



NEWS RELEASE  
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**THREATS AND HARASSMENT ESCALATE AS MEMBERS OF PHILIPPINE MILITARY TARGET  
POLITICAL ACTIVISTS IN CORDILLERA REGION**

***Activist Community Calls on Philippine Government to Convict Perpetrators Before Offenses Lead to More Killings***

**February, 22, 2006, NEW YORK, NY.** Members of the Cordillera Peoples' Alliance (CPA) and Bayan Muna released a statement this week that exposes increasing occurrences of threatening behavior perpetrated by the Philippine military against leaders and political activists in the Cordillera region. Activists from that community are demanding that the Philippine government respond to these offenses before they result in more killings.

According to the CPA, activists in the area have observed indications of being monitored and followed and their offices and homes have been tampered with, harmed and broken into. The wife of the CPA's Vice-Chairman, while in an isolated area, was nearly forced into a suspicious van with men who appeared to be wearing military uniforms, but she resisted. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has yet to respond to the incidences.

"Due process of law is clearly ignored and violated by the government in their attempt to cripple and paralyze legitimate organizations and instill fear amongst their members and followers," explains the statement, which goes on to call the Arroyo government policy "treacherous and cowardly."

"The top priority here is to stop the momentum of these threats so that more lives are not lost," said Brian Keane, executive director of Land is Life, an organization that works with indigenous peoples around the world to protect and promote their human rights. "We join the community of Cordillera activists in demanding that the Philippine government respond quickly and definitively to this situation," he said.

The CPA statement reports that since 2001 there have been 272 documented cases of killings of activists, human rights defenders and NGO workers in the different regions of the Philippines. Further, most of these killings took place after victims were subjected to intense surveillance by suspected military elements or their hired goons.

Just last year, the CPA cites, three NGO workers in Northern Luzon were killed by suspected hired goons or paramilitary elements. Romeo Sanchez, Bayan Muna Coordinator of the Ilocos Region was killed in Baguio City in March 9, 2005. Pepe Manegdeg, a Church worker of the Rural Missionaries of the Philippines was brutally murdered with 22 gunshot wounds in San Esteban, Ilocos Sur on November 28, 2005. Albert Terredano, a human rights advocate and employee of the Department of Agrarian Reform was killed in Bangued, Abra, on November 29, 2005. The killers of the three are still on the loose.

For more information, go to [www.cpaphils.org](http://www.cpaphils.org).

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