

# Press Release



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## German Human Rights Network expresses great concern about impunity, extrajudicial killings, and so-called trumped-up charges

**Action Network Human Rights – Philippines**

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“The culture of impunity regarding serious human rights violations such as extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and torture still remains unbroken in the Philippines” said Elmar Noé, chairperson of the German-based Action Network Human Rights - Philippines (ANHRP), at the end of a visit to the country.

A delegation of the ANHRP, representing seven major German Church and Civil Society Organizations visited the Philippines from February 10 to 14. The delegation met with victims of human rights violations, human rights defenders, partner organizations from the civil society, church leaders, representatives of the Philippine state authorities, and the Commission on Human Rights.

Members of the delegation expressed their concern about the continuing human rights violations taking place and a lack of progress in ending extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, and torture. They also observed a worrying trend in the increasing number of so-called trumped-up or fabricated charges filed against individual human rights defenders. This development, according to the ANHRP, reflects insufficiencies within the legal system which have to be addressed by the Philippine Government.

Although institutional reforms and legislative action took place in recent years, including the passage of national laws against torture and enforced disappearances, the delegation found that there is not much improvement on the ground. The ANHRP criticized especially that, contrary to the promises of the Aquino administration, in only few cases have perpetrators of human rights violations been successfully prosecuted and convicted.

The Action Network Human Rights - Philippines thus called upon the Government of the Philippines to address the gap between its progressive national laws and ongoing rights violations, particularly those committed by the state security forces. It recommended issuing invitations to the Special Rapporteurs of the United Nations in order to receive an independent assessment of the most pressing issues.

Many of the violations of political and civil human rights happen in the context of economic and social conflicts. The delegation therefore also emphasized the need to address violations of economic, social, and cultural human rights.

The delegation expressed its solidarity with civil society and church organizations as well as peace platforms and lauded their efforts for the protection of human rights. The ANHRP will continue its support to partners in addressing human rights violations on the international level and to raise the voices of the victims.

Delegation members:

- Elmar Noé (MISEREOR)
- Rev Dr. Jochen Motte (United Evangelical Mission)
- Sieglinde Weinbrenner (Brot für die Welt – Protestant Development Service)
- Jan Pingel (philippinenbüro)
- Luca Martin (International Peace Observers Network)
- Johannes Icking (Action Network Human Rights - Philippines)

Members: Amnesty International, Brot für die Welt – Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst, IPON, Misereor, missio, philippinenbüro e.V., Vereinte Evangelische Mission

