and to self-determination.

The IP struggle for development encompasses the demands for better access to social services, such as health services, sexual and reproductive health services, education, social protection, and social security. This also entails the recognition of the IP contribution to development at various levels. At the level of their ancestral domain, this is expressed through the formulation of their community-based ancestral domain management plan, or for some communities, with their ancestral domain sustainable development and protection plans. Beyond the ancestral domain, the IP's social and economic struggle is underpinned by the articulation of the IP agenda in both local and national development plans.

The democratic struggle of the IPs has revolved around issues of political representation in the areas of IP Mandatory Representation (IPMR) and the formation of IP political parties and their engagement in the party-list elections. The struggle is also manifested in the continuing assertion for recognition of indigenous political structures of governance, anchored on the right to self-determination. A key area of their assertion is also the Free, Prior and Informed Consent process, where they participate in good faith.

In the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), the political struggle finds expression in the push for the full inclusion of the rights of non-Moro Indigenous Peoples in the Bangsamoro Organic Law and the meaningful implementation of these rights. Central to this is the recognition of the non-Moro Indigenous People's ancestral domain. The first-ever BARMM Parliament election in 2025 is a decisive factor in shaping legislation that is crucial for protecting and promoting the rights of non-Moro Indigenous Peoples in the region. However, it was postponed again despite opposition.

Non-Moro Indigenous Peoples (NMIP) face challenges in gaining recognition within the region. The Bangsamoro Indigenous Peoples Act (BIPA) of 2024, currently finalizing its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), expands protections from six tribes to eight. Despite progress, many indigenous women remain unaware of parliamentary processes. NMIP recognition, advocated strongly in the IRR, was achieved through tribal assemblies, as it was excluded from the act's main provisions.

As long as the national government does not duly recognize the rights to self-determination and ancestral domain, conflicts in the region will only ensue, especially as it remains a hotspot during elections. Thus, the commitment of the next officials from both the national and BARMM Parliament elections to uphold the rights of non-Moro Indigenous Peoples is necessary for a just and inclusive society in the Bangsamoro region.

With the current political climate marked by parties vying for their interests, the upcoming midterm elections are poised to play a crucial role in shaping the trajectory leading up to the 2028 Presidential elections. The outcomes are likely to set the stage and influence the tone of future laws and policies. Reframing how the State views Indigenous Peoples and Communities and their contributions to Philippine society is the long-term aspiration of this IP Electoral Agenda. The realization of this goal hinges on the positive steps on five identified key issues and concerns that would have to be undertaken by the state.

## **KEY ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

### **1. Ancestral Domain**

There is an estimated area of 5-7 million hectares of ancestral domains, considered home to 12-15 million Indigenous Peoples.

The watershed areas within ancestral domains provide water supply for the adjacent rice land communities in the lowlands, numbering from 20-25 million Filipinos who in turn provide food supply and ensure national food security. These also prevent flooding of lowland cities. 85% of the country's Key Biodiversity Areas are within ancestral domains. This points to the significant and critical role of the Indigenous Peoples in protecting and sustainably managing our natural resources. It is then imperative that the government fulfills its mandate to protect the country's biological resources and the environment by protecting the ancestral domains. The protection of ancestral domains is a triple win—for the Indigenous Peoples, for the national interests and the government, as it contributes significantly to biodiversity and climate change commitments and/or agreements that the government is signatory to.

However, there is a major difference in how we value our ancestral domain and the natural resources therein, from how the government values these. The Indigenous Peoples consider their land, their sacred grounds, and the air flowing within as a source of food, spirituality, and life. The government sees the land, the waters, and the entire domain as sources of profit. The government has passed laws and policies to ease the entry of big businesses into IP territories without regard to the communities who depend on the land and its resources for their survival. To date, large-scale mining operations under the flawed Philippine Mining Act of 1995 pose the largest threats to the survival of IPs. Despite the widespread protests and opposition to mining, the previous governments aggressively pushed for large-scale mining. In 2012, a moratorium on the processing of new mining applications was imposed.

However, Marcos Jr. continued to position the mining industry as a key driver of the country's economic growth. Marcos Jr even urged a new fiscal regime for mining, primarily to increase government revenue. These extractive industries expose the ancestral domains to local and foreign plunder. The Marcos Jr. administration has blatantly used public funds to invest in extractive industries within ancestral lands. An investment fund worth \$76.4 million (₱4.42 billion) has recently been allocated to Makilala Mining Company, owned by the Australian firm Celsius Resources, which is set to operate in Kalinga province.

The Marcos Jr. administration follows the global push for energy transition, which increased pressure on indigenous lands, with 56% of Competitive Renewable Energy Zones (CREZ) potentially overlapping with IP territories. Additionally, there is a push to expand coconut-based biofuel plantations and designate 8 million hectares of forest lands for carbon credit schemes. Hence, Marcos Jr. has been keen in accelerating industrial projects by

weakening the FPIC process and indigenous participation, including revising guidelines, shortening timelines for energy projects, and introducing new protocols for carbon forestry.

As pressures mount within ancestral lands due to these projects, there has been an increase in militarization and aerial bombardment within our communities. Under the Marcos administration, bombings continued, and several cases affected Indigenous communities.

## **2. Criminalization**

Of traditional, spiritual, and cultural values that IPs demand in the exercise of their rights to land.

IP cultural and spiritual values inextricably link people with land, and provide identity as people. This is an inviolable and unalterable reality acknowledged under international and national laws. Standing for these values in the form of demands for respect of rights to ancestral land have been equated with “anti-development” and consequently vociferous attacks on IPs. Attacks begin with harassment, vilification through disinformation or fake news (i.e, legitimate organizations being marked as front organizations of CPP-NPA), red-tagging, terrorist-labeling, arrests for trumped-up charges, fake surrenders, and enforced disappearances.

Indigenous Peoples organizations protested the Anti-Terrorism Act (2020) before the Supreme Court by filing a petition for certiorari and prohibition. They argued that the law's "vague and arbitrary definitions of terror crimes" could be misused against indigenous communities and advocates of indigenous rights. In 2023, the Anti-Terrorism Council issued a list designating certain individuals as "terrorist" suspects, including four leaders of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA). This designation criminalizes their advocacy for Indigenous and environmental rights, creating a chilling effect that silences dissent and hinders efforts to safeguard natural resources and ancestral lands.

Under the administration of President Marcos Jr., anti-terrorism financing laws have been used to target individuals like Marcylyn Pilala from Mountain Province and Alaiza Lemita, whose siblings fell victim to the "Bloody Sunday" killings. These individuals have been charged with terrorism financing, illustrating the weaponization of the law, where even basic activities, such as selling food or providing meals, can be mischaracterized as criminal acts.

Further compounding this issue, baseless charges continue to be lodged against Indigenous Peoples, humanitarians, and advocates. In July 2024, the Talaingod 13—a group of Lumad educators, human rights advocates, and community leaders—were wrongfully convicted of “child endangerment” by the Regional Trial Court of Tagum City, Davao del Norte. They had bravely defended Indigenous children from paramilitary threats by evacuating them from

imminent danger, yet now face four to six years of imprisonment based on fabricated and retaliatory charges.

In between the above impunity, the weaponization of laws including Executive Order No. 70 creating the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF ELCAC), (2018) and the Anti-Terrorism Act (2020) aimed at stifling legitimate political dissent targeting indigenous communities (where large-scale projects are proposed) human rights defenders, activists and ordinary members of people's organizations. The Anti-Terror Act (ATA) has endangered civic freedoms under the guise of national security. The first arrests based on the law were of two indigenous persons—Ayta in Zambales. These laws were enacted under the Duterte administration, which was then inherited by Marcos Jr., proving that the current administration is no different in repressing the struggle of Indigenous Peoples.

### **3. Abduction and Extra-judicial Killings**

During the initial three years of the Marcos Jr. administration, the Center for Environmental Concerns reported 32 cases of abduction, including the abduction of one Indigenous Person and two Indigenous rights advocates. On April 28, 2023, Dexter Capuyan, a Bontoc-Kankanaey-Ibaloi, and Gene Roz Jamil “Bazoo” De Jesus, an advocate for Indigenous rights, were abducted by agents of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police in Taytay, Rizal. Another alarming case involved Felix “Jun” Salaveria Jr., also an advocate for Indigenous rights, who was forcibly taken from his home in Tabaco, Albay, on August 28, 2024.

Since Marcos Jr. assumed office, Karapatan has documented 119 political killings and 76 attempted extrajudicial killings, with Indigenous communities and peasant leaders frequently targeted in military counterinsurgency operations.

Two particularly distressing cases illustrate this violence. On April 7, 2024, 21-year-old Mangyan-Hanunuo youth leader Jay-El Maligday was killed in his home during a military operation in Oriental Mindoro after being wrongfully accused of being a member of the New People's Army (NPA). His family has since filed a complaint with the Ombudsman and organized protests to demand accountability from the military. Additionally, on June 8, 2024, 16-year-old Dulangan-Manobo student Kuni Cuba was shot dead by soldiers in Sultan Kudarat while returning from a gathering with friends. Despite his compliance with military orders, the group was fired upon, resulting in Kuni's death. The military falsely claimed he was an NPA member killed in combat. These killings highlight how counterinsurgency programs not only terrorize Indigenous communities but also aggressively silence Indigenous youth leaders opposing militarization and land grabbing.

#### **4. Social Justice**

There is no official count of the Indigenous Peoples population in the country. The national census does not include ethnicity and indigeneity. This makes Indigenous Peoples invisible and therefore excluded from the programs of the government. This is very apparent in social protection programs, making the much-needed support and care from the government inaccessible. The lack of serious effort and attention of the government to make these programs available and truly accessible to Indigenous Peoples is a clear renegeing of its obligations to the marginalized sectors of society.

Access to social services has been a perennial problem among Indigenous Peoples. This state neglect, in terms of education, health services, support to livelihood, and comprehensive response to the survivors of violence against women, has made indigenous communities more vulnerable to discrimination, impoverishment, and acts of violence at different fronts. Furthermore, communities are more susceptible to allowing the entry of corporations in extractive industries into their ancestral domains, as these corporations promise to provide social services that the government has failed to deliver.

Over the past two decades, poverty among Indigenous Peoples (IPs) has increased by 9%, with a poverty rate rising from 70% to 79% between 2013 and 2023. According to the 2024 State of the Indigenous Peoples Report, IP communities also face a 10% higher rate of inaccessibility to public services compared to non-IPs, affecting essentials like water, electricity, sanitation, education, and food. Chronic inflation, climate impacts, and the decline of agriculture have worsened their economic struggles. Geographic isolation, with 37% of IPs living in disadvantaged areas, combined with inadequate public infrastructure, further deepens systemic inequalities.

Land encroachment and displacement have impoverished Indigenous communities by disrupting their lives and barring them access to their food sources. A survey done in 2023 revealed that 51% of Indigenous peoples identify themselves as “food poor.” This hunger becomes even more pronounced during disasters, political or armed conflicts, and crises. Indigenous women, in particular, are often hungrier as they prioritize the needs of other family members over their own. Additionally, they are more vulnerable to the impacts of the climate crisis due to disproportionate, unrecognized, and unpaid care work.

Poverty also contributes to gender-based violence (GBV), including domestic abuse, child marriage, and teenage pregnancy. Despite the law that prohibits child marriage, the practice continues in some Indigenous communities, driven largely by economic poverty. Access to free, quality, and culturally appropriate sexual and reproductive (SRH) services, including comprehensive sexuality education (CSE), remains a significant barrier for Indigenous women and girls.

In 2022, there was an alarming increase in live births among girls aged 14 and below. A 2024 World Bank study then found that Indigenous girls are 3% more likely to become pregnant than their non-Indigenous peers. The reasons for this vary from poverty, lack of access to CSE and SRH services, and a deeply rooted culture of patriarchy and conservatism in Indigenous communities that make discussions about sexuality—such as rights to bodily autonomy and reproductive self-determination—taboo. These conditions lead to unsafe sex, GBV, early and unplanned pregnancies, and child marriage.

## **5. Identity**

The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) issued Resolution No. 08-009-2021, dated 2 March 2021, denouncing the use of the term ‘Lumad’ to refer to Indigenous Peoples of Mindanao. The resolution, by stating that the ‘emergence’ of the name ‘Lumad’ is ‘marred’ by its association with the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People’s Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF), further fuels the malicious tagging of indigenous peoples. It not only marginalizes indigenous peoples but also puts their lives at risk. It undermines indigenous peoples’ right to self-asciption, which is itself rooted in their fundamental right to self-determination.

Former Davao City Mayor Sara Duterte ordered the closure of Lumad schools in 2019, citing alleged connections to communist rebels. Since taking office as Vice President and being appointed Secretary of the Department of Education (DepEd) in 2022, thousands of Indigenous Lumad individuals remain displaced and denied justice. With limited access to education, many have returned to farming, while some young women are being married off to settle family debts.

Not only do Indigenous Peoples suffer from continuing discrimination but there is a real risk of the loss of their culture. Intensifying development, aggression and conflicts cause the forced displacement of Indigenous Peoples from their ancestral domains, the very heartland of their culture and heritage.

An education program that fails to take cognizance of Indigenous Peoples’ contexts, traditional knowledge, and needs further undermines the integrity of their identity and culture.

## **6. Laws and Policies on Indigenous Peoples**

Not only are IP rights in jeopardy, but the very IPRA itself has reached a distortion of the highest/gravest level. The NCIP, established to protect Indigenous rights under the



Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), has collaborated with the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict (NTF-ELCAC). For example, at the 2022 National Indigenous Peoples Summit at Camp Aguinaldo, these agencies framed Indigenous rights through a counterinsurgency lens. The dual role of Retired Colonel Allen Capuyan, who served as both the former NCIP chair and Executive Director of the NTF-ELCAC, underscores the troubling overlap between military operations and the protection of Indigenous rights. This collaboration prioritizes national security and resource exploitation over Indigenous rights, accelerating the approval processes for mining and energy projects by shortening FPIC procedures.

Moreover, individuals known for red-tagging and committing human rights violations against Indigenous Peoples are running for office in the upcoming midterm elections. This includes Allen Capuyan, who is vying for a Senate seat, as well as Lorraine Badoy, Jeffrey Celiz, and Atty. Barlon Bosantog, who are nominees of the Epanaw Sambayanan party-list, flagged by election watchdogs as being backed by the NTF-ELCAC.

Recent legislation has made it easier for corporations to streamline their projects. Executive Order No. 130 has lifted the ban on new mineral agreements. This is paving the way for large destructive mining projects to continue operations and further open in Indigenous Peoples' ancestral domains, undermining the FPIC process and dividing communities. EO 130 flows out of the government's pronouncement to pursue mining as an economic recovery strategy from the COVID-19 pandemic. Simply put, the government has picked extractive investments over the rights of indigenous peoples and the environment.

The NCIP has proposed revisions to the FPIC process that threaten to undermine the decision-making rights of Indigenous Peoples. The revision process has notably excluded Indigenous voices from meaningful consultation, violating their inherent rights. Despite the significant implications of these changes, the NCIP has acknowledged that the proposal was drafted in 2022, finalized in 2023, and involved only one stakeholder forum, lacking the thorough consultation required for such critical policies that affect Indigenous rights and environmental conservation.

The proposed House Bill No. 9608 also attempts to diminish the right to ancestral land under IPRA. This bill proposes transferring the authority to issue ancestral land titles from the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

## **7. Good Governance and Accountability**

Indigenous Peoples are confronting significant sectoral challenges, as detailed in the 2025 agenda. Under the Marcos Jr. administration, attacks against these communities have

intensified, building on the actions taken during the Duterte regime. As a marginalized group, Indigenous communities continue to experience increasing levels of poverty. The costs of goods, fuel, healthcare, education, and other essential services are soaring, while wages remain stagnant. Farmers, who represent a substantial portion of the Indigenous population, struggle with inadequate access to land and low farm-to-market prices. As ordinary Filipino citizens wrestle with the fallout of a deepening economic crisis, political figures like Marcos and Duterte, alongside their allies, remain entrenched in power struggles over scarce resources.

Sara Duterte was recently impeached by the House of Representatives over corruption. During her time as Education Secretary, Sara Duterte allegedly misused P612 million in confidential funds. This was evidenced by the accumulating unexplained wealth and her failure to fully disclose her assets in her SALN. Meanwhile, cases against the Marcoses over their ill-gotten wealth are being dismissed consecutively.

Both oligarchs have a dismal track record on Indigenous Peoples' rights, having committed human rights violations that further institutionalize violence and discrimination against Indigenous communities.

## **CALLS AND DEMANDS TO CANDIDATES**

Agenda for the first 100 days

### ***On Ancestral Domain***

RECOGNIZE Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination, an integral part of which is the shift of the kind of development that will be pursued – from corporate-driven, profit-oriented, and resource-intensive, to one that is responsive to the needs of the people, nurtures the environment, and considers the future of the next generation.

1. Investigate and review documented violations of indigenous people's rights to land, and compel government and transnationals to comply with international humanitarian laws and signed agreements, including rights-based business practices.
2. Repeal EO130 on the lifting of the moratorium on new mining applications, and uphold the decisions to suspend and cancel mining contracts within ancestral domains based on the mining audit reports of the then DENR Secretary. Gina Lopez. Review and revoke mining operations with fraudulent Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC). Certify the Alternative Minerals Management Bill (AMMB) or the Peoples' Mining Bill as urgent.
3. Fast-track the approval of applications and release of Certificate of Ancestral Domains Titles (CADTs). Immediate release of the Certificate of Ancestral Domain Titles (CADT) issued by the NCIP that are currently pending at the Land Registration Authority (LRA), and expedite the processing of legitimate CADT applications from bona fide Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities.
4. Reject JAO DAR-DENR-LRA-NCIP No. 1, s. 2012, and forward progressive land laws that ensure Indigenous Peoples' tenurial rights and are in congruence.
5. Protect and respect the Free, Prior, Informed Consent (FPIC) process by investigating issues regarding Indigenous Peoples' consent and dissent to projects, and ensuring their right to full participation, including women and the youth.
6. Any attempts to diminish the rights under IPRA, such as in the attempt of House Bill 9608, must not be supported.
7. Stop the construction of large dams in ancestral lands. Stop the construction of the Kaliwa Dam, Jalaur Dam, and Gened 2 Dam, among others.
8. Official adoption and integration of the Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development Protection Plan (ADSDPP) as part of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP).
9. Cease the militarization and aerial bombings in ancestral lands.

### ***On Criminalization of IP Struggles, Abduction, and Extra-judicial Killings***

EXACT ACCOUNTABILITY from Duterte, Marcos Jr. and other key perpetrators for all forms of violence and human rights violations against Indigenous Peoples, and IP rights defenders.

1. In light of the Supreme Court decision on the Anti-Terrorism Act, certify as urgent the review and amendment of the law.

2. Revoke EO 70, abolish NTF ELCAC. Implement and support IP-led community development projects and address the root causes of insurgency.
3. Assert state accountability and respect for International Humanitarian Law, International Human Rights agreements, and local human rights laws.
4. Certify as urgent a bill that criminalizes and penalizes the practice of terrorist labeling and red-tagging of Indigenous Peoples.
5. Provide access to justice to IP victims of human rights violations and hold the masterminds and perpetrators accountable. Ensure that IP victims of human rights violations receive justice. Provide compensation and protection to the victims' families and communities.
6. Review cases of IP detainees, and free those with unjust and trumped-up charges. Release the elderly and sick based on humanitarian grounds.
7. Drop all trumped-up charges against the Indigenous Peoples and advocates.
8. Respect the IP right to defend their ancestral domains and their right to self-determination, as already recognised under national and international law.
9. Investigate the pattern of increasing cases of abduction and enforced disappearances, and surface the disappeared Indigenous Peoples and advocates.
10. Convict the state forces responsible for the killings. Review cases, coupled with an independent commission to investigate these incidents. Address such grave violations and eliminate any culture of impunity that may exist within law enforcement and military operations.
11. Pass the Human Rights Defenders Bill, which includes the protection of Indigenous Peoples' rights defenders.

### ***On Social Justice***

DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT a humane, just, and inclusive social protection policy so that indigenous people may live with dignity. There should be a special focus on providing state support for education, health, livelihood, and comprehensive support for survivors of violence against indigenous women and the youth. The social protection policy will make the Indigenous Peoples less vulnerable and enable them to have a meaningful participation in our society. Meaningful delivery of social justice requires a revamp of the NCIP that will truly be representative of the indigenous communities, including the selection and appointment process of commissioners.

1. Financial and technical support programs for the education of indigenous children and youth should be established jointly by the Department of Education and the National Commission on Indigenous People (NCIP).
2. An audit on the health services, including sexual and reproductive health, for the indigenous communities, should be conducted jointly by the Department of Health and the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples; the results of which would direct the creation and funding of appropriate health service programs.

3. Respect and support indigenous and traditional healing practices as recognized by the Traditional and Alternative Medicine Act.
4. Decriminalize indigenous birthing practices. Ensure and increase barangay-based lying in centers, especially within IP communities. Train and accredit community midwives and indigenous birthing attendants.
5. Provide support to community-based livelihood, that harness indigenous knowledge, systems and practices.
6. End the practice of child marriage and properly implement RA 11596 or the Anti-Child Marriage Act.
7. Enact the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy Bill, and implement a Comprehensive Sexuality Education that is accessible to Indigenous peoples, especially young Indigenous girls and boys.
8. Ensure indigenous women and girl-children have access to quality, comprehensive, essential, and appropriate services for survivors of violence.

### ***On Identity and Culture***

RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT the distinct identity of Indigenous Peoples; and especially the Non-Moro Indigenous Peoples living in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). It is in their identity that their distinct rights emanate from, as indigenous peoples. Ensure that NMIP chooses their representatives in the Ministry of Indigenous Peoples Affairs (MIPA) and the Bangsamoro Women's Committee (BWC), under the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM);

1. Respect and protect Indigenous Peoples' right to self-ascription, free from unwarranted and malicious designation; [or Recall NCIP Resolution Resolution no. 08-009-2021 and protect Indigenous Peoples' right to self-ascription, free from unwarranted and malicious designation;
2. Ensure community-determined choice of Indigenous People Mandatory Representative (IPMR), free from political pressure, undue influence, and interference;
3. Ensure the meaningful and culturally appropriate implementation of Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Program to realize Indigenous Peoples' right to basic education that is responsive to their context, respects their identities, and promotes the value of their indigenous knowledge, skills, and other aspects of their cultural heritage.
4. Ensure the protection of Indigenous Peoples' intellectual property over their traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions, art, genetic resources and practices, free from commercial exploitation.

### ***On Policies and Laws***

For Indigenous Peoples, human development and security starts with addressing ancestral land and domain rights. Their inherent right to own, manage, and control their lands must be

respected. However, from the very start, the policy of the State has been inconsistent with indigenous customs and the traditional understanding of land ownership. The Philippines adopted colonial laws regarding land ownership, all of which echo the assertion that the State owns all public lands. As such, this has put the State in conflict with indigenous communities.

Moreover, the policy on economic development and national security has worsened the condition of Indigenous Peoples, aggravating their precarious situation. Transnational corporations and foreign interests, such as mining and agro-industrial companies, have invaded ancestral lands and domains. Driven by liberalization and profit, the State has become complicit in the dispossession of Indigenous Peoples of their ancestral territories. Current policies continue to reflect these priorities.

1. AMEND ATL to remove unconstitutional provisions. Certify as urgent the review of the law.
2. Revoke EO 70 and abolish NTF ELCAC. Implement and support IP-led community development projects and address the root causes of insurgency.
3. REVIEW the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA). Sec. 56 (vested right) must be evaluated in the light of how it has been used to undermine and diminish indigenous peoples' assertion of their ancestral domains, undermining the intent of the law to correct historical injustices.
4. REVAMP the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). The NCIP should focus on its primary mandate - the protection and promotion of IP rights and ensuring ancestral domains are recognized and protected. It must not be used to advance political and economic agendas that run counter to its mandate, among these the push for large-scale, extractive and resource-intensive investments in ancestral domains that undermine Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination and culturally appropriate development, and leading the counter-insurgency program. The NCIP must have greater independence, free from any political agenda, to be truly a commission that promotes and protects indigenous peoples' rights. To achieve this, there must be a process of consultation with IP groups and communities to review and assess the NCIP.
5. REVIEW contracts that cover ancestral domains, especially those entered into by the State (e.g., FTAA, IFMA, etc.)—ensure compliance with FPIC, environmental audits, and Human Rights standards.
6. ENACT the Alternative or Peoples Mining Bill or the Alternative Minerals Management Bill (AMMB) to replace the flawed Philippine Mining Act of 1995.
7. ENACT a law that holds accountable those who engage in terrorist labeling and red tagging of IP rights advocates.
8. ENACT an accountability mechanism accessible to victims of corporate human rights violations.

9. ENACT the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy Bill and ensure its implementation in Indigenous Communities.

### ***On Good Governance and Accountability***

DEMAND for good governance, immediate relief, accountability, and justice. This pursuit can begin by investigating key individuals responsible for the continued violation of the rights of Indigenous Peoples to ancestral lands and self-determination. This issue necessitates submission to the International Criminal Court in light of the severe and sustained human rights violations perpetrated against indigenous peoples over nearly a decade.

1. EXACT ACCOUNTABILITY from Ferdinand Marcos Jr. for the development projects that violate IP rights, policies that criminalize the solidarity of IPs, and human rights violations that sow terror across IP communities during his presidency.
2. IMPEACH and CONVICT Sara Duterte for her failure to uphold human rights and IP rights; and misuse of public funds that deprived IPs of social services, especially education.
3. CONVICT Rodrigo Duterte for committing grave crimes against Indigenous Peoples and enacting laws and policies that have led to severe human rights violations even after his administration.

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### **CLOSING STATEMENT**

Resistance from indigenous communities has been met with militarization and rights violations. Instead of prioritizing IP rights, they are tagged as rebels or insurgents. The labels “terrorist” or “insurgents” have become the catch-all pretext to legitimize the criminalization and attack on Indigenous Peoples defending their land and rights.

Three years into the new administration, human rights violations against Indigenous Peoples have only intensified, further deepening the systemic oppression they have long fought against. It is essential to stand together and persist in resisting this ongoing injustice, despite attempts to criminalize indigenous solidarity. More than just replacing those in power, it is imperative to hold accountable those responsible for severe rights violations and to seek justice for all victims.

The State is duty-bound to secure peace and protect its citizens, and this must be within the framework of respecting rights and prioritizing the welfare of the people. Genuine implementation of the rights of indigenous peoples, ensuring the free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) of IPs on all activities within their ancestral domain and land, and the adoption of a national development framework that puts IP rights over sheer destructive profit ensures their security over their lands and persons. This redounds to the national

aspiration for the safeguarding of our biodiversity, food security, and mitigation of the climate disaster. A policy shift and meaningful implementation to protect indigenous peoples and their rights to their ancestral domains are urgently needed; only then can the nation achieve real, inclusive, and collective development—one that ensures welfare for all.

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The Electoral Agenda was developed based on [1Sambubungan's Electoral Agenda for the 2022 National Presidential Elections](#). It was subsequently updated and amended through a series of meetings conducted by 1Sambubungan from February 17, 2025, to March 11, 2025.