

Press Release

# Philippines : Workers protest Brunei's labor, LGBT discrimination

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Members of the Partido ng Manggagawa (PM), the Philippine Airlines Employees' Association (PALEA) and groups comprising the labor coalition Nagkaisa picketed the Brunei Embassy this morning as part of an "International Day of Action" in 13 cities across the globe against anti-LGBT laws in Brunei and to protest the anti-labor management of hotels owned by the Sultan Bolkiah.

PM chair Renato Magtubo averred that "We call for the repeal of the discriminatory law in Brunei and recognition of unions in the hotels owned by Sultan Bolkiah. Workers demand respect for labor and civil rights across ASEAN countries not just economic integration which will commence next year. ASEAN integration is iniquitous if only involves liberalization of trade in good and services and not standardization in adherence of universal human and labor rights."

The day of action is timed for the 45th anniversary of the so-called Stonewall uprising which marked the birth of the gay movement for civil rights in the US. The international protests are being spearheaded by LGBT groups in the US, the hotel workers union UNITE-HERE and the international union IUF.

Brunei introduced draconian laws which include death by stoning for same-sex activity. In April the campaign went high profile with the support of Hollywood celebrities such as Ellen Degeneres, Jay Leno and even Kim Kardashian. LGBT and labor groups have joined hands to protest the Sultan of Brunei. The sultan owns the Dorchester Collection hotels which have refused to recognize the right to organize of its workers and have fired workers wholesale.

"Workers in the Philippines stand with our brothers and sisters in Brunei who are victims of anti-gay discrimination and in the US who are fighting for a voice in the workplace. Direct action by labor unions, the LGBT community and their allies can win the repeal of the discriminatory laws," asserted Magtubo.

Nagkaisa vowed to continue solidarity actions until the campaign is successful.

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\* <http://www.partidongmanggagawa2001.blogspot.fr>