



ORDRE DES
AVOCATS
DE PARIS

Le Bâtonnier

Adresse postale :
11 place Dauphine
75053 Paris cedex 01
Tél. : 01 44 32 48 10
Fax : 01 44 07 26 74
e-mail : lebatonnier@avocatparis.org

Monsieur H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo
Président de la République
New Executive Building, Malacanang
Palace, JP Laurel St., San Miguel,
Manila 1005,
Philippines
Fax +: +632 736-1010 / 742-1641
/ 929 968

Paris, 31st October 2008,

CCB/ET

Dear President,

I am writing on behalf of the Paris Bar which represents more than 21 000 lawyers. The Paris Bar is deeply concerned about the situation and security of Me Ramigio Saladero Jr, human right lawyer.

We have been informed by The Observatory for the protection of Human Rights Defenders of the arbitrary detention of Atty. Remigio Saladero Jr., a human rights and labour attorney, member of the National Union of Peoples' Lawyers, the chief legal counsel for the trade union alliance Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU) and Board Chairperson of the Pro-Labour Legal Assistant Centre (PLACE), which handles 700 pro-bono cases on labour, human rights, criminal, civil and administrative cases.

According to the information received, on October 23, 2008, members of the Philippines National Police (PNP) from Antipolo city entered Atty. Remigio Saladero's office and showed him a warrant of arrest for multiple murder and multiple frustrated murder cases, which was reportedly issued by Branch 40 of the Mindoro Oriental Regional Trial Court (RTC) in Calapan city, Oriental Mindoro. Said warrant was allegedly defective as it bore a wrong name and was dated back to 2006. Atty. Saladero was then handcuffed and

removed from his office, along with his mobile phone and computers, and taken to Calapan City Provincial Jail. He was officially charged for “multiple murder and multiple frustrated murder cases”, along with 72 other persons.

Atty. Saladero is also facing other judicial proceedings. Following the bombing of a Globe Cellsite in Lemery Batangas on August 2, 2008, the military and Globe Telecoms filed a complaint against 27 leaders and activists from Southern Tagalog Region, including Atty. Saladero, for “conspiracy to commit rebellion, arson and destruction of property”. The investigation is ongoing and Atty. Saladero has not been officially charged yet.

Atty. Saladero remained detained in the Calapan City Provincial Jail.

As a consequence, the Paris Bar would like to express its deepest concern regarding Mr Atty. Saladero detention, which underlines the repressive environment for human rights defenders in Philippines.

On behalf of the Paris Bar, I ask you to guarantee in all circumstances the physical and psychological integrity Atty. Saladero.

My approach is inspired from the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 9, 1998, especially its Article 1, which states:

“Everyone has the right, individually and in association with others, to promote and to strive for the protection and realisation of human rights and fundamental freedoms at the national and international levels”.

Article 12.2, provides:

“The State shall take all necessary measures to ensure the protection by the competent authorities of everyone, individually and in association with others, against any violence, threats, retaliation, de facto or de jure adverse discrimination, pressure or any other arbitrary action as a consequence of his or her legitimate exercise of the rights referred to in the present Declaration”;

I also ask you to release immediately Atty. Saladero. I hope that you will take all necessary measures to ensure that such acts of intimidation against lawyers and human rights defenders do not happen again. I seek your reassurance that you will also provide adequate protection to these human rights defenders.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Charrière-Bournazel', with a stylized, flowing script.

Christian Charrière-Bournazel
Bâtonnier de l'Ordre des avocats de Paris