

PHILIPPINES DISARM AND DISBAND PRIVATE ARMIES

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**





Dear President Arroyo

I am writing to express my deep concern that private armies continue to operate in the Philippines despite the mass killing of 63 people in Maguindanao province in November 2009. Among the dead were 33 journalists and other media workers, the world's largest ever single attack on journalists.

Political killings, mainly in the name of counter-insurgency, are a major human rights problem in the Philippines. To support the military in their fight against insurgents, the government has armed and employed poorly trained and unaccountable paramilitary groups. Many of these groups act with impunity under the control of local politicians who effectively use them as private armies.

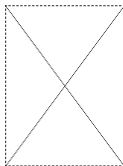
I urge you to:

- Revoke Executive Order 546 which allows for militia and paramilitary groups to provide active support in counter-insurgency operations.
- Immediately disarm and disband all private armies.
- Ensure a just and expedited prosecution of those responsible for the Maguindanao massacre.

Yours respectfully,

Name: _____

Address: _____



**Her Excellency
Gloria Macapagal Arroyo
Malacañang Palace Compound
J.P. Laurel Street, San Miguel
Manila
Philippines 1005**

ASA 35/002/2010

Image: Site of the Maguindanao massacre, November 2009.
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Amnesty International, International Secretariat, Peter Benenson House,
1 Easton Street, London WC1X 0DW, UK. www.amnesty.org