SEEKING FAIRNESS AND JUSTICE:
Toxic Wastes Left Behind
at the former US Military Installations
in Clark and Subic, Philippines

The United States acknowledged that both its former military installations in the Philippines, Clark Air Base and the Subic Bay Naval Facility, have significant environmental damage and if the US unilaterally decides to clean up these bases in accordance with US standards, the costs for environmental clean up and restoration could approach Superfund proportions (U.S. General Accounting Office Report, January 1992).

Brief Timeline
- In 1902, the end of the Philippine-American War; established Philippines as a colony
- In 1904, the US established a naval facility in Subic Bay, the center of the US Seventh Fleet
- In 1945, the US also established Clark Air Base, the second largest base in the US Air Force
- In 1945, the United States gave the Philippines its independence
- In 1947, the United States and the Philippines jointly signed the US-Philippine military bases agreement that gave the US a 99-year rent-free contract in the Philippines
- In the 1950s, with the Cold War, found urgency to extend military presence in Asia
- From the 1960s to the 1990s, the US depended heavily on both bases, Clark and Subic, for military operations: from the Korean War, to the Vietnam War, to Persian Gulf War
- In June 12, 1991, Mt. Pinatubo erupted and forced the evacuation of Clark Air Force Base
- In September 16, 1991, the Philippine Senate refused to extend the bases agreement
- In 1991, displaced residents from Mt. Pinatubo’s eruption were temporarily resettled at the CABCOM military facility. Many complained of the contaminated drinking water; pregnant women suffered miscarriages; and children were born with disabilities
- In November 24, 1992, US troops shipped out leaving behind tainted facilities and neglected toxic waste victims
- In 1992, the Philippine government redeveloped the areas into "special economic zones"
- In 1993, the World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed the findings of the US General Accounting Office (GAO) that certain areas were affected with considerable pollution.

What’s Next? How Can You Help?
Twenty years later, the Philippine case is still far from being resolved. The US continues to deny responsibility because the US-Philippines military bases agreement that it signed in 1947 lacked any provisions on environmental protection. However, denial of its responsibility also ignores the US’ core values of fairness and justice. The Bayanihan Foundation, the Alliance for Bases Clean Up (ABC) and others will conduct an education and outreach campaign and will appeal to Filipino Americans and to all for fairness and justice on this important almost forgotten issue.

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US Rear Admiral Eugene Carroll, Jr. (retired), outspoken expert and witness to the toxic wastes left behind by the US military installations in Clark and Subic, Philippines.

**Health Cost of US Military Presence in the Philippines: Evidence of Environmental Hazards and Toxic Wastes Left Behind**

**Seepage from underground storage tanks** both Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Navy Facility

**Lack of sanitary sewer system** at the Subic Bay Navy Facility

**Lead and other heavy metals** from the ship repair facility’s sandblasting site directly drained into the bay or are buried in a landfill

**Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB)** The Subic Bay Navy Facility’s power plant contains unknown amounts of polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) but no official testing has been performed

**Aviation fuel** Thousands of gallons of highly corrosive aviation fuel were left behind in a decrepit 42-mile underground pipeline connecting Subic and Clark

**Runoff and migration** of contaminants beyond area of contamination source; absorbed on soil particles; and bio-concentrated by animal or plant life and move up the food chain

**Unexploded ordnance** UXO was left behind in firing ranges in Subic and Clark and scarred hundreds of innocent victims. See testimonies of 21 victims of UXO (www.fdnbayanihan.org)

*Filipino Workers and Residents Affected*

- **Ed Pugay**, a former worker at the ship repair facility, said that base officials never told him of the dangers of asbestos and heavy metal wastes that he inhaled while cleaning Navy ships.
- **Edgar Magalang** said workers soaked their gloved hands in polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) contaminated fuel and they did not use respirators.
- **Salvador de Ocampo** thought he was doing a harmless job taking in samples from electric transformers; they gave him gloves and a mask for protection. He was never told that he would be handling PCBs. Afterwards he was suffering from headaches and nausea.
- **Anding Velonza** was severely burned in the face and body when a UXO exploded. Anding survived but his eight-year old brother, Dante died in a separate UXO explosion incident.
- **Abraham Taruc** was one of the children born with disabilities; his family lived in the CABCOM military area of Clark Air Base. He could not walk, talk or eat solid foods.

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*Multiple Scientific Reports*

- In 1994, a report identified 14 known contaminated sites at Subic Bay with significant potential risks to human health (Bloom, others).
- In 1997, a participatory health survey revealed that a high proportion of growth retardation and respiratory problems were present among women and children (Bertell, 1997, others).
- In 1997, the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) conducted an environmental baseline survey of Subic Bay and did not find widespread contamination (Woodward Clyde, others).
- In 1998, the reliability of the Woodward Clyde report was put to the test as Clearwater Revival Company (CRC), reversed its conclusions (Clearwater Revival, others).
- In 1998, the Clark Development Corporation (CDC) hired Weston International to undertake another soil and water baseline study, confirming 22 contaminated sites but maintained that the contamination was localized, identified and secure (Mercado, others).
- In 1999, a report of 1,000 former base workers had been diagnosed with asbestosis, a form of lung cancer contracted from exposure to asbestos (Institute for Policy Studies, 1999).

Overwhelming evidence point towards the continued presence of toxic wastes in the former military sites of Clark and Subic as the victims seek fairness and justice over this neglected issue.

Complete bibliography at www.fdnbayanihan.org

*Other Social Costs of the US Military Presence in the Philippines*

The US military service personnel fathered 50,000 Amerasian children whose mothers are Filipinos; only less than 25% were acknowledged by their American fathers. Amerasian children, especially those with African-American fathers, unfairly suffer prejudice and discrimination due to their physical appearance and their mother’s low social status perceived as prostitutes. They also do not have legal standing in the US; their births would not have been registered in the US.

*US Denial of Responsibility*

In the midst of all the scientific reports, the US continues to unfairly deny its responsibility of toxic wastes in their former military installations. US government officials do not deny the existence of toxic wastes in Clark and Subic. They deny responsibility based on the military bases agreement that it does not impose any well-defined environmental responsibility upon the US to clean up after the withdrawal and that both US and Philippine governments have agreements that included “hold-harmless” clauses that hold the US harmless (U.S. General Accounting Office Report January 1992). But beyond the legal standpoint and international laws, toxic waste victims want to appeal to fairness and justice to US policymakers and that the US should honor its responsibility to clean up the toxic wastes they left behind.