

After Kintanar's assassination

Letter to Francis Wurtz (GUE/NGL)

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SATUR OCAMPO (BAYAN MUNA)

April 15, 2003

M. FRANCIS WURTZ
Member of the European Parliament
President of GUE/NGL

Dear M. Wurtz,

This is in response to your letter dated March 20, 2003 which we received by email asking our political party Bayan Muna to condemn the killing of former NPA leader Rolando Kintanar and the purported "NPA death lists."

I appreciate your frank position on the matter. I would like, however, to firmly put on record that our political party Bayan Muna is a legal organization separate and distinct from the underground organization of the New People's Army. We have absolutely nothing to do whatsoever with the activities of the NPA. It would thus be most unfair to lump us together with the NPA as the military forces here in the Philippines have been wont to do to the extreme peril of the lives and security of many political activists in our country. In fact, over 20 Bayan Muna members have been killed by suspected government agents in the last two years.

I would like you to know that I attended the wake of Rolly Kintanar at the funeral chapel to extend condolences to his wife and family. The last time I was with him for a long period was in 1991-92 when we became political prisoners at Fort Bonifacio. I was as surprised like many others to read in our national newspapers about the admission of top military and police officers and even by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo herself regarding the extent of his work as a security and intelligence operative for the government.

It is not for us in Bayan Muna to justify Kintanar's killing, even as we would like to understand the reasons which brought this about as we understand the criticisms which have been raised against such an extreme action. It is not for us either to denounce another organization for engaging in a revolutionary struggle which it sees as the most appropriate response to address the social condition unique to the Philippines.

Regarding the purported "death sentences" of the NPA, Philippine newspapers have quoted the CPP spokesperson that **NO** such NPA list exists of those to be killed just because they have left the revolutionary movement. Only those with criminal liabilities to the movement or the people, especially those who have become armed combatants, are made to answer for their offenses. I personally know many other revolutionaries who have left the movement of their own free will and no harm has befallen them. Prominent among them is Mr. Rigoberto Tiglao, now the chief of staff of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who has written sharp criticisms on the CPP and NPA.

There are always many sides to an issue and one should not be too quick to pass judgment without careful and thorough investigation. I suggest that you meet with the NDF negotiating panel based in Utrecht and give them a fair chance to present the other side of the issue. Their personnel there in Europe can help explain the position of the CPP-NPA that the ostensible "NPA hit list" is but a false claim of the military and other detractors of the CPP and NPA intended to stir confusion and paranoia to discredit and isolate these organizations.

M. Wurtz, I sincerely hope the Kintanar killing will not be a stumbling block to firming up the solidarity ties that we have initiated between our organizations. We in Bayan Muna very much appreciate every assistance that you have extended us in many ways, and we look forward to closer cooperation with the GUE/NGL.

It would be most unfortunate if this incident would affect the relations we have already begun at this crucial time when links between various progressive organizations across the globe should all the more be strengthened, especially in unified response to the bogey of "terrorism" that is being used by the United States to divide the world's peoples.

I would like to use this opportunity to reiterate the invitation of my congressional office and Bayan Muna for you to come over to the Philippines for a visit. We would gladly welcome and host the GUE/NGL delegation.

I appreciate this frank and open exchange of views about issues of concern to either of our organizations. I really hope to see you again soon.

Very truly yours,

Rep. SATUR C. OCAMPO