

# ***amnesty international***

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## **PHILIPPINES**

### **@Human Rights Activists Detained**

**15 OCTOBER 1993**

**SUMMARY**

**AI INDEX: ASA 35/18/93**

**DISTR: SC/CO/GR**

Amnesty International is concerned for the safety of two human rights activists, Niel Ballesteros, a worker with the *Kongreso ng Pagkakaisa ng Maralitang Lungsod* (KPML), an organization working with the urban poor, and his wife Ma. Socorro, a human rights education official with Amnesty International's national office of the Philippines. They were detained for several hours on the night of 11/12 October 1993 by six men believed to be military agents. Since their release their house has been kept under surveillance and the family are now in hiding. Amnesty International is concerned that their abduction and subsequent harassment may have been linked to their human rights activities.

Niel Ballesteros and Ma. Socorro were abducted at 8.30pm on 11 October 1993 from a grocery shop in Quezon City by six armed men who introduced themselves as policemen. They were then taken away by car to a house where they were put in separate rooms and interrogated for approximately two hours. In the course of her interrogation, Ma. Socorro was questioned about her work for Amnesty International, both within and outside the country, and about whether she had any links to the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

Niel Ballesteros was also interrogated and agreed, because he feared for his and his wife's safety, to become a military informant and to report secretly on the activities of an alleged leading communist figure. The two were then taken back to their house in Quezon City and released at about 2am on 12 October. After realizing that their house was under surveillance Niel Ballesteros and Ma. Socorro went into hiding with their two young children, fearing for their safety.

Amnesty International is calling on the authorities in the Philippines to take immediate and effective measures to guarantee the safety of Neil Ballesteros, Ma. Socorro and their family. It also urges the authorities to investigate the identities of the abductors and to bring those responsible to justice.

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

- calling on the authorities in the Philippines to take immediate and effective measures to guarantee the safety of Neil Ballesteros, Ma. Socorro and their family;

- urging the authorities to investigate the identities of the abductors and to bring those responsible to justice.

**APPEALS TO:**

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

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

**Salutation: Dear General Imperial**

General Lisandro Abadia  
Commander  
Armed Forces of the Philippines  
Camp Aguinaldo  
Quezon City, Philippines

**Telegrams: General Abadia, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, Philippines**

**Salutation: Dear General Abadia**

President Fidel V Ramos  
Malacañang Palace  
Manila, Philippines  
**Telegrams: President Ramos, Manila, Philippines**  
**Salutation: Dear President Ramos**

**COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:**

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

<b>KEYWORDS:</b> ARBITRARY ARREST / HARASSMENT / HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS / WOMEN / MILITARY /
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