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# *amnesty international*

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## PHILIPPINES @Human Rights Worker Threatened

9 FEBRUARY 1994

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Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of **Avelino F. Javier**, a human rights worker, aged 39, who has recently received death threats. Amnesty International fears that his life may be in danger and urges the Philippine Government to act immediately to guarantee his safety and well-being and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Avelino Javier is Regional Director for Mindanao of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, a church-based non-governmental organisation that works for the promotion and protection of human rights. On 27 December 1993, he received a letter bearing the message: "*Death comes along your way*". He received a further letter on 4 January 1994 which read: "*You're too much, death follows next*". Attached to the letter was a black paper cross. Javier strongly suspects that these threats were made by government agents.

These threats came shortly after Javier had spoken publicly in Mindanao about human rights under the government of President Ramos. He had sharply criticized the government's record on human rights, citing its slowness in releasing political prisoners and its continued counter-insurgency operations against Communist and Muslim rebels despite the on-going talks aimed at reaching a peaceful solution. On 7 January 1994, Javier spoke in a radio broadcast about these death threats,

Harassment, death threats and other human rights violations in the Philippines have occurred against a background of armed conflict between government and government-backed forces and its opponents -- namely the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), a Muslim separatist movement, and the New People's Army (NPA), the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). There is clear evidence that people who receive death threats are at serious risk of being extrajudicially executed or "disappeared". The majority of these victims are civilians whose peaceful political, social,

religious or human rights activities have brought them into conflict with government policy. Such people are frequently accused or labelled by the military as sympathizers of the NPA and as such are seen and portrayed by the security forces as legitimate targets of the government's counter-insurgency campaign.

**RECOMMENDED ACTIONS:** Please send telegrams/telexes/express and airmail letters either in English or your own language:

- expressing grave concern for the safety of Avelino F. Javier, a human rights worker who has been receiving death threats;
- urging the government to act immediately to guarantee his safety and well-being and to bring the perpetrators promptly to justice;

**APPEALS TO:**

- His Excellency President Fidel V Ramos

Malacañang Palace  
Manila  
Philippines

**Fax: +63 2 731 1325 or +63 2 832 7793**

**Telegrams: President Ramos, Manila, Philippines**

**Salutation: Dear President Ramos**

- General Raul Imperial  
Director General  
Philippine National Police  
Camp Crame, Quezon City  
Manila  
Philippines

**Telegrams: Gen. Imperial, Camp Crame, Manila, Philippines**

**Salutation: Dear General Imperial**

General Lisandro Abadia  
Chief of Staff, Armed Forces of the Philippines  
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo  
1110 Quezon City  
Metro Manila  
Philippines

**Fax: +63 2 832 3793**

**Telegrams: Gen. Abadia, Camp Aguinaldo, Manila, Philippines**

**Salutation: Dear General Abadia**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

- Sedfrey Ordoñez  
Chairman, Commission on Human Rights  
IBP Building  
Doña Julia Vargas Avenue  
Pasig, Manila  
Philippines

**KEYWORDS:** HARASSMENT / HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS / ARMED CONFLICT /

**INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT, 1 EASTON STREET, LONDON WC1X 8DJ, UNITED KINGDOM**