A resolution in solidarity with the Filipino youth in demanding an end to political persecution and human rights violations

**ORGANIZATION/ ORGANIZACIÓN/ ORGANISATION:** Akbayan Youth

**COUNTRY/ PAÍS/ PAYS:** Philippines

1. In the year 2016, Rodrigo Duterte was elected President of the Philippines, following his election, he declared a War on Drugs in the Philippines with the promise of eradicating drug lords and drug-related crimes in the country within 3-6 months.

2. This has led to an alarming amount of extrajudicial killings by the police and vigilante groups—most of which were citizens from poor communities. At present, human rights groups have claimed that there are over 30,000 deaths linked to Duterte's War on Drugs. Different civil society groups, especially the youth, have protested against this brutal war on drugs that have turned into a war against the poor.

3. On February 24, it will be the second year of Philippine Senator Leila De Lima's arrest. By now, it is undeniable to the world that she was sent to jail for standing up to the human rights violations of President Rodrigo Duterte under his War on Drugs.

4. When she fearlessly brought to light how poor Filipinos are slaughtered in cold blood, she was targeted and attacked. She was persecuted on dubious drug charges. She remains imprisoned today, despite having no conviction yet, jailed by a government that is fearful of brave women. De Lima's imprisonment is a reflection of the situation in the Philippines: While those who called for the killings of Filipinos are free, those who speak of the truth are sent to jail.

5. Maria Ressa, the head and founder of Rappler, an independent online news portal in the Philippines was charged with cyber libel for an article Rappler published about the allegedly corrupt ties of a businessman with a Philippine judge. Rappler has reported before on the killings under President Duterte's War and his use of a disinformation network to silence his critics.
The method of the arrest was crafted in a way as to deprive Maria Ressa of all the constitutional rights awarded to accused citizens under Philippine Law. This attack on Maria Ressa was an attack not simply on an individual but on the institutions of Philippine democracy. The power of our government must be kept in check.

IUSY affirms its commitments to democracy and the system of checks and balances which necessitates a free press.

IUSY urges the Philippine government to end all harassment against Maria Ressa, put an end to political persecution and release Sen. Leila De Lima from incarceration.

IUSY reiterates our condemnation of the arrest as a politically motivated charge against a journalist and a human rights defender who spoke the truth against the abuses of the Philippine government.

IUSY strongly condemns Duterte’s War on Drugs and recognizes its systemic harms to the most vulnerable sectors of society. As more countries seek to replicate President Duterte’s authoritarian approach, we strongly urge other countries to reject the Philippines’ punitive approach to addressing the issue of drug use.

IUSY strongly supports and stands in solidarity with the Filipino youth who are tirelessly working against the ruthless policies of the Duterte Administration.

IUSY further recommends that the Filipino youth create spaces and institutions where the value of democracy and human rights are instilled in the principles for future generations.###