

Extrajudicial Assassinations in The Philippines

Opposition members of the Philippine Congress report before Canada's Parliament

By [Global Research](#)

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Filipino legislators ask Canada to help end human rights abuses

OTTAWA – Three Filipino opposition critics in the Philippine Congress are set to report before the House of Commons Subcommittee on International Human Rights on the gross human rights violations in the Philippines.

The human rights abuses include 900 extrajudicial killings and 180 enforced disappearances that have been directly linked to the Philippine military's counterinsurgency program under the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We will call on the subcommittee to recommend to Parliament to review its aid to the Philippines to ensure that no part of it is being used by the Arroyo government in its counterinsurgency program," said Gabriela Women's Party Representative Luz Ilagan.

Canada exports military goods to the Philippines and provides military and police training as part of its efforts to build security relations with foreign countries.

United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions Prof. Philip Alston has linked the extrajudicial killings and other human rights violations to the counterinsurgency program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Despite this finding, the Arroyo administration and military continue to deny responsibility and have not brought even one perpetrator to justice. Last Friday, the Philippine government painted a rosy picture of the human rights situation in the Philippines in its presentation before the UN Human Rights Council during its Universal Periodic Review.

"According to my fellow party member who attended the presentation, it was a totally one-sided report, with a lot of fanfare that lacked substance," said Bayan Muna Party President Satur Ocampo. "Fortunately, not all countries were fooled by the PR stunt. Sixteen countries, including Canada, raised concerns that the Philippine government was not doing enough to stop the human rights violations."

The three legislators attribute the marked reduction of extrajudicial killings to the mounting pressures applied on the Philippine government by the international community and the Filipino people.

“Canada has a precedent of suspending aid to the Marcos dictatorship, particularly in 1984, two years before the dictator’s downfall,” Ocampo said.

The legislators hope Canada will again add its voice to the throngs of international protests against the human rights abuses.

“Canada has earned international respect for promoting peace and human rights,” said Anakpawis Party List Representative Crispin Beltran. “It should distance itself militarily from any foreign government that violates human rights with such blatant impunity.”

Canadian and Filipino-Canadian groups which comprise the Stop the Killings Network “C Canada sponsored the visit of the three legislators as part of its country-wide campaign to raise awareness on the extrajudicial killings in the Philippines.

“Apart from military aid, Canadian investments in mining and development aid may have been linked to militarization and human rights violations in the Philippines,” said STKN spokesperson Bern Jagunos. “It’s appalling to think that Canadian taxes may have contributed to the intimidation, detention, torture and executions of innocent people. Our network demands that the Canadian government disclose to the public how taxpayers’ money have been spent in the Philippines. We also call on our Canadian government to suspend aid to the Philippines pending a full review of its relations with the country.”

The legislators will present their reports to the Commons subcommittee on Tuesday, April 15, 2008, at 1:00 p.m.

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