



**A STATEMENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF  
THE JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION COMMISSION  
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF THE MAJOR RELIGIOUS SUPERIORS  
OF THE PHILIPPINES**

*Mindful that we are bearers of peace, which must be built up unceasingly, we should seek out ways of unity and fraternal harmony through dialogue trusting in the presence of the Divine seed in everyone and in the transformed power of love and pardon. Messengers of perfect joy in every circumstance, we should strive to bring hope and joy to others.<sup>1</sup>*

**WE**, fifty-eight members of AMRSP-JPICC, together with the Mission Partners, coming from 29 religious congregations, gathered at the Holy Spirit Convent at No. 8 Poinsettia Street, Cubao, QC, from November 28-29, 2017, to discern and plan as a general assembly on the theme 'The AMRSP JPIC Commission - a Platform for Prophetic Witnessing, Transformative Leadership & Good Governance'

We are deeply disturbed and saddened by the worsening assault on human life and dignity of human beings, specially the poor victims of the war on drugs: 6,225 drug-related deaths since July 2016 to June 2017.<sup>2</sup>

We are alarmed by the threats on democracy as evidenced by the weak rule of law and the growing supremacy of the rule of power; lawlessness or impunity with the increase of violence related with organized crime and increased terrorist activities from local gangs linked to the Islamic State<sup>3</sup>; the rhetoric of violence and discrimination; minimizing the value of human rights, demonizing human rights as a Western concept and thus, "cannot be applied to Eastern cultures"<sup>4</sup>, and the increasing militarization of society.

Furthermore, we see no significant systemic economic reforms and programs to alleviate the lives of the poor.

We adhere to Bishop Pablo David's statement, that, "Our credibility as Church leaders is compromised when we carry with us a political agenda. It is important to keep our leadership in the spiritual and moral realms of leadership."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Franciscan Third Order

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/10/07/1746112/pnp-6225-drug-related-deaths-no-extrajudicial-killings>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.philstar.com/headlines/2017/09/23/1741826/2017-report-philippines-worst-impunity>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.pressreader.com/philippines/philippine-daily-inquirer/20150516/281526519633510>

<sup>5</sup> Bishop Pablo Virgilio David, DD, Talk on *Church Perspective on the Current National Situation*, 29 November 2017, AMRSP JPICC GA.

Moreover, Bishop David reminded us of the importance of anchoring ourselves in the power of our Christian Gospel values: “Our religious symbols, rituals and narratives still bear a powerful influence on our people's imagination and collective consciousness,<sup>6</sup> ...and the transformative power of these rituals and narratives to effect genuine change:<sup>7</sup>

- tolling of Church bells at 8pm as a sign of protest,
- "tirik kandila",
- Pinoy Easter "Salubong" concept as applied on our CBRP (community based rehabilitation program),
- San Roque's relevance to EJK's
- the Black Nazarene as a collective representation of the "last, the least, and the lost"
- revival of the prophetic "oracles of doom" in the mold of the Pinoy "sumpa".

On our journey to be transformative-servant leaders, we, are determined to leave our mark to rewrite, remake, and recreate this nation toward peace, nonviolence, care for the earth, justice and love for all those who are marginalized and disenfranchised in society. We constantly remind ourselves of our identity, mission and of our role in the transformation process of our world. For this is the essence of the Good News.

Thus, faithful to the mandate of JPICC and the Church Social Teachings, we, commit to these core programs: (1) Human Rights Advocacy to promote the life and dignity of human beings and the environment, (2) Transformative Leadership and Legislative Advocacy for good governance, (3) Integral Ecology as essential to “greening” the mission, and (3) Talitha Kum, a global anti-trafficking in persons network.

We, individually, as a congregation and as an Association will mainstream JPIC's engagements and core programs in our communities, mission houses, schools, lay partner associations, the poor communities where we are present. Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation is the new norm for being, relating and doing.

We take courage in the narrative of the birth of Jesus Christ:

*“God is unexplainably born in our hearts moment by moment, breath by breath. In order to discover that, we must leave the noise and business of the inn, finding our way in the dark back to the stable. We have to enter into the humility, simplicity, patience, and delicate nature of what's unfolding in our hearts to discover how God is being born in our lives. We are asked to bring this delicate simplicity out into the world.”<sup>8</sup>*

***Participants of  
AMRSP JPICC General Assembly  
November 28-29, 2017***

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> James Finley, <https://cac.org/>