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Action Network Human Rights - Philippines

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Press release

## German Advocacy group bewails slow progress in Maguindanao Massacre court case

Two years have passed since at least 57 people were killed in broad daylight in the southern Philippines, partly chopped up and buried in a mass grave which was dug beforehand for this purpose only.

Among the victims were many lawyers and journalists who accompanied family members of an election candidate, Esmael Mangudadatu. While on their way to the registration office at the 23rd November 2009, the delegation was waylaid and brutally killed by the private militia of the Ampatuan clan, members of this ruling family and hired policemen.

While the victims' families are still waiting for justice, they and their lawyers are subject to counter-charges and obscure delaying tactics on part of the putative murderers' lawyers. In fact it seems that the lawsuit is being undermined by deadly assaults on witnesses, attempted bribery, intimidation and flawed investigatory work.

“We are very concerned to notice that the public interest in the Maguindano Massacre trial is decreasing”, says Maike Grabowski, coordinator of the German Action Network Human Rights-Philippines (AMP) and demands an impartial investigation of all charges, the acceleration of the court procedure and an effective protection mechanism for witnesses and lawyers.

The German advocacy group, which comprises of eight church based development and human rights organisations, will light candles in front of the Philippine consulate in the city of Essen at 6 p.m. on November 22 (November 23 Manila time) to countervail oblivion.

“We want to show our support to the families, friends and colleagues of the victims and encourage them to continue their struggle for justice and the rule of law in the Philippines”, Maike Grabowski amplifies.

On the occasion of the second anniversary of the massacre the AMP has published a dossier, which highlights the context of the tragedy and the current developments in the murder trial.

The dossier can be downloaded under the following link:

[Dossier Maguindanao Massacre.](#)

Members: Amnesty International, Brot für die Welt, Diakonie, Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst, Misereor, Missio, philippinenbüro e.V., Vereinte Evangelische Mission



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