



Human Rights Watch statement
Adoption of the outcome of the UPR of the Philippines
September 22, 2017

Thank you, Mr. President.

We are dismayed that the Philippines rejected all UPR recommendations that would make a practical difference in ending extrajudicial killings perpetrated in the name of its murderous “war on drugs.”

It rejected Peru’s recommendation to cooperate with special procedures by extending a standing invitation, and recommendations by Ghana, Hungary and others to allow access to the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, without conditions that might compromise her impartiality.

We remind Philippines of its obligation as a member to cooperate with the Council and its mechanisms.

We are deeply concerned that rather than investigating compelling evidence of culpability of police and their agents in many of those killings, Duterte has launched a campaign of vilification and harassment against individuals and institutions pursuing accountability for those abuses, Senator Leila de Lima, who faces politically motivated drug charges designed to silence her, the official Commission on Human Rights, as well as the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial executions.

In its UPR responses, the Philippines even refused to accept recommendations to protect journalists and human rights defenders, or reject incitement to violence.

Instead of calling for respect for international standards or due process, President Duterte has said of drug suspects: “My order is to shoot to kill you. I don’t care about human rights, you better believe me.” And “I will kill you, I will kill you. Forget about the laws of men, forget about the laws of international law, whatever.”

Does the delegation deny President Duterte made these remarks? Does it believe that any killing without due process is justified if perpetrated in the name of the “war on drugs”?

The High Commissioner said in his update to this session: “I continue to be gravely concerned by the President’s open support for a shoot-to-kill policy regarding suspects, as well as by the apparent absence of credible investigations into reports of thousands of extrajudicial killings, and the failure to prosecute any perpetrator.”

If the Philippines will not face up to its international responsibilities and membership obligations, the Human Rights Council should step in, and do all that it can to end the violence, support independent international investigations into the deaths, and demand accountability for all unlawful killings.