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Dear President Arroyo,

### **Stop Trade Union Repression and Political Killings in the Philippines**

Public Services International (PSI) is a global trade union federation that represents 20 million women and men working in the public services around the world. It has some 600 affiliated unions in almost 150 countries. PSI is an officially recognised non-governmental organisation for the public sector within the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and has consultative status with ECOSOC and observer status with other UN bodies such as UNCTAD and UNESCO.

PSI is writing to express its deepest concern at the continued and alarming trade union and political repression in the Philippines. Since your government came to power in 2001, there have been over 700 victims of political killings including more than 60 leaders, members, organisers and supporters of trade unions and informal workers.

PSI is equally concerned about other cases of trade union and human rights violations such as abductions, harassment, intimidation, threats, illegal arrests and militarization in the workplaces and communities. On 25 February 2006, 73 year-old Crispin Beltran, Chair of Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), member of Congress and union organiser, was arrested under sedition charges. Although at the beginning of March the courts had ordered his release, he remains in detention to this date. Annie Geron, PSLINK General Secretary and PSI Vice-President for the Asia-Pacific Region, was issued with a transfer order to a remote area of the country after filing a complaint of corruption against her employer.

PSI strongly condemns and denounces political killings as the worst form of political repression. We call on you, Madame President, as the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines to immediately take concrete steps to stop the the political killings, harassment, intimidation and all forms of trade union and political repression committed against leaders, members, organizers and supporters of trade union organizations and informal workers.

We will continue to monitor the situation in the Philippines. This long series of violations of basic human and trade union rights is deeply disturbing and of grave concern to the international trade unions. We strongly urge your government to take convincing measures aimed at guaranteeing the safety of trade unionists in the country.

Yours sincerely,

HANS ENGELBERTS  
General Secretary

Copies:

- ITUC Geneva and Brussels
- Philippines Mission in Geneva
- PSI Regional Office Singapore
- KMU
- PSI affiliates

- Hon. Chairperson Dr. Purificacion Quisumbing, The Commission on Human Rights
- Hon. Sec. Avelino Cruz, Department of National Defense
- Sen. Manny Villar, Senate President
- Hon. Arturo Brion, Secretary Dep. of Labor and Employment

