

# L'OBSERVATOIRE

pour la Protection des Défenseurs des Droits de l'Homme

## THE OBSERVATORY

for the Protection  
of Human Rights Defenders

## EL OBSERVATORIO

para la Protección  
de los Defensores de Derechos Humanos

### Open Letter

To: Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal Arroyo  
President of the Philippines

Paris-Geneva, August 26, 2004

LA LIGNE D'URGENCE

THE EMERGENCY LINE

LA LINEA DE URGENCIA

Your Excellency,

The Observatory for the Protection of human Rights defenders, a joint programme of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT), express its deepest concern about the killing of Mr Rashid Manahan on August 24, 2004, in the Philippines.

Mr Rashid Manahan was the coordinator of Mamamayang Tutol sa Bitay (MTB-Davao / Movement for Restorative Justice), a newly established Philippine network of NGOs and human rights institutions involved in the struggle for the abolition of the death penalty.

#### E-mail

[observatoire@iprolink.ch](mailto:observatoire@iprolink.ch)

The Observatory has been informed by Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP) that Mr Rashid Manahan has been killed in front of Ponce Suites, Bajada, Davao City, while he was on his way to attend a forum against the death penalty and salvaging at UP (University of the Philippines) Mindanao.

#### direct FIDH

tel : 33 (0) 1 43 55 20 11

fax : 33 (0) 1 43 55 18 80

The Observatory calls upon the Philippine authorities to order an immediate investigation into the killing of Mr Rashid Manahan, identify those responsible, and bring them before an independent and impartial tribunal.

#### direct OMCT

tel 41 (0) 22 809 49 39

fax : 41 (0) 22 809 49 29

The Observatory recalls that in February 2004, two other human rights defenders were killed. Mrs. Juvy Magsino, a human rights lawyer and the Chairperson of Mindoro for Justice and Peace and Vice Mayor of Naujan, in Mindoro Oriental, and Mrs. Leima Fortu, a volunteer at Mindoro for Justice and Peace and the Acting Secretary General of the Alliance for Advancement of People's Rights (KARAPATAN), in Mindoro Oriental in Philippines, were shot dead by two unidentified men on a motorcycle without a license plate.

The Observatory would also like to draw attention to the death of yet two other human rights defenders in April 2003. Eden Marcellana, Secretary general of the Tagalog-South office of KARAPATAN, and Eddie Gumanoy, President of the KASAMA-TK peasant group, were found dead shortly after being kidnapped when they were investigating human rights violations committed in the eastern province of Mindoro. The presumed

Un programme de la FIDH et de l'OMCT - An FIDH and OMCT venture - Un programa de la FIDH y de la OMCT

**fidh**

Fédération Internationale  
des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme  
17, Passage de la Main d'Or  
75 011 Paris, France

**OMCT**

Organisation Mondiale  
Contre la Torture  
Case postale 21 - 8 rue du Vieux-Billard  
1211 Genève 8, Suisse

# L'OBSERVATOIRE

pour la Protection des Défenseurs des Droits de l'Homme

## THE OBSERVATORY

for the Protection  
of Human Rights Defenders

## EL OBSERVATORIO

para la Protección  
de los Defensores de Derechos Humanos

authors of these assassinations are armed men acting with the support of the 204th infantry brigade of the army of the Philippines, commanded by Colonel Jovito Palparan Jr. To date, the killers of Marcellana and Gumanoy have not been brought to justice, in spite of an express request by the UN Human Rights Committee in December 2003.

We urge you to ensure that the Philippines conform to the provisions of the UN Declaration on Human Rights defenders of December 9, 1998, in particular article 12.2 which provides that "the State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually or 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."

Hoping that you will take these considerations and requests into account, we remain,

Sidiki Kaba  
President of the FIDH

Eric Sottas  
Director of the OMCT

---

*Un programme de la FIDH et de l'OMCT - An FIDH and OMCT venture - Un programa de la FIDH y de la OMCT*

**fidh**

Fédération Internationale  
des Ligues des Droits de l'Homme  
17, Passage de la Main d'Or  
75 011 Paris, France

**OMCT**

Organisation Mondiale  
Contre la Torture  
Case postale 21 - 8 rue du Vieux-Billard  
1211 Genève 8, Suisse