

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **CHR may yet find Palparan liable for political killings in Central Luzon**

Reference: **Sr. Cecile C. Ruiz**

Chair, Karapatan-Gitnang Luzon

CP No. 0917-824-9537

The human rights group Karapatan-Gitnang Luzon and relatives of human victims in Central Luzon scored a point after the Commission on Human Rights put on back burner a resolution of one of its commissioners exonerating retired army general Jovito Palparan and other senior military officials from charges of grave human rights violations in Central Luzon.

In a recent dialogue with the group, commissioner Dominador N. Calamba II gave the assurance that the CHR will dig deeper into the cases against Palparan's group to substantiate their alleged culpability in the spate of killings, abductions and other military atrocities in the region.

Commissioner Eligio Mallari, who investigated Karapatan-GL's complaints against Palparan and other military respondents, came up last month with a resolution clearing them of the charges, saying there was no prima facie evidence against them.

But Karapatan-GL and the victims' organization, Mothers and Relatives against Tyranny (MARTYR-Central Luzon), assailed the findings as extremely oppressive and unjustified even as they accused Mallari of covering up for the respondents.

Sr. Cecile C. Ruiz, Karapatan-GL chair, said Calamba conceded that the findings may be deemed untenable as he also believes the investigation conducted was not exhaustive.

"Commissioner Mallari's resolution only reflects his own opinion. It does not bind the entire CHR. We may decide to set it aside, but first we have to conduct further investigation to build a strong case against the respondents. So, let us help each other," Ruiz quoted Calamba as saying.

Ruiz considered this a welcome development. "At least we are vindicated. And we hope the CHR will help the victims find justice," she said.

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