



The killings must be stopped immediately

The movement in the Philippines is growing despite the repression and the killings. Demonstrations continue to call for an end to the killings and an end to the Arroyo Presidency. International human rights groups have called for an end to the political murders and for independent investigations. It is essential that people here in the US – the biggest supporter of Arroyo – add our voices and demand that the human rights violations be stopped immediately and that the perpetrators be held accountable and be brought to justice.

What you can do:

1. Call the Philippine Embassy/ Consulate and Demand a Stop to the Killings. In Washington DC: (202)467-9300 or (202)467-9417(fax). **In SF:** (415) 433-6666 / fax number (415) 421-2641

2. Demand that the US congress investigate the use of US funding for death squads under Philippine government policy.

<http://www.house.gov/writerep>

3. Get in touch with GABRIELA Network, we'd love to speak to your group, rally, class or event!
email: sfbayarea@gabnet.org

4. Stay updated with the latest news on the political repression:

<http://sfbaygabnet.pbwiki.com>



Stop the Killings.

[We] must condemn the killings of political activists and baseless prosecutions of elected legislators and acknowledge the overwhelming evidence that the killings are being carried out by the Philippine military and para-military death squads under the Philippine government policy.

Seeking Answers – An All Women Human Rights Delegation Report on the Philippines,

9/21/2006

Activists are getting murdered in the Philippines! In the past 5 years – since Gloria Macapagal Arroyo took office- there have been over 765 “extra-judicial” killings. In a country of 80 million it’s as if 3000 activists had been murdered in the U.S. since 2001.

Over 190 people were assassinated this year alone. It’s getting to the point that several people are assassinated every week. On July 31st – in just one 24-hour period – three people were killed in three different provinces.

Activists, community leaders, peasant and labor organizers, women and human rights workers and students, have all been targeted. Although the government

says it is fighting against the 37- year old insurgency led by the Communist Party of the Philippines and its New Peoples Army (NPA), it is in fact attacking a broad variety of popular legal organizations. The military has particularly focused on the left opposition electoral parties and their organizers. These parties are: Bayan Muna (People First), Gabriela Women’s Party and Anak-pawis (Toiling Masses).

80 women have been murdered, half from the GABRIELA women’s party, one of the only all women’s electoral parties in the world. 58 children are victims, not including those who have been orphaned. Ten judges and at least 15 attorneys have been killed. Six journalists were assassinated in 2006, alone; 46 since Arroyo came to power. In fact the Philippines is now considered the second most dangerous country for journalists after Iraq.



The government kills with impunity

The government says that the movement is killing itself, but all evidence points to the military and paramilitary. In its August 2006 Report on the Philippines, Amnesty International stated: *The attacks are not an unconnected series of criminal murders but constitute a politically motivated pattern of killings.*

Hooded and disguised men on motorbikes drive by in broad daylight and shoot people down. The victims have often been singled out and labelled as insurgents and/or their names have been placed on military hit lists called the “orders of battle.” Whole communities have been under attack resulting in the displacement of thousands of families.

In 2002, the Arroyo government released its *Oplan Bantay Laya* – Operation Plan Freedom Watch- which proposed a “holistic approach to combining the political, security, socio-economic, psychosocial elements” and which would *make no distinction between armed combatants and civilians*. OBL identified seven “NPA stronghold” regions as priority areas of implementation. Not surprisingly, the killings have escalated exponentially in these areas.

Arroyo is widely believed to have won her last election by fraud. Perhaps this is one reason why she’s so determined to crush the left. In July, she gave the Philip-

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ippine military and police \$20 million more in counter insurgency funds. This, at a time when the country has a 80% rate of poverty. She justified the expense by proclaiming: “Fighting terrorism is the glue that binds the country together.” *Does this sound familiar?*

Arroyo claims she wants the killings stopped, but so far not one perpetrator has been brought to trial or removed from military service. General Jovito “the butcher” Palparan, the military officer accused of signing the death sentence of hundreds of activists, has been promoted time and time again.

Mrs. Arroyo is one of George Bush’s biggest allies. Together they have designated the Philippines the second front in the war on terror. As a result the US has increased its military aid to the Philip-

ppines by 2000% in the last five years. The Philippines is now the 4th largest recipient of US foreign military assistance. US troops conduct *Balikatan* war games in

the Philippines on a regular basis. The current constitution forbids permanent bases, but the 1999 visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) has ensured that the US has mobile facilities throughout the archipelago.

The Philippines is Selling Its Women

The Philippines is facing grave economic and social crisis. The cost of living is rising while social services continue to decline. As usual it is the women who are the most affected. The entire country is running on remittances and is based on the export (sale) of its people. Last year one million left for jobs overseas. Of these 75% (750,000) were women. Most went to work as domestics; but at least 30% went to the so-called sex industry.

Overseas workers send back over 12 billion dollars a year. Without them, the economy would collapse.

The Specter of Martial Law

The conditions in the Philippines are once again reminiscent of those under the hated dictator, Ferdinand Marcos. In February 2006, Arroyo declared a State of Emergency. The provisions were largely based on the 1972 declaration of Martial law including those for warrantless arrests, suspensions of demonstrations and a crackdown on the media. Although the SOE was lifted, many of its provisions remain in place. Six congress people, including Liza Maza, the sole women’s sectoral representative, are still facing charges of rebellion. 73-year-old Crispin Beltran, another of the six, remains in custody to this day.

Just as under Marcos, Arroyo now wants to rewrite the 1987 Constitution and extend her term indefinitely. But perhaps even more significantly, the new constitution would once again allow permanent foreign military bases on Philippine soil and would remove all restrictions to trade and investments.