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**International Centre for Trade Union Rights**

*Centro Internacional para los Derechos Sindicales  
Centre International pour les Droits Syndicaux*

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ICTUR was founded to  
defend and extend trade union rights and  
to raise awareness of these rights and their violations  
around the world

**February 2019****By e-mail:**

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**Attn:**

Rodrigo Roa Duterte  
President of the Republic of the Philippines  
Malacañang Palace,  
JP Laurel St., San Miguel  
Manila, Philippines

**CC:**

Silvestre Bello III, Secretary, Department of Labor and Employment  
Menardo Guevarra, Secretary, Department of Justice  
Jose Luis Martin Gascon, Chairperson, Commission on Human Rights  
Clément Nyaletsossi Voule, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the  
rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association

Dear Mr. President,

The International Centre for Trade Union Rights is writing to raise serious concerns about incidents of state violence and harassment levelled against trade unionists over the past two years. ICTUR is gravely concerned at the alarming deterioration of trade union rights in the Philippines.

In the present instance, ICTUR is profoundly concerned by death threats received by the General Secretary of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT), Raymond Basilio, and at reports of the unlawful 'profiling' of ACT members by the authorities.

**Death threats against Raymond Basilio**

Raymond Basilio received death threats on his personal mobile phone, including a threat delivered during an ACT press conference on 11 January 2019. The caller appeared to know personal details about Basilio and his family, and claimed that an order had been issued for him to be killed unless he agreed to cooperate with the caller's demands.

### ‘Profiling’ of ACT members

ACT members have also reported numerous cases of ‘profiling’ carried out by the police in different regions of the nation. It is reported that intelligence operatives have been visiting schools nationwide, asking for ‘an inventory’ of members or allies of the ACT. Teacher members have also reported police visiting them at their homes. ICTUR recalls that these actions take place against the backdrop of ongoing ‘red-labelling’ scares against leftist trade unions, and widespread and serious violations of trade union rights affecting leftist unions in particular, with state forces often implicated.

### **ICTUR wishes to remind the government of the Philippines of its obligations under international law and in particular under the fundamental International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions, all of which the Philippines has ratified.**

The ILO’s Committee on Freedom of Association has stated clearly that fundamental rights – especially those relating to human life and personal safety – must be fully respected and in order to guarantee the principles of freedom of association, enshrined in Conventions 87 and 98. According to the Committee, ‘trade union rights can be exercised in normal conditions with respect for basic human rights and in a climate free of violence, pressure, fear and threats of any kind’ (Freedom of Association: Compilation of decisions of the Committee on Freedom of Association, ILO. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2018. Para. 71).

Concerning the ‘profiling’ of trade unionists, we recall also that the Committee has further expressed ‘deep concern’ at measures amounting to ‘stigmatization and intimidation’, emphasising the ‘importance of strong measures to avoid such actions and statements against individuals and organizations that are legitimately defending their interests under Conventions Nos 87 and 98’ (Committee on Freedom of Association of the ILO, Interim Report - Report No 374, March 2015, Case No. 2254).

ICTUR calls on the government to undertake all necessary measures to ensure that it complies with the Philippines’ international obligations, and to protect the fundamental freedoms of workers to join and form unions and take action in defence of their interests. ICTUR will report these incidents in the journal International Union Rights, which was established in 1993, and which enjoys a readership in more than 100 countries.

Yours Faithfully,



Daniel Blackburn, Director