

COPY OF PROTEST LETTER SENT BY BAYAN-CANADA

April 6, 2009

H.E. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo,
President,
Republic of the Philippines,
Malacanang Palace,
Manila,
Philippines

Your Excellency:

I write to you to urge you to have the charges against 33 trade unionists in Cavite dropped.

The warrants for the arrests of these trade unionists were issued on March 17th at the Municipal Trial Court in Rosario, Cavite. Thirty-one of these trade unionists are members and officers of the Nagkakaisang Manggagawa sa Chong Won (NMCW) and the Kaisahan ng mga Manggagawa sa Phils. Jeon Inc. (KMPJI) and two of the officers belong to Solidarity of Cavite Workers (SCW). The charges of direct assault upon agents of persons in authority and of grave coercion against the trade unionists were made by the Cavite Provincial Prosecutor's Office based on complaints filed on October 12, 2006 by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) police force and the Chong Win management. This prosecutor's office is silent on charges of grave coercion filed by the striking workers against the PEZA police and the management of the Chong Wong Fashion Inc. and the Phils. Jeon Inc. on October 27, 2006. The strike began on September 25, 2006 and lasted nearly a year. It was met with violent attacks, dispersals, and death threats by the PEZA against the striking workers. To date, there has been no real move to resolve the workers' complaints.

Therefore I urge you to have the repression against the trade unions stopped and, again, to drop all charges against the 33 trade unionists in Cavite.

Thank you.

Yours truly,

Peter Kerr
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cc: Mr. Juan Somavia,
Director-General,

International Labor Organization

Ms. Linda Wirth,
Director, International Labor Organization
Sub-regional Office for South-east Asia and the Pacific

Mr. Michihiro Ishibashi,
Senior Specialist on Workers' Activities
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