

URGENT APPEAL - THE OBSERVATORY

On the extra-judicial killing of Mr. Charlie Solayao

Monday 30 July 2007, by [FIDH](#), [OMCT](#) (Date first published: 25 July 2007).

PHL 002 / 0707 / 085

Extra-judicial killing

Philippines

July 25, 2007

The Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, a joint programme of the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH), requests your urgent intervention on the following situation in the Philippines.

Brief description of the situation:

The Observatory has been informed by reliable sources about the extra-judicial killing of Mr. Charlie Solayao, Vice-Chairperson of the Tacloban section of the Association of Urban Poor Communities (Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap - KADAMAY), an urban poor organisation, and an active campaigner against the demolition of sidewalk vendors in Tacloban market.

According to the information received, on July 17, 2007, a motorcycle with two men on board came close to Mr. Solayao. One of the men, who was riding pillion, shot three times at Mr. Solayao and then continued shooting at him as he laid on the ground. Mr. Solayao died later on at the hospital.

In June 2007, Mr. Solayao had been warned by his cousin, a member of the Philippine military, that he could be killed if he did not stop his activities. After the shooting, his wife declared that her husband had no known enemies and that "his being involved in protest rallies which aim at nothing but at defending the rights of the downtrodden like [them] could be the reason why he was mercilessly gunned down by the perpetrators".

The Observatory expresses its deep concern about the ongoing attacks against human rights defenders perpetrated by both state and non-state actors in the Philippines, and recalls that the Philippines has been elected as a member of the Human Rights Council until 2010 and has, in this regard, committed to "uphold the highest standards in the promotion and protection of human rights" [1].

The Observatory further recalls that according to Article 12.2 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 9, 1998, "the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration".

Actions required:

Please write to the authorities of Philippines urging them to:

- i. Guarantee the physical and psychological integrity of all human rights defenders in the Philippines;
- ii. Conduct a fair and impartial investigation into the assassination of Mr. Charlie Solayao in order to identify all those responsible, bring them before a competent and impartial tribunal and apply to them the penal, civil and/or administrative sanctions provided by the law;
- iii. Guarantee that adequate reparation is provided to his relatives;
- iv. End all forms of harassment and ill-treatment of human rights defenders in the Philippines, and guarantee in all circumstances that they be able to carry out their work without any hindrance;
- v. Conform with all the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, especially its Article 1, which states that “everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels” and above-mentioned Article 12.2;
- vi. More generally, ensure in all circumstances respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with international human rights standards and international instruments ratified by the Philippines.

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Please also write to the diplomatic missions or embassies of the Philippines in your respective country.

Geneva - Paris, July 25, 2007

Kindly inform us of any action undertaken quoting the code of this appeal in your reply.

The Observatory, a FIDH and OMCT venture, is dedicated to the protection of Human Rights Defenders and aims to offer them concrete support in their time of need. The Observatory was the winner of the 1998 Human Rights Prize of the French Republic.

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Footnotes

[1] [mhtml:mid://00000059/#_ftn1](mailto:00000059/#_ftn1)