

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Death threats/harassment

19 November 1992

PHILIPPINES: Eduardo Faelnar

Amnesty International has just learned that Eduardo Faelnar, a messenger for the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) in Cagayan de Oro City, has been subjected to death threats and other forms of harassment since October 1992. The threats and intimidation are believed to have been carried out by military officials and their close associates. Recent reports indicate that harassment is continuing and there are fears for Eduardo Faelnar's safety.

On at least two occasions, civilians believed to be closely associated with the local Military Intelligence Command (MICO) have informed Eduardo Faelnar that the military are out to "eliminate" him. In October Eduardo Faelnar was arrested by members of MICO and briefly detained. He was told that if he did not cooperate with the military his name would be included on the "Order of Battle", a list of alleged members of the outlawed New People's Army wanted by the military. During the last six weeks Eduardo Faelnar has been followed by members of the MICO and his movements watched by men believed to be intelligence agents stationed outside his house.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

FLAG is a network of human rights lawyers which provides free legal aid to political prisoners and the underprivileged. At least six human rights lawyers, three of them FLAG members, have been extrajudicially killed by government or government-backed forces in the last three years. Dozens more have received death threats in recent years and at least one, Vidal Tombo, was shot and wounded. The attempted murder occurred in July 1991 and was probably connected to Vidal Tombo's defence of suspected NPA members. Other FLAG lawyers have been arrested and charged with subversion after acting on behalf of suspected NPA members.

Harassment and death threats by members of military or paramilitary forces are a matter of urgent concern as they have frequently been followed by "disappearance" or extrajudicial execution in the Philippines. The threats are apparently intended to prevent human rights advocates from carrying out lawful activities on behalf of those whose human rights are in jeopardy. Amnesty International urges the Philippine Government to take immediate, effective measures to guarantee the safety of all those working in defence of human rights and to demonstrate its unequivocal opposition to death threats and all forms of military harassment, by bringing the perpetrators to justice.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/express and airmail letters in English or your own language:

- expressing concern for the safety of Eduardo Faelnar following death threats

and harassment by members of the military and their close associates;

- urging the authorities to take immediate steps to guarantee the safety of Eduardo Faelnar and to ensure that all threats and harassment are immediately called to a halt;

- asking the government to conduct a prompt and impartial investigation into this incident, for the results to be made public and the suspected perpetrators to be brought to justice.

Page 2 of UA 361/92

APPEALS TO

1) The Commanding Officer
Military Intelligence Command (MICO)
Camp Evangelista, Patag
Cagayan de Oro City
Philippines

Telegrams: Commanding Officer, MICO, Cagayan de Oro, Philippines

Salutation: Dear Commanding Officer

2) Brig. Gen. Quintin Alcudia
Commanding Officer 4th ID
Camp Evangelista, Patag
Cagagayan de Oro City
Philippines

Telegrams: Brig Gen Alcudia, Camp Evangelista, Cagagayan de Oro City, Philippines

Salutation: Dear Brigadier General Alcudia

3) General Renato de Villa
Secretary of National Defense
Department of National Defense
Camp General Aguinaldo
1110 Quezon City
Manila
Philippines

Telegrams: Gen. de Villa, Camp Gen. Aguinaldo, Manila, Philippines

Salutation: Dear General de Villa

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

Commission on Human Rights
Integrated Bar of the Philippines Blg
Doña Julia Vargas Avenue
Pasig, MM
Philippines

FLAG
2nd Floor Pozon Blg
83 Capistrano Cr. Montalvan St
Cagayan de Oro City
Philippines

and to diplomatic representatives of the Philippines accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat or your section office if sending appeals after 31 December 1992.