



## **FOI ON TRACK WE LOOK AHEAD TO RATIFICATION OF BICAM REPORT**

After long struggle, the passage of the Freedom of Information Act is finally near at hand!

At the resumption of session last Monday (18 January), we marched to the House of Representatives with a rally contingent of 1000 to call on our House of Representatives to stand for Freedom of Information. With Committee on Public Information Chairman Bienvenido Abante, Jr., Vice Chairman Eduardo Zialcita, Committee TWG Chairman Lorenzo “Erin” Tañada III, and Minority member Rufus Rodriguez, we met with Speaker Prospero Nograles to appeal for the immediate constitution of the House Panel to the Bicameral Conference Committee on the Freedom of Information Act.

We were not frustrated. The final act of Congress before it adjourned for the day was the naming of the following members to the House Panel: Rep. Bienvenido Abante, Jr. (Chairman), Rep. Eduardo Zialcita, Rep. Lorenzo “Erin” Tañada III, Rep. Rodolfo Antonino, Rep. Jesus Crispin Remulla, Rep. Rodante Marcoleta for the Majority, and Rep. Joel Villanueva and Rep. Cinchona Cruz-Gonzales for the Minority.

On Wednesday, 20 January, the Bicameral Conference Committee met at the Senate to reconcile the disagreeing provisions of House Bill 3732 and Senate Bill 3308. Present were Senators Alan Peter Cayetano (Chairman) and Juan Miguel Zubiri for the Senate Panel, and Representatives Abante (Chairman), Zialcita, Tañada, Antonino, and Cruz-Gonzales for the House Panel.

We congratulate the conferees present for discharging their legislative work with efficiency and dispatch. Noting that the Senate Committee on Public Information used the House Bill as starting point, the two panels agreed to focus their discussion on the amendments introduced by the Senate. Even as these amendments were meant to address remaining legitimate concerns raised by

stakeholders and by Senators, Representatives Abante, Zialcita, Tañada, Antonino, and Cruz-Gonzales still took the responsibility and care to ask further clarifications, and to introduce further refinements and improvements. The result is a reconciled bill that is as much a House as it is a Senate version.

With the Bicameral Conference Committee Report approved on the same day, Freedom of Information is back on track.

We look to the Senate and to the House of Representatives to complete the final legislative actions on the bill this week. With efficient work from the Senate and House Committee secretariats, the Senate Panel has already signed the Bicameral Conference Committee Report and we only await the signatures of the House Panel.

We look forward to the prompt filing of the signed Report and to its distribution to our Senators and Representatives. We eagerly await immediate action by each House on the Bicameral Conference Committee Report. For a few minutes of session on Tuesday or Wednesday (26 or 27 January), we count on our Senators and Congressmen to set aside political contentions that go with the nearing elections, and unanimously ratify the Bicameral Conference Committee Report on the Freedom of Information Act.

The Freedom of Information Act will address the substantive and procedural gaps that have long prevented our full enjoyment of our right to information. It will supply a definite procedure for access, enumerate clearly the information that government may validly keep secret, spell out the remedies in cases of denial, impose penalties for unlawful violation of our right to information, require the automatic disclosure of important government transactions, and establish mechanisms for the active promotion of openness in government.

When finally signed into law by the President, we have no doubt that the Freedom of Information Act will be a strategic and most significant contribution of the 14<sup>th</sup> Congress to the fundamental renewal of public institutions in our country.

Right to Know. Right Now!

**Right to Know. Right Now! Campaign**  
**25 January 2010**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III                            | 4th District, Quezon Province                                      |
| 2. Rep. Joel Villanueva                               | CIBAC Party List   |
| 3. Rep. Del De Guzman                                 | 2nd District, Marikina City  |
| 4. Rep. Riza Hontiveros-Baraquel<br>Rep. Walden Bello | Akbayan  |
| 5. Atty. Nepomuceno Malaluan                          | Action for Economic Reforms (AER)                                  |
| 6. Dr. Florangel Rosario - Braid                      | Asian Institute of Journalism and<br>Communication (AIJC)          |
| 7. Dean Antonio La Viña                               | Ateneo School of Government (ASoG)                                 |
| 8. Ms. Angelica Simone Mangahas                       | Ateneo Debate Society  |
| 9. Ms. Adelina Alvarez                                | Center for Community Journalism and<br>Development (CCJD)          |
| 10. Prof. Luis Teodoro                                | Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility<br>(CMFR)              |
| 11. Atty. Roberto Cadiz                               | LIBERTAS   |
| 12. Mr. Sonny Fernandez;<br>Mr. Nestor Burgos         | National Union of Journalists of the<br>Philippines (NUJP)         |
| 13. Mr. Bartholome Guingona                           | pagbabago@pilipinas  |
| 14. Ms. Malou Mangahas                                | Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism<br>(PCIJ)           |
| 15. Mr. Vincent T. Lazatin                            | Transparency and Accountability Network<br>(TAN)                   |
| 16. Atty. Virginia S. Jose                            | Citizens' Battle Against Corruption (CIBAC)                        |
| 17. Mr. Joshua Mata                                   | Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL)                                |
| 18. Mr. Alberto Lim                                   | Makati Business Club   |
| 19. Ms. Ellene Sana                                   | Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA)                                  |
| 20. Ms. Ester Perez Tagle                             | Concerned Citizens Against Pollution (COCAP)                       |
| 21. Ms. Luz Malihiran                                 | Community Organizers Multiversity                                  |
| 22. Mr. Sammy Gamboa                                  | EU-ASEAN FTA Campaign Network-<br>Philippines                      |
| 23. Mr. Al Alegre                                     | Foundation for Media Alternatives (FMA)                            |
| 24. Mr. Milo Tanchuling                               | Freedom from Debt Coalition (FDC)                                  |
| 25. Ms. Judy Pasimio                                  | Legal Rights and Natural Resources Center -<br>Kasama sa Kalikasan |
| 26. Atty. Ma. Tanya Karina Lat;<br>Mr. Arnel Mateo    | IDEALS, Inc.   |

27. Mr. Jude Esguerra; Mr. Doy Cinco	Institute for Popular Democracy (IPD)
28. Mr. Ric Serrano	La Liga Policy Institute
29. Mr. Rey Rasing	Labor Education and Research Network (LEARN)
30. Atty. Farah Marie Decano	Lady Local Legislators' League of the Philippines, Inc. (Four-L Phils.)
31. Mr. Raymond Marvic C. Baguilat	University of the Philippines - Law Student Government
32. Mr. Ed Mora	Pambansang Kaisahan ng Magbubukid sa Pilipinas (PKMP)
33. Mr. Isagani Serrano	Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement
34. Ms. Annie Geron	Public Services Labor Independent Confederation (PSLINK)
35. Mr. Carlos Magtolis, Jr.	Siliman University – ASPAP
36. Ms. Evi-Ta Jimenez	Center for People Empowerment in Governance
37. Mr. Joseph Purugganan	Stop the New Round Coalition
38. Dr. Sixto K. Roxas	Maximo T. Kalaw Institute for Sustainable Development
39. Mr. Ben-Hur Sacopla	Southern Luzon State University ASPAP – Region IV
40. Ms. Eirene Aguila	Team RP
41. Prof. Leonor M. Briones	Social Watch Philippines
42. Ms. Mae V. Buenaventura	Women's Legal Bureau, Inc.
43. Ms. Jenina Joy Chavez	Focus on the Global South – Philippines Program
44. Mr. Ramon Tuazon	Philippines Communication Society
45. Ms. Ana Maria R. Nemenzo; Ms. Mercedes Fabros	WomanHealth Philippines
46. Dr. Buenaventura B. Dargantes	Program on Integrated Water Resources Management RDE, Institute for Strategic Research and Development Studies, Visayas State University
47. Mr. Boy Nuera	Pandayan para sa Sosyalistang Pilipinas (PANDAYAN)

48. Mr. Roy Calfoforo	People's Alternative Studies Center for Research and Education in Social Development (PASCRES)
49. Mr. Alain Pascua	Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan All Filipino Democratic Movement (KAAKBAY)
50. Mr. Horacio T. Cadiz	The Philippine Network Foundation, Inc (PHNET)
51. Mr. Joe Valencia	KASAPI-HELLAS
52. Mr. Nestor Villanueva	Akbayan Greece
53. Mr. Sixto Donato Macasaet	CODE-NGO
54. Mr. Jun S. Aguilar	Filipino Migrant Workers
55. Mr. Pablo Rosales	Progresibong Alyansa ng mga Mangingisda (PANGISDA)
56.	Pambansang Katipunan ng Makabayang Magbubukid (PKKM)
57.	Kilusang Para sa Pambansang Demokrasya (KPD)
58. Ms. Lourdes M. Tison	Paghiliusa sa Paghidaet-Negros (PsPN)
59. Mr. Abby Y. Pato	Task Force on Food Sovereignty Mindanao
60. Ms. Karen Tañada	Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute
61. Ms. Mardi Mapa-Suplido	Negros Peace Watch
62. Dr. Jose Reuben Alagaran	Philippines Communication Society
63. Ms. Aurora Regalado	Management Organization for Development and Empowerment, Inc.
64. Mr. Ernesto Lim Jr.	People's Campaign on Agrarian Reform (AR NOW!)
65. Mr. Anthony Marzan	KAISAHAN
66. Mr. Jesus Vicente Garganera	Alyansa Tigil Mina
67. Ms. Luz Cabucos-Fegarido	RSW
68. Ms. Maria Lisa Alano	Alternate Forum for Research in Mindanao (AFRIM), Inc.
69. Dr. Jose Reuben Alagaran II	Philippines Communication Society
70. Ms. Ma. Lourdes M. Tison	Paghiliusa sa Paghidaet-Negros (PsPN)
71. Mr. Joel Saracho	GCAP-Phils
72. Ms. Trinidad Domingo	Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan

73. Mr. Richard Gutierrez	Ban Toxics
74. Mr. Nonoy Oplas	Minimal Government Thinkers
75. Mr. Harvey Keh	Kaya Natin! Movement
76. Mr. Czarina Sacaguing	Confederation of Student Government in the Philippines
77 Mr. Byron Abadeza	Affiliated Network for Social Accountability in East Asia and the Pacific
78. Dr. Ma. Olivia Domingo	Center for Leadership, Citizenship and Democracy, UP-NCPAG
79. Dr. Angelo Ramos	Philippine Community e-Center Network
80. Ms. Mae Sabio	Sulong CARPER
81. Mr. Diosdado Calmada	PEACE
82. Ms. Lanie Factor	Task Force Mapalad
83. Ms. Maris Dela Cruz - Cardenas	EmPOWER Consumers
84. Mr. Wilson Fortaleza	Partido ng Mangagawa
85. Atty. Elpidio Peria	Third World Network Vice Chairman, Social Concerns Committee, IBP South Cotabato – General Santos City Chapter
86. Prof. Gigi Francisco	Miriam College - International Studies Department
87. Mr. Obet Pagdanganan	Coalition for Health Advocacy and Transparency (CHAT)
88. Mr. Omi Royandoyan	Centro Saka
89. Ms. Carolyn Arguillas	MindaNews
90. Mr. Abner Francisco	DXCA – FM
91. Ms. Florencia Casanova-Dorotan	Women’s Action Network for Development
92. Ms. Violeta Corral	Aksyon para sa Kapayapaan at Katarungan
93. Mr. Crispino Aguelo	Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (PAKISAMA)
94. Ms. Michelle Domocol	Visayas Climate Action Network
95. Judge Dolores L. Español (Ret.)	Transparency International – Philippines
96. Mr. Roby Alampay	Southeast Asian Press Alliance
97. Ms. Teresita Quintos Deles	International Center on Innovation, Transformation and Excellence in Governance (INCITEGov)

98. Ms. Maita Gomez	Bantay Kita
99. Mr. Rey Hulog	Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas
100. Mr. Jose Pavia	Philippine Press Institute
101. Mr. Isagani Yambot	Philippine Daily Inquirer
102.	College Editors Guild of the Philippines
103. Ms. Emy M. Santos	National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO)
104. Ms. Tes M. Borgoños	Manggagawang Kababaihang Mithi ay Paglaya (MAKALAYA)
105. Ms. Marilyn Fuentes	National Union of Building and Construction Workers (NUBCW)
106. Atty. Michael Yu	Integrated Bar of the Philippines- Cebu City Chapter
107. Dr. Prospero E. de Vera	National College of Public Administration and Governance, University of the Philippines
108. Sylvia Estrada Claudio, M.D. PhD.	Center for Women’s Studies, University of the Philippines
109. Mr. Viktor Samuel Fontanilla	UP ALYANSA
110. Ms. Anna Luz Lopez	UP BUKLOD CSSP
111. Mr. Jeffrey Crisostomo	AKBAYAN Youth - UP Diliman
112. Ms. Susan Ople	Blas Ople Foundation
113. Mr. Romeo Cabagnasan	Alyansa ng Maralitang Pilipino
114.	Initiative for International Dialogue