

## Unity Statement

# THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES COMMUNITY RISES! WE CALL FOR AN END TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

*ONE BILLION RISING – UP COMMUNITY*

February 6, 2013

**One Billion Rising – UP Community will be launched on Feb. 14 with a program and dance at Quezon Hall at 4 to 5 pm. We will then join the One Billion Rising Philippines activity at Morato St., Quezon City, at 6pm which is co-sponsored by the office of the Quezon City Vice Mayor Joy Belmonte, GABRIELA, and the New Voice Company. We call on the whole community of UP to participate and register our collective stand against all forms of violence against women. Let us rise, strike and dance on February 14!**

One in three women on earth will be raped or beaten. That is one billion women too many. One Billion Rising (OBR) is a global event; an invitation to women and men to reject violence against women and girls as a given. Through dance, the OBR highlights the need for global solidarity to call for an end to violence against women (<http://onebillionrising.org/>).

We, members of the UP Community in Diliman - students, faculty, REPS, administrative staff, contractual workers, hotel workers, and other members of this community- bond together in support of the call of One Billion Rising to end violence against women. We shall rise, strike and dance to call for an end to violence against women. **We call ourselves, One Billion Rising- UP Community.**

The University of the Philippines in its “Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Anti-Sexual Harassment Act of 1995” affirmed “\_its commitments to provide a secure and conducive learning and working environments for students, faculty members and employees free from sexual harassment and all forms of sexual intimidation and exploitation.” Our University therefore clearly does not and will not tolerate any form of gender-based violence.

Beyond the policy declaration of our University is the stark reality of violence that women suffer in our society. UPLB student Maria Victoria Reyes was robbed and killed inside her home in Los Baños last November 19, 2012. Lordei Hina, UP Diliman student, was robbed and brutally stabbed last February 1, 2012 inside Vinzons Hall. Given Grace Cebanico, UP Los Baños student was raped and killed last October 11, 2011. UP Diliman students Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan were abducted on June 26, 2006 and remain missing to this day. A fellow abducted prisoner who managed to escape told of the sexual abuse and maltreatment of the two students while in military custody. Maricon Montajes, a College of Mass Communications student, was arrested on June 3, 2010 and suffered mental torture and interrogation. She remains a political prisoner up to this day.

At the national level, the 2008 National Demographic and Health Survey revealed that “one in five women aged 15-49 has experienced physical violence since age 15; 14.4 percent of married women have experienced physical abuse from their husbands; and more than one-third (37%) of separated or widowed women have experienced physical violence, implying that domestic violence could be the reason for separation or annulment.” (<http://pcw.gov.ph/statistics/201210/statistics-violence-against-filipino-women>). The Center for Women’s Resources, a research and training institution for women reports the trend for a decade (2001-2010) that “every hour, a mother or her child is beaten. Every two hours, a woman or child is raped. Every five hours, a woman or child is sexually harassed” (<http://cwrave.wordpress.com/2012/11/25/increasing-violence-against-women-and-children-as-mirror-of-our-society-cwr/>).

These figures obviously do not include the many cases of sexual harassment, sexual abuse and domestic violence that are not reported or the cases of sexual abuse suffered by our Filipina migrant workers. These figures neither reflect the discrimination, harassment and sexual abuse of lesbians, bisexual women and transsexual women.

Victim blaming, fear of reprisal from perpetrators, and lack of family and community support are some of the factors which prevent women victims from coming out to seek justice. On the other hand, the causes of male violence range from the internalization of patriarchal beliefs that men have the right to beat or rape women; non-awareness that women's rights are human rights to the culture of impunity that allows perpetrators of violence to go scot free.

Gabriela, the Filipino women's alliance, cites poverty, the culture of impunity and the failure of the government and its legal institutions to dispense justice to victims of violence as major causes of the worsening cases of violence against women in the Philippines (<http://bulatlat.com/main/2012/11/09/rape-cases-of-violence-against-women-on-the-rise-%E2%80%93-gabriela/>). Violence against women, therefore, thrives under an economic situation characterized by pervasive poverty, a political climate of impunity, and a dominant culture that privileges patriarchal views and practices.

One Billion Rising—UP Community will rise, strike and dance to call for an end to violence against women! One Billion Rising-UP Community will rise, strike and dance to call for an end to the economic, political and cultural conditions that give rise to such violence.

**CONVENORS:**

UP Diliman Gender Office (UPDGO)  
Department of Women and Development Studies, CSWCD  
All-UP Women Solidarity  
GABRIELA-Youth

**INITIAL SIGNATORIES:**

All-UP Workers Union  
All-UP Academic Employees Union  
Catholic for Reproductive Health Bill (C4RH)  
College of Social Work and Community Development  
College of Social Work and Community Development Student Council (CSWCD-SC)  
Congress of Teachers/Educators for Nationalism and Democracy (CONTEND)  
Diliman Learning and Resource Center  
DZUP  
Gender Committee, University Student Council (USC)  
Human Resource and Development Office (HRDO-UPD)  
Office of Anti Sexual Harassment (OASH) - UPD  
Office of Counseling and Guidance -UPD  
Office of Student Housing-UPD  
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs (OVCCA-UPD)  
Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (OVCSA-UPD)  
Philippine Collegian  
Saligan sa CSSP  
Samahan ng mga Manininda sa UP  
Sinagbayan  
Student Alliance for the Advancement of Democratic Rights in UP (STAND-UP)  
University Hotel Workers Union  
UP Center for Women's Studies (UCWS)  
UP Solidaridad