



BANTAYOG NG MGA BAYANI FOUNDATION, INC.
Sen. Jovito R. Salonga Building, Bantayog ng mga Bayani Center
Quezon Ave., near cor. EDSA, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel./Fax No. 8985-1126
bantayog@bantayog.foundation

STATEMENT ON THE DRAFT ANTI-TERRORISM ACT OF 2020

The Bantayog ng mga Bayani Foundation stands with those who oppose a proposed law that could be used against citizens, critics, activists, and organizations, violating our rights to free speech, and against illegal arrest and unreasonable searches and seizures. The Foundation rejects all policies that normalize and legalize abuses perpetrated by government against its own people.

“(We) challenged a dictator and all the evils his regime had stood for: repression of civil liberties and trampling on of human rights. We set up a popular government, restored its honored institutions, and crafted a democratic constitution that rests on the guideposts of peace and freedom,” the late Supreme Court associate justice Abraham Sarmiento had written in 1990.

That Constitution he speaks of, which embodies the lessons we learned under years of the Marcos dictatorship, provides that --

* No law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances. (Section 4)

* The right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized. Access to official records, and to documents and papers pertaining to official acts, transactions, or decisions, as well as to government research data used as basis for policy development, shall be afforded the citizen, subject to such limitations as may be provided by law. (Section 7)

We speak today in behalf of those heroes and martyrs we honor, as well as the nameless and faceless ones still unrecognized who risked everything they had to resist the tyrannical rule of the Marcos dictatorship. They dreamed and hoped for a country with freedom and justice for its citizens. Let us not forget their sacrifices. Let us put the lessons of history to use. Let us not allow our rights to be suppressed all over again.

WIGBERTO E. TAÑADA
For the Board of Trustees
BANTAYOG NG MGA BAYANI FOUNDATION
June 6, 2020