

"The Killings Must Stop"

Statement of European Church and Civil Society Organisations

We are concerned about the upsurge of politically motivated killings and the constant deterioration of the human rights situation in the Philippines in recent years. Amnesty International informs that at least 51 political killings took place in the first half of 2006, compared to the 66 killings recorded in the whole of 2005. Since March 2006 we received an increasing number of reports on political killings – at times on a daily basis. We are particularly worried about the killings representing a pattern to target a broad range of critical and non-violent people involved in local or national politics.

We recognise the government's initiative to increase efforts towards investigations into a number of assassinations. We stress the need to sustain these efforts, to investigate all political killings and to prosecute the perpetrators and their accomplices and to give justice to the victims and their families in order to prevent further escalation and grievance. We support civil society initiatives and efforts to press for investigations of political killings and human rights abuses.

We also condemn the violence and killings of the armed opposition groups. Their doings should however not be used as a justification for human rights violations and killings committed by paramilitary forces and the government. The use of paramilitary forces in the Philippine government's all-out war against the New People's Army (NPA) and other armed left groups as well as the spread of armed paramilitaries is particularly worrying. The decision of the Communist Party of the Philippines' (CPP) leadership to set up armed partisan forces counterattacking operatives and masterminds of the killings does also cause great concern. We believe that these developments will lead to further deterioration of the human rights situation, severely threatening those engaged in non-violent, critical and investigative forms of civil and political activism.

We call on all government departments concerned, especially the Department of Justice (DoJ) and the Philippine National Police (PNP), to investigate all killings with a political background, prosecute the perpetrators and their accomplices and to deliver justice to the victims and their families.

We call for the implementation of Republic Act 6981, providing witness protection, security and protection for activists facing death-threats.

We call for an independent investigation into the Department of Defence and the Armed Forces of the Philippines to investigate allegations concerning the use of political assassination as a counter-insurgency strategy.

We call on both the government and the CPP to continue serious peace negotiations and to respect human rights.

We call on the armed opposition groups to refrain from the use of political killings.

We call our own governments and the United Nations (UN) to pay attention to these alarming developments and to urge the Philippine government to end the killings and guarantee justice for all victims.

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Asia Foundation, Germany
Asia House, Germany
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Bayanihan - Philippine Women's Center, Netherlands
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Mr. Harry van Bommel, Member of Parliament for the Socialist Party, Netherlands
South-North Exchange of Peoples Organizations (BOND), Belgium
Prof. Theo van Boven, Professor of International Law, University of Maastricht, Former UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Former Director of the UN Human Rights Division, Netherlands
Bread for the World, Germany
Ms. Brid Brennan, Transnational Institute, Netherlands
Broederlijk Delen, Belgium
Bundeskoordination Internationalismus (BUKO), Germany
Christian Aid, United Kingdom
Church Development Service (EED), Germany
CMC Mensen met een missie, Dutch Catholic Missionary Development Agency, Netherlands
11.11.11 - Coalition of the Flemish North-South Movement, Belgium
Conference of Religious in the Netherlands (KNR), Netherlands

CORDAID, Netherlands
Critical Ecology - Institute of Applied Cultural Research, Germany
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Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO), Netherlands
Dutch section of the International Commission of Jurists (NJCM), Netherlands
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Kindernothilfe (KNH), Germany
Philippine-European Solidarity Center (KSP), Netherlands
Foundation Lawyers for Lawyers, Netherlands
Misereor, Germany
Missio-Munich, Germany
Missionszentrale der Franziskaner (MZF), Germany
Netherlands Humanistic Committee on Human Rights (HOM), Netherlands
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Office of Mission, Ecumenism and Global Responsibility of the Evangelical Church of Westphalia, Germany
One World Action, United Kingdom
One World Network Network Northrhine-Westphalia, Germany
Oxfam Novib, Netherlands
Partnership Third World, Germany
Pax Christi German Section, Germany
Pax Christi International, Belgium
Philippinenbüro, Germany

Philippine Solidarity Group- Protestant Church of Jülich, Germany
Philippine Indigenous People's Links, United Kingdom
ProMISPA Friends of the Philippines, Germany
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