

## Greenpeace challenges Arroyo on Climate Change Legacy

Manila, PHILIPPINES &mdash; Greenpeace today challenged President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to lay the foundations for a true legacy in climate change mitigation and energy security during her term. The challenge calls for Arroyo to set the example, and to put into place enabling policies in the Philippines that will phase out harmful energy sources like coal plants and put a stop to optioning similarly dangerous alternatives such as nuclear energy, especially since vast sources of clean, renewable energy remain untapped during her presidency.

Anticipating that Arroyo will paint a rosy picture of a renewable energy and energy efficient future for the Philippines during her State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Monday, the global environment organization points out that the Philippine government cannot yet expect to attain the target set by Arroyo of 60% energy independence in two years, unless it shifts its existing policies.

During her National Statement at the Asian Development Bank Clean Energy Forum last June 17, Ms. Arroyo herself admitted that we need to lessen our dependence on fossil fuels, something that has been missing from her 8-year term.

"While the passage of the Renewable Energy Law was an important step for the country, there are at least nine new coal plants that are either in the pipeline or awaiting construction or expansion. The Arroyo administration will lock us into a future with more carbon emissions unless these proposals are scrapped. We want to see complementary legislation for phasing out coal plants." says Amalie Obusan, Greenpeace Southeast Asia Climate and Energy Campaigner.

Coal burning contributes more to climate change than any other fossil fuel. Coal-fired power stations pump 11 billion tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year. This amounts to 72% of carbon dioxide emissions from power generation and 41% of total global emissions of carbon dioxide from fossil fuels. Coal still accounts for 26.44% or 4213 MW of the Philippines' present energy mix.

Another threat to the development of renewable energy in the Philippines is Arroyo's open declaration of support for unsustainable and dangerous nuclear energy. If pursued, funding placed on nuclear power will be funding taken away from renewable energy.

"Climate change solutions cannot be half-done nor half-hearted. Climate change is the biggest and most urgent environmental and humanitarian threat that we face today. And the Philippines is among the 'most vulnerable and least prepared' to face this threat."

"While developing countries like ours must do our part, strong commitment from developed countries is crucial. This is the time for change, and bold leadership is needed. President Arroyo must show she is sincere by shifting her energy policy. Greenpeace is additionally challenging Ms. Arroyo to ask US President Barack Obama to commit to legally binding, timely and deep emissions reductions, as well as to enable a massive increase in public and private funding for climate change mitigation and adaptation during her visit to the United States next week," concluded Obusan.

Greenpeace is an independent, global campaigning organization that acts to change attitudes and behavior, to protect and conserve the environment, and to promote peace.

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