



# WALANG DAANG MATUWID SA APECO.

DEAR PRESIDENT NOYNOY AQUINO,

On November 24, 2012 one hundred twenty five (125) farmers, fisherfolk and indigenous peoples from the town of Casiguran, Aurora began marching to Manila in order to assert their firm opposition against the Aurora Pacific Ecozone and Freeport (APECO).

APECO was established by R.A.10083 over 12,923 hectares of productive agricultural lands and natural forests in Casiguran. The affected area is home to at least three thousand farmer, fisherfolk, and indigenous families – people who have been building their lives on these lands for decades, and have walked on their last hopes to defend their home.

Mr. President, WALANG DAANG MATUWID SA APECO.

THE TRUTHS ARE:

The APECO Law was passed **without consultation with the people of Casiguran.**

The APECO Law was passed **without approval of the local government unit of Casiguran**—a violation of the Local Government Code (RA 7160) and the APECO Law itself.

APECO **displaces fisherfolk without provision for relocation and livelihood**—a violation of the Fisheries Code (RA 8550).

APECO **intrudes into ancestral lands of the Agta Dumagats without their “Free, Prior and Informed Consent”**—a violation of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (RA 8371).

APECO’s proposed infrastructure and industries will **destroy at least 300 hectares of productive, irrigated rice lands thereby endangering food security in Aurora and the pristine waters of Casiguran Bay**—a violation of the CARPer Law (RA 9700).

APECO **disregards the rights of affected tillers of 105 hectares of land covered by the CARP** (RA 6657).

**Ten hectares of mangroves have already been cleared to give way to APECO** – a clear violation of environment policies in PD 705 and DENR DMC 2008-03.

APECO paid more than **P650,000 per hectare for the coconut land of Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officer Benjamin Miña**, while it paid only P45,000 per hectare for the rice lands of those who have already lost their homes—a violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act (RA 3019).

Since 2008, more than **P518-million of the people’s money has already been released to APECO**, while a number of projects which have supported APECO’s operations, such as the **Casiguran Mariculture Park**, remain non-operational or of dubious value. This raises the question of how sound and worthwhile are these ventures into which we are investing all of our taxpayers’ monies.

**Industries Development Corporation (IDC)**, the first registered investor in APECO asked for exemption from DENR DMC 2008-03 **prohibiting commercial cutting of natural forests in Aurora** in order to implement a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Province of Aurora and IDC, **signed by Governor Angara-Castillo, Senator Edgardo Angara, Congressman Sonny Angara and Mr. Ong. In 2010, Mr. Ong** was one of the 5 Board members of APECO.

**APECO has paid P120 million to IDC** supposedly for the purchase of its logging rights—a blatant violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act (RA 3019).





