

February 22, 2021

**MS. ANA ZBONA**

Project Manager  
Civic Freedoms & Human Rights Defenders

**MS. CHRISTEN DOBSON**

Senior Project Lead & Researcher

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**Dear Ms. Zbona and Ms. Dobson,**

This is in response to your message on February 16, 2021, seeking this office's comment on joint police and military raids at indigenous villages in the Philippines, which happened to be near the site of a Korea Eximbank-supported project, particularly the Jalaur River Multipurpose Project Stage II (JRMP-II).

We note the concerned Philippines authorities' statement that such raids were conducted as part of ongoing Philippine Government efforts to combat the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA)-both formally labeled as terrorist groups by the Anti-Terrorism Council (ATC) of the Philippines on December 9, 2020.

Through its EDCF Safeguard Policy, the Bank ensures that the overseas cooperation projects it finances are in compliance with international humanitarian and human rights standards and principles. The Bank is closely monitoring the situation related to the above incident, as well as the associated issues that arose from the international human right communities and potential threats to the autonomy and constitutional rights of the Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines, including those in Panay Bukidnon and the affected communities of the JRMP-II.

A thorough and complete discussion of such sensitive matters is beyond the scope of this correspondence. Nonetheless we would like to emphasize that linking JRMP-II to the reported incidents is misleading.

The allegation of associating the project with the reported incident hinges upon the following assumption: to quote from the second article you shared (from APIL), *"The reason why Korean civil society is paying attention to the massacre of Tumandok indigenous people is because Tumandok residents have been opposing the "Jalaur Mega Dam project" and; "Local residents who suffered both direct and indirect damage from the dam project have been opposing the construction...."* This assumption is not grounded on solid facts and thus, fallacious.

As you may be aware, the term "Tumandok" has two different meanings, i.e. general term referring to a particular indigenous community (a.k.a. Panay Bukidnon people) and a particular political indigenous organization residing in 'West Panay'(a.k.a. Panay Bukidnon).

It is true that the affected Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities by the project is Tumandok (Panay Bukidnon) people. However, the Bank would like to highlight that the affected IP communities are not represented by this particular TUMANDOK organization, and this has been verified by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) through its Field Based Investigation as part of the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) process for the project.

Furthermore, it is the Bank's carefully reasoned and factually grounded conclusion that the majority of the IP community members affected by the project are supportive of the project. This has been validated through the legitimate FPIC process conducted by the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) with supervision and endorsement by the NCIP. Over the years, the Bank closely monitored this process to validate its legitimacy and appropriateness.

We intend to continue monitoring its implementation to, through, and beyond completion, while remaining true to the principle of leaving no one behind and globally recognized standards of environmental and social management.

Sincerely,  
**EDCF-Korea Eximbank**