

PUBLIC

AI Index: ASA 35/006/2002

2 August 2002

Further information on UA 236/02 (ASA 35/005/2002, 25 July 2002) - Fear of execution

PHILIPPINES Alfredo Nardo (m), aged 40

New name: Filemon Serrano (m), former taxi driver

Amnesty International has learned that another execution date has been set in the Philippines. Filemon Serrano is scheduled to be executed on 20 September. If this execution goes ahead, it will be the first for more than two years.

Both Filemon Serrano and Alfredo Nardo, who is due to be executed on 16 October, were convicted of raping their daughters. Filemon Serrano is reported to have been sentenced to death by the Pasig Regional Trial Court in February 1997.

His death sentence was confirmed by the Supreme Court in February 2001. President Arroyo has the right to grant clemency in both cases.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases as a violation of the right to life and the right not to be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The death penalty is an inherently unjust and arbitrary punishment, however heinous the crime for which it is inflicted. Studies have shown that it is more likely to be imposed on those who are poorer, less educated and more vulnerable than average. The death penalty is irrevocable, yet the risk of error in applying it is inescapable. While Amnesty International recognizes the need to combat violent crime, there is no convincing evidence that the death penalty deters crime more effectively than other punishments.

FURTHER RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send appeals to arrive as quickly as possible, in English or your own language:

- urging the President to grant clemency to Alfredo Nardo and Filemon Serrano;
- expressing unconditional opposition to the death penalty as a violation of one of the most fundamental human rights - the right to life;
- expressing sympathy for the victims of rape but pointing out that the death penalty has never been shown to have a unique deterrent effect, and is brutalizing to all involved;
- expressing concern at serious defects in the Philippine criminal justice system, including the use of torture, lack of access to lawyers and unfair trials, which increase the risk of executing the innocent;
- urging the President to grant clemency to all other prisoners currently awaiting execution, and to support current moves within Congress to abolish the death penalty.

APPEALS TO: (Please note that fax tones are sometimes difficult to obtain)

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
Malacañang Palace
J.P. Laurel St
San Miguel 1005
Manila
Philippines

Telegrams: President Macapagal-Arroyo, Manila, Philippines

Fax: + 63 2 736 1010 / 832 3793

Salutation: Dear President Macapagal-Arroyo

COPIES TO:

Secretary of Justice
Secretary Hernando Perez
Department of Justice
Padre Faura, Ermita, Manila
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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 13 September 2002.