



## ENOUGH! STOP VIOLATING WOMEN'S DIGNITY AND BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS!

Enough! This is the cry of every woman feeling the pain of her 26 sisters now in Morong detention who were reportedly tortured and molested. The voice is getting louder, echoing from all corners of the land.

Enough! This is the cry of every wife, daughter, husband, father, child of the 43 health workers who are still detained in Camp Capinpin, Morong, Rizal, despite the lack of evidence that they are “bomb experts” and rebels. The tears well up the demand for their release.

Barely three months of the year's time, gross violations against women have occurred in the Philippines. First was the Ampatuan Massacre in Maguindanao, Mindanao where 21 women were killed and some were even reportedly raped and mutilated. Two of those killed were pregnant.

Seventy days after, 26 women health workers were illegally arrested and reportedly molested. The 26 women are part of the 43 doctors, nurses, and community health workers who were accosted on the 6th of February 2010. Two of the arrested women are pregnant.

To juxtapose the two mentioned cases, we could see the one-sidedness of justice in the Philippines. The perpetrators of the Ampatuan massacre, which claimed 57 lives of innocent civilians, lawyers and journalists, are known as close ally of the Arroyo administration. Though arrested, the prime suspect was treated like a king while in prison. His relatives can visit any time and even his maids could come and go to clean his cell. Despite the damning evidence of heavy ammunitions and firearms collected both from the crimes scenes and from his mansions, he was only accused of “rebellion”, which is a political case.

On the other hand, the 43 health workers, who were attending a training-workshop on first aid/ medical intervention were subjected to harsh interrogation, psychological and physical torture. For the first three days of their captivity, they were held incomunicado and were denied visits from their relatives and lawyers. They were continuously interrogated, threatened bodily harm or actually being beaten while blindfolded and handcuffed for 36 hours. They suffered indignities like having their private parts handled by soldiers when they used the toilet. Even the Supreme Court ruling that the detainees be produced in court were initially ignored by the military. To justify their illegal arrest, the military accused all the 43 as members of the New People's Army, the revolutionary group considered as the nemesis of the government soldiers. Despite the accusation of being rebels, the 43 are not charged with a political offense but with “illegal possession of firearms”, which is a criminal case. The military treatment of the Morong 43 is a gross violation of the newly signed Republic Act 9745 or the Anti-Torture Law of 2009 and the Magna Carta of Women. And yet, the Arroyo government remains mum about the case.

Instead of maltreatment, the healthworkers should be praised and supported for their untiring commitment to serve the poor people in far-flung areas. The ratio of doctors to patients in the Philippines is 1:833. While so many doctors and nurses have left for greener pastures to other countries, the 43 healthworkers have chosen to stay and serve the poor. Many of these community

**FREE**  
the  
**43**



health workers are mothers who volunteer to give their precious time in providing basic healthcare. Perhaps, it is only in the Philippines that being committed to help the poor is considered a rebellious act. And it is only in the Philippines that human rights violators like the two military officers, who led the arrest of the 43 health workers, are being conferred with the Bronze Cross Medal for heroism. Onli in da Pilipins.

How can we not be outraged of the irony of things? While the dignity and human rights of the perpetrators of the Ampatuan massacre are properly observed and protected, the Morong 43 health workers are deprived of their rights? How can we not be furious that the list of human rights violations is getting longer and yet justice remains elusive in this country?

Women deserve a better society. Women deserve a government that respects their dignity and recognizes their potential in nation building. Women are fed up of Arroyo and her soldiers who commit violence with impunity.

And, in this fight, we ask for the support of women's rights advocates all over the world to persuade the Philippine government to free the 43. We urge all feminist organizations around the world to have one collective call: Stop violating women's dignity and basic rights. Enough! *Tama Na! Sobra Na!*

---

### **The JASS Network – Philippines**

#### **Its member organizations and institutions:**

Batis Center for Women  
Babaye Ugma ug Karon-Agusan-Surigao (BUKAS)  
Center for Women's Resources (CWR)  
Cordillera Women's Education Action Research Center (CWEARC)  
GABRIELA  
ILAW, Inc.  
Iloilo Women Center, Inc.  
INNABUYOG  
Kababaihang Asawa ng mga Mangingisda (KAWANGIS) – General Santos  
Lesbians for National Democracy (Lesbond) – Cordillera  
National Network of Agrarian Reform Advocates – Youth Sector (NNARA-Youth)  
Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK)  
Piglas Kababaihan  
Samahan ng mga Maralitang Kababaihang Nagkakaisa (SAMAKANA)  
Suara Bangsamoro  
Sugarworkers' Solidarity – Negros  
Talikala  
Union of Journalist in the Philippines – UP Diliman  
Welga ng Kababaihan  
Workers' Assistance Center  
Women Development Center – Bohol  
Women's Education Development Productivity and Research Organization (WEDPRO)  
Woman Health Philippines  
Women's Legal Bureau (WLB)  
Women's Media Circle  
Women's Studies and Resource Centre (WSRC)

#### **Individuals:**

Dr. Judy Taguiwalo, Phd.  
University of the Philippines – Diliman

Ms. Princess Nemenzo  
Founder and National Coordinator, Woman Health Philippines

Ms. Marivic Raquiza  
Board Member, Just Associates (JASS)

Prof. Marion Jimenez-Tan  
Chairperson, CWR  
Coordinator, Gender Office, University of the Philippines - Diliman

CONTACT INFORMATION  
cwrgrl@gmail.com  
jassnetphil@yahoo.com  
Telefax (632) 920-1373 / 411-2796