

MESSAGE OF SOLIDARITY

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE EXCHANGE

JULY 21-26, 2019

JAKARTA AND WEST JAVA, INDONESIA

I send my warm greetings and solidarity with the participants of the People to People Exchange gathering in Indonesia. I understand this is one of the activities suggested as a follow-up to the “Conference on Alternatives in Southeast Asia: Rethinking Cross-Border Regionalism” of last November 27-29, 2019 in Manila, Philippines which presented documented case studies of alternative practices from the ground.

I am happy that the Program on Alternative Development of the University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP CIDS AltDev) has taken the initiative and responsibility for these two events. For the People to People Exchange, UP CIDS Alt Dev has entered into a partnership with the Konfederasi Pergerakan Rakyat Indonesia (KPRI), an Indonesian peoples’ movement that is hosting the activity.

I also note that the documentation of alternative practices, the conference on alternatives, and the people to people exchange are initiatives that hew closely to the ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ ASEAN Peoples’ Forum (ACSC/APF) 2017 statement on the need to “establish, expand, and strengthen a new peoples’ regional integration process based on the alternative practices of peoples, networks, and organizations across the region’s societies.”

Even as the ACSC/APF continues to engage the official ASEAN process and persists in bringing to the attention of the regions’ leaders the issues and concerns of Southeast Asian peoples in their quest for justice, equality, dignity, and a sustainable future for all, there is also a need to acknowledge and recognize that the vision of an alternative society is already being crafted by grassroots and community-based practices of an economic, political, social, and cultural nature. It is these peoples’ initiatives that will form the constituent parts of a new people’s regional integration model.

I wish to extend my heartfelt wish for a successful gathering and eagerly await the results and outcomes of these initiatives. I also hope for more events of this type that will cement the solidarities and commonalities of Southeast Asian peoples in the struggle for peoples’ empowerment and a shared regional identity.



Raquel Castillo

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