**TO: Alysha Khambay & Thulsi Narayanasamy – Business & Human Rights Resource Centre**

**FROM: Brent Wilton, Global Director Workplace Rights**

**DATE: January 16, 2020**

**SUBJECT: Response to Allegations of attacks on unions in the Philippines**

The IUF’s allegations against The Coca-Cola Company and its bottling operation in the Philippines are unfounded.

The issues arise from communication and information provided by local law enforcement officials in the Philippines to all employees including management at the Coca-Cola Bottling Philippines Inc. (CCBPI) Bacolod plant.

The Philippines has been experiencing an internal conflict in parts of the country for many years. In September 2018 the Philippine President signed Executive Order NO. 70. This order created a Philippine National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict in the country. One aspect of this effort by the government is for the Philippine National Police (PNP) to speak to communities and its citizens to try and prevent the recruitment of individuals to armed radical groups.

By letter dated Sept. 18, 2019, the Republic of the Philippines National Police Commission, Region Office 6, Negros Occidental Police Provincial Office, requested of the Bacolod operation time to hold information sessions with all CCBPI employees. (see attached letter) Attendance at the meetings was voluntary and the sessions were held on Oct. 2 and 5, 2019.

The Philippines National Police, over the last year, have also requested and held these same kinds of meetings in CCBPI facilities in Santa Rosa, Cebu, Misamis Oriental and Davao. CCBPI has not received any complaints or concerns from employees in relation to any of these meetings.

CCBPI has also been advised that similar seminars have been conducted at other businesses throughout country.

The claim by the International Union of Food and Allied Workers (IUF) and the FCCU, a union that represents CCBPI employees, that the company engaged in “red-tagging” or denouncing any of its employees’ unions at such meetings is false. No one from the Company’ management spoke at these meetings or with those officers running the seminars.

The IUF further alleged that members of its affiliates have received visits from military or police personnel at their homes. CCBPI is unaware of such activity by the authorities and can therefore provide no comment.

We can assure your readers that the IUF’s allegations against the Company are without merit. CCBPI continuously works to respects its employee’s human rights, including freedom of association. CCBPI has 52 collective labor agreements across its operations that have been negotiated with 52 different unions. CCBPI has over 10,000 employees, of which over 6,600 are covered by these collective agreements.

We recommend the IUF and/or its affiliates reach out to the Philippine National Police and the Philippine National Task Force to raise their concerns/complaints and to gain a more thorough understanding of their efforts and the methods and messaging they use throughout the country to implement its program.



