

H.E. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo  
President of the Republic of the Philippines  
Malacanang Palace  
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Dear President Arroyo

### **Repression of Trade Unionists rights**

Further to my letter of 10 March 2006 on behalf of the British Trades Union Congress and your offices response of 06 June 2006 I am writing again to restate our growing concern at information we are receiving in regard to the current situation facing trade unionists in the Philippines.

In particular we are deeply alarmed by reports that 64 of our colleagues in the trade union movement and informal workers associations have been killed since 2001 and that these deaths are part of the more than 750 victims of political killings in the Philippines recorded up to Sept 2006. We strongly condemn and denounce political killings and assassinations. Political killings violate all norms and international standards for the respect of human rights and have no place in a democratic society.

We are equally alarmed at reports of other cases of trade union and human rights violations, such as abductions, harassment, intimidation, threats, illegal arrest and militarization in the workplaces and communities. Workers who assert their democratic rights and campaign for social justice are being branded as terrorists and “enemies of the state” and are being attacked with seeming impunity under the guise of counter-terrorism.

The case of Annie Geron, the General Secretary of the PSLINK public service union and a Vice President of Public Services International, who is apparently being victimised for her stand against alleged corruption in the Technical, Education and Skills Department Authority in Manila is of particular immediate concern and we would ask you to investigate.

We are further deeply concerned at the continued 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 and despite advanced years and ill health continues to be held in prison.



As a signatory to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, to the United Nations Covenant on civil and political rights and to the International Labour Organization Conventions 87 and 98, the Philippine government must ensure that the Filipino workers right to organise, to bargain collectively and to exercise their democratic rights is recognized and respected.

We ask you as President to take concrete steps to stop the political killings, harassment and intimidation and to ensure that trade unionists in your country are allowed to undertake their normal roles free from fear.

We will continue to monitor the situation in the Philippines closely and ask our government to do likewise.

Yours sincerely

**Brendan Barber**  
General Secretary

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