



393 Swanston St
Melbourne
Victoria 3000 Australia

PRESIDENT
Sharan Burrow
SECRETARY
Greg Combet

TELEPHONE
ISD (613) 9663 5266
STD (03) 9663 5266

FACSIMILE
(03) 9663 4051
(03) 9663 8220

WEB
www.actu.asn.au

Ref: SB:dd

16 November 2006

H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo
President
Republic of the Philippines
Malacanang Palace
JP Laurel St., San Miguel
Manila, Philippines

Fax: (+632) 742-1641 / 929-3968
E-mail: corres@op.gov.ph / opnet@ops.gov.ph

Dear Madam President,

Re: Respect for workers' rights and release of Crispin Beltran

Further to my letter to your representative in Australia, of 27 February and 6 April, I am again writing on behalf of some 2 million Australian trade union members to express in the strongest possible terms, our alarm at the continued repression of workers' and trade union rights in the Philippines.

We are alarmed at the many cases of trade union and human rights violations including abductions, harassment, intimidation, extra-judicial executions, illegal arrest and militarization in workplaces and communities. Workers who assert their democratic rights and fight for social justice have been branded as terrorists, communists and "enemies of the state" and are being attacked with impunity under the guise of counter-terrorism. Union leaders, workers, peasants and other social justice activists have been targeted, having their lives and livelihoods threatened.

We are deeply concerned at the continued illegal detention of KMU Chairperson Emeritus and Anakpawis Rep. Crispin "Ka Bel" Beltran who was arrested without warrant on Feb. 25, 2006, a day after a state of emergency declaration by your Government. Mr Beltran is well known to the Australian trade union movement and we call on your intervention in achieving his immediate release.

~ 2 ~

As a member of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), we urge your Government to respect the fundamental labour rights and principles of freedom of association and respect the Filipino worker's right to organise, to bargain collectively, the right to strike and to exercise their democratic rights. The good reputation of your country is at stake so long as the repressive campaign against workers continues.

We also call on you, as the President, to take immediate action to stop the political killings, harassment, intimidation and repression of all trade unions and workers. We expect that you will take decisive action to ensure that justice is upheld.

We will continue to monitor the situation until these matters are resolved.

Yours sincerely



Sharan Burrow
ACTU PRESIDENT

Cc: Hon. Chairperson Dr. Purificacion Quisumbing
The Commission on Human Rights
Email: drpvq@chr.gov.ph

Hon. Sec. Avelino Cruz
Department of National Defense
Email: snd@dnd.gov.ph

Sen. Manny Villar
Senate President
Email: mb_villar@yahoo.com

Rep. Jose de Venecia Jr.
Speaker of the House

Hon. Arturo Brion
Secretary, Department of Labor and Employment
Email: osec@dole.gov.ph

The Hon. Alexander Downer, Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, (fax) +61.2.6277.7500