



PRESS RELEASE

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Date Released: 26 June 2017

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Statement of Sec. Delfin N. Lorenzana on the report alleging that Marawi women are scared of being raped by soldiers

While the nation continues to suffer from the havoc wrought by the ongoing rebellion in Marawi and atrocities in various parts of Mindanao, some factions obviously have a lot of free time on matters other than helping improve the situation.

I question the motives and credibility of certain leftist groups and individuals in coming up with a dubious report that Marawi women residents allegedly fear that they will be raped by soldiers in the ongoing military operations in Marawi City.

Our soldiers have undergone a series of gender sensitivity trainings under our Gender and Development (GAD) program. These trainings focus on participation, empowerment, equity, respect for human rights, freedom from violence, and actualization of fullest human potential not just of soldiers but the communities where these soldiers operate as well.

Linawin ko lang po: Ang ating kasundaluhan at kapulisan ay nasa Marawi upang labanan ang mga teroristang gustong gawing pugad ng kasamaan ang siyudad, at upang pigilan na lumawak pa ang kaguluhan. Ito ang kanilang sinumpaang tungkulin. To this day, close to 70 soldiers and policemen have already paid the ultimate sacrifice in the defense of Marawi City and our people, with many more wounded and in need of serious medical attention.

The groups who made the report have just exposed their obvious ulterior motives – for the government fail in the fight against evil in order to advance whatever selfish reasons they have. *Hindi po ba ang mga grupong ito ang mga grupong patuloy na nagbubulag-bulagan sa mga krimeng ginagawa ng mga kabaro nila sa CPP-NPA?* The same groups who conveniently forget that their communist-terrorists colleagues continue to loot, murder, rape, and destroy private and public properties in the countryside.

I challenge the organizations where the information originated to present their evidence and lodge a complaint before the proper authorities if they can, and not just throw away accusations like they are reading lines from their same old propaganda for almost five decades now which the Filipino people have grown tired of hearing.

Alam ng taumbayan na makapapagkatiwalaan nila ang ating Sandatahang Lakas, ang kaisa-isang Sandatahang Lakas ng Pilipinas, at nakikita naman ito sa mga survey. Kung labag sa ideyolohiya ng mga grupong ito ang sumuporta sa mga sundalo, sana ay makunsensiya naman sila para sa ating mga kapatid na Maranao – mga kababaihan, kabataan, katutubo at buong komunidad sa biktima sa sitwasyon. Mas mainam siguro na buksan nila ang kanilang isip at puso sa totoong nangyayari at huwag magpakawala ng mga tsismis at fake news.

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