

EXTERNAL

AI Index: ASA 35/03/98

3 March 1998

Further information on UA 361/97 (ASA 35/14/97, 18 November 1997) - Death threats / fear for safety

PHILIPPINES James Segen, pastor, community leader
Rico Nunez, human rights activist
Jovena Wasalon, peasant activist

Fears for the safety of James Segen, Rico Nunez and Jovena Wasalon appear to have receded, following their involvement in a land dispute between a community of B'laan indigenous people and a plantation company in South Cotabato province, Mindanao.

James Segen and Rico Nunez have moved to different provinces to be closer to relatives. Jovena Wasalon continues to head a local B'laan peasants' association, but has taken precautions to ensure his safety.

A member of the UA network received an e-mail reply from President Fidel Ramos's office. It stated that the Office for Southern Cultural Communities, under Presidential supervision and control, is "in constant touch with Jovena Wasalon" and that the government is taking measures to protect both cultural communities and those who work on their behalf.

No further action is required at this time. Thank you to all those who sent appeals.