



January 22, 2019

President Rodrigo Duterte
Office of the President
Malacañang Complex
J.P. Laurel Street
San Miguel, Manila
1005
Republic of the Philippines

Via Email: pcc@malacanang.gov.ph / mro@malacanang.gov.ph

Dear President Duterte:

Subject: Continued Attacks on Workers' and Peasants' Organizations in the Philippines

I write on behalf of the Vancouver and District Labour Council, with its approximately 100 affiliate unions and over 60,000 members, regarding the massacre of the “Sagay Nine” and the ongoing crisis of workers right in the Philippines.

In November of last year, I wrote to you regarding the horrible massacre of the “Sagay 9”, members of the National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) who were murdered in cold blood October 30. Unfortunately, I am writing you today because that violence has continued in Negros and elsewhere in the Philippines.

Just after Christmas, on December 27, six people (Jesus “Dondon” Isugan, Delia Isugan, Dominador Isugan, Reneboy Fat, Jaime Revilla, and Demetrio Fat) were killed by members of the Philippine National Police (PNP) and military on the island of Negros. An additional sixteen were arrested arbitrarily and are facing trumped-up charges.

This new wave of repression represents a continuation of apparent efforts to crush farm worker and peasant movements in the region. Working people in Negros are struggling to feed themselves and have taken to occupying land which was to be redistributed through the government land reform program and using it to grow sustenance crops for themselves and their families and communities.

The violence they face for merely fighting for survival and standing up for the rights and entitlements denied them by their government is inexcusable and must be condemned.

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To: President Duterte
Re: Human Rights

At the same time in recent weeks the Philippine National Police has begun pressing education officials for lists of members of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT), in order to profile, harass, and intimidate those fighting for better teaching and learning conditions.

This effort to single out ACT members and extract their person information for dubious purposes is a clear violation of the right to organize, freedom of expression and assembly, and the right to privacy. ACT leaders have received death threats and faced widespread intimidation and surveillance.

We reiterate our call for your government to act to end the repression of working peoples' organizations in the Philippines and to ensure respect for human rights for all.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours truly,



Stephen von Sychowski
President

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