



Secretary Leila de Lima
Department of Justice (DOJ)
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PHILIPPINES

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Cologne, April 10, 2014

Harassment of Pastor June Ver Mangao (UCCP)

Honorable Secretary de Lima,

The Action Network Human Rights – Philippines expresses its grave concern at the harassment of UCCP Pastor June Ver Mangao by members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

According to our partners from the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), on August 20, 2013 surveillance operations were carried out on the Pastor by intelligence agents of the 1st Infantry Battalion of the AFP, based in Sta. Maria, Laguna under the command of Col. Jose Augusto Villareal. Apparently, these intelligence agents were investigating Pastor Mangao because he worked with political prisoners and their families. On this day, two unnamed persons visited several UCCP church members in Mabiac, Laguna and inquired about the Pastor. The persons used different cover stories and asked questions about the Pastor's whereabouts and his background, and tried to obtain a picture of him. Later the day they called him, again without giving their identities.

Pastor Mangao is now in hiding. In January 2014, other unidentified men started again to ask questions to congregation members on his whereabouts.

On October 24, 2013 after international interventions, the Department of Justice directed the NBI-LAGDO in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, to conduct a preliminary verification of these allegations and to submit a report of the findings within thirty days. To this day, Pastor Mangao is waiting for the report. Instead he received an application form for the Witness Protection Security and Benefit Program, which he found unhelpful in his current situation.

In November 2013, the UCCP approached the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and asked for assistance and protection. The case was referred to the regional office of the CHR. Although the office informed the church that they know the identities of the two military staff, they were not able to release their names together with their report.

Members: Amnesty International, Brot für die Welt – Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst, IPON, Misereor, missio, philippinenbüro e.V., Vereinte Evangelische Mission



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In many cases we learnt of, surveillance operations like this were later followed by serious human rights violations such as illegal detention, enforced disappearance or even an extra-judicial killing. We therefore call upon the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines:

- To conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into the harassment of Pastor June Ver Mangao. The findings of the NBI and CHR investigations should be released promptly.
- To take appropriate disciplinary action against any member of the security forces involved and against those who authorized the harassment. This includes Col. Jose Augusto Villareal who bears command responsibility and who has been recently transferred to another area of assignment

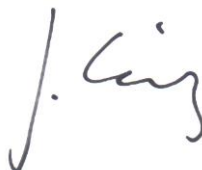
We kindly ask you to keep us informed about the measures taken by you.

Yours sincerely,

For the Action Network Human Rights Philippines:



Elmar Noé
Chair of the Action Network Human Rights - Philippines



Johannes Icking
Coordinator

Copy to:

Loretta Ann P. Rosales

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Chief Human Rights Office
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Barbara Lochbihler, MEP

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Chair of the Committee on Human Rights and
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Stavros Lambrinidis

EU Special Representative for Human Rights

About the Action Network Human Rights - Philippines

The Action Network Human Rights - Philippines (Aktionsbündnis Menschenrechte – Philippinen, AMP) was formed in August 2007 to promote lobby- and information work in Germany and the EU regarding the human rights situation in the Philippines. Through its office, the network coordinates publications, events and lobby activities. Target groups are political decision makers, human rights defenders and social activists as well as the media in Germany and Europe. Member Organisations of the AMP are Amnesty International Germany, Bread for the World - Church Development Service (EED), International Peace Observers Network (IPON), Misereor, Missio Munich, philippinenbuero Inc. in Asia House and the United Evangelical Mission (UEM). The main focus of the network lies on the core human rights issues of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances, as well as trumped up charges.

Members: Amnesty International, Brot für die Welt – Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst, IPON, Misereor, missio, philippinenbüro e.V., Vereinte Evangelische Mission



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