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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 210

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Introduced by
GABRIELA WOMEN'S PARTY
REPS. ARLENE D. BROSAS and EMMI A. DE JESUS

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE VIOLENT DISPERSAL OF PROTESTING FARMERS ON APRIL 01, 2016, DUBBED AS THE "KIDAPAWAN MASSACRE", PERPETRATED BY ELEMENTS OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE THAT LED TO THE DEATH OF TWO (2) FARMERS, WOUNDING OF MORE THAN A HUNDRED, AND CHARGING OF 81 OTHERS WITH TRUMPED-UP CASES, AND CAUSED TRAUMA TO PREGNANT AND ELDERLY WOMEN WHO WERE AMONG THOSE ILLEGALLY DETAINED AND FALSELY CHARGED

WHEREAS, on the 4th week of March 2016, starving farmers and their families from different municipalities of North Cotabato united in protest in Kidapawan City to call for the release of rice subsidies to drought victims across the province;

WHEREAS, the farmers claimed that it has been months since El Niño hit their lands, but no assistance was ever provided by the government. It can be recalled that the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of North Cotabato has passed SP Resolution No. 014 as early as January 20, 2016 placing the entire province under the *state of calamity* to aid the farmers and their families during the drought season. The drought has already affected 27,558.55 hectares of agricultural lands based on the Damage and Needs Analysis report of the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist;

WHEREAS, on April 01, 2016, the protesting farmers and their supporters were fired upon by policemen from the Philippine National Police-Region 12, allegedly upon the order of Gov. Emmylou Taliño-Mendoza, leaving behind two (2) dead farmers, 116 injured and 81 others facing false assault charges, including 3 pregnant and 2 elderly women;

WHEREAS, pregnant and elderly women were not spared by the PNP from among those whom they illegally detained for several days, and later were falsely charged with assault;

WHEREAS, Arlene Candiban, 25 years old, a Lumad from Magpet, North Cotabato, was one of the pregnant women protesters who was illegally arrested and detained by the police. On June 10, 2016, Candiban suffered from stomach cramps and was rushed to the hospital where she had a premature delivery of her twins. One of her babies eventually died due to extreme stress and trauma. The other baby, Althea, survived but is currently being incubated due to a weak heart;

WHEREAS, Rolinda Paunil, another pregnant farmer who was arrested in the same incident, also said that she suffered miscarriage sometime in May 2016;

WHEREAS, Nanay Valentina, one of the elderly women facing assault charges, was among those who travelled to Manila to attend the Senate Committee Hearing on the Kidapawan Massacre. A week after the Senate hearing, Nanay Valentina decided to go back to her house. However, uniformed men came to her and persuaded her to withdraw the case she filed in connection with the Kidapawan Massacre, and in exchange, she was offered sixty thousand pesos (P60,000.00). Because of fear of continued harassment from uniformed men, Nanay Valentina was left with no choice but to return to the sanctuary;

WHEREAS, currently, the family, together with some cause-oriented organizations led by the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, takes charge of the medical needs of Arlene and her baby Althea, and other women victims who are currently recovering from the trauma brought by the incident and undergoing rehabilitation;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Constitution states that, "The State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights." It further states that "It shall equally protect the life of the mother and the life of the unborn from conception.";

WHEREAS, the unfortunate deaths of the unborn children could have been prevented if only the pregnant women were released immediately after no case could be filed against them. The PNP, instead of releasing them, filed fabricated charges at the expense of the safety of the mothers and the health of the unborn babies;

WHEREAS, the protesting farmers, especially the women who were victimized twice over, have been seeking justice for the human rights violations committed against them by no less than the government forces who are duty-bound to protect them. Their plea for food, not just for themselves but also for their unborn children, was answered by the government forces with bullets;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Committee on Human Rights conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the violent dispersal of protesting farmers on April 01, 2016, dubbed as the "Kidapawan Massacre", perpetrated by elements of the Philippine National Police that led to the death of two (2) farmers, wounding of more than a hundred, and charging of 81 others with trumped-up cases, and caused trauma to pregnant and elderly women who were among those illegally detained and falsely charged.

Adopted,


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