

September 2016



International Network of People who Use Drugs



### Stop killing People who Use Drugs in the Philippines

The Asian Network of People who Use Drugs (ANPUD) and the International Network of People who Use Drugs (INPUD) urgently demand an immediate halt to the killing of people who use drugs in the Philippines. We implore President Duterte to immediately call for an end to the extrajudicial murder of people who use drugs and instead focus on internationally accepted, evidence-based interventions and policies that place the reduction of harm and the wellbeing of the community front and centre.

As a lawyer and a politician, you know that the foundation of a country cannot be built upon the blood of thousands of the citizens whom you are bound to protect.

### People who Use Drugs are Human

People who use drugs are human beings. We are mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, sisters, brothers, and grandparents. We care for our families and communities, and our contribution and place in society is just as valuable and important as that of all others. We are students, workers, musicians, caregivers, artists, and labourers. Our deaths cause untold suffering and pain among us and our communities, to our families, and to Filipino society as a whole, and particularly the already poor and marginalised.

The recent spate of killings is of enormous concern. We acknowledge your stated intention to create stability in the Philippines. In other countries where similarly violent approaches have been employed against people who use drugs, including in the ASEAN region, the result has only been pain, suffering, social exclusion, and huge instability. The violence must stop, and different approaches should be utilised in order to realise a peaceful, secure, and stable Philippines that benefits *all* Filipinos.

### Different Models: a Focus on Harm Reduction and an End to Poverty

It is vital to immediately call a halt to the killings of people who use drugs, and to guarantee the safety and rights of all people of the Philippines, of people who use drugs in the Philippines and particularly of those who have surrendered to the police due to fear of being killed. Instead of punishment, violence, and discrimination, we urge you to consider and employ systems of social support, social inclusion, harm reduction, and access to legal justice for people who use drugs. This approach sits within a framework which seeks to use science and evidence to minimise the harms that can be associated with drug use. It also matches with your stated philosophy of reducing harm to society through reducing poverty and injustice.

Again, we urgently require that you call an immediate end to the extrajudicial killing and instead focus on health, wellbeing, and scientific standards for people who use drugs that have been recommended by the World Health Organisation, and which will lead to a healthy, productive, and prosperous Philippines, both our aim and yours. We urge you to have discussions that focus on evidence-based interventions and harm reduction services for people who use drugs, and urge that these discussions are inclusive of community and civil society organisations, particularly those communities who are currently suffering as a result of this violence. We entreat you to take a strong and forward-looking view on drugs that promotes a reduction of harm; we entreat you to make good on your pledge to end inequality, to end poverty and increase solidarity with the poor and disenfranchised, and an end to violence and discrimination.

International Network of People who Use Drugs

INPUD | Unit 2C05 | South Bank Technopark | 90 London Road | London | SE1 6LN | UK

info@inpud.net | www.inpud.net



INPUD Limited is a non-profit company registered in England (company registration number 8828458). Our registered office is at Unit 2C05, South Bank Technopark, 90 London Road, London, SE1 6LN, UK