

After Kintanar's assassination

# Meeting the CPP-NDF in the European Parliament

A letter

Friday 4 April 2003, by [ROUSSET Pierre](#) (Date first published: 4 April 2003).

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Dear friends in the Philippines,

The NDF in Europe asked to meet our European Parliamentary Group after it reacted strongly to the assassination of Kintanar. This meeting occurred Monday March 31, 2003. Our group (GUE/NGL) was represented by Stellan Hermansson (Deputy-Secretary General) (Stellan is from the Swedish Left Party) and myself. Fidel Agcaoili and Grace represented the NDF side. The meeting went on for two hours. It may be useful for me to give you a summary of what was said.

**1. THE GUE/NGL.** First, a word on the GUE/NGL. The European United Left/Nordic Green Left is a group in the European Parliament with 49 MEPs coming from 10 countries, with 15 political parties and some few more political "entities". As you can see from these figures, it is a left pluralistic group: several countries are represented by more than one party (especially France, Italy and Greece).

The GUE/NGL has been very active in fighting against the "terrorist list" initiated by the US after September 11. It fought against this policy as a whole and took concretely the defense of a number of individuals or organizations threatened to be listed in it by the European Union. In that framework, it acted strongly in defense of Joma Sison and the CPP.

The GUE/NGL was very chocked by the killing of Kintanar, what it revealed and what consequences it could have. This assassination created a situation in which it became impossible for the concerned MEPs to continue the defense campaign as if nothing had happened. The group maintains its political stand against the "terrorist list". But it decided to suspend all planed initiatives in defense of Joma and the CPP until they condemn Kintanar's assassination.

The president of the group, Francis Wurtz, also sent a letter to Satur (Bayan Muna has been received by the group in the framework of the defense campaign). In this letter, he informed Bayan Muna that our group strongly condemns the assassination, asks for our partners in the Philippines to do the same and states that the CPP should publicly lift forever all "death sentences" threatening its former members.

**2.** It is in that context that the NDF asked to meet the GUE/NGL group. The first and obvious purpose of this meeting was for them to check if our group could modify its decision concerning Joma and the CPP. With this in mind, they distributed a sanitized, expurgated version of Rosal's statements. They insisted that there has never been any death sentence pronounced because the NDF abide to juridical Anglo-Saxon laws and no condemnation in abstentia is then possible. Grace was very adamant on that. Kintanar was to be arrested and brought to a people's court;

unfortunately, he was armed and could not be arrested...

What I found amazing (and chilling) is that Fidel and Grace seemed absolutely unable to understand the present world. They wanted to answer the concerns of a Parliamentary group, of MEPs and of a broad range of Left Parties. Stellan did his best to explain to them how these people and organizations can view such assassinations as those perpetuated by the CPP. Nevertheless, they went on speaking at length of "people's courts", "due process", the possibility to put on trial other "criminals" in the coming future (to begin with Ric, I'll come on this later). They were giving a terrible image of themselves and were apparently unaware of it. They were also totally unable to discuss politics, beyond principles: the political implications of their acts, the political effect of Kintanar's assassination.

One can understand that the Tiamzons have some difficulties in understanding from their NPA camps today's world. But Fidel, Grace, Joma and others have been living in Europe for decades. And it seems that they are still convinced that normal MEPs will happily accept the CPP's notion (and practice) of "people's court", "revolutionary justice", etc.

**3.** My guess is that they got my Letter of Concern and were answering a number of arguments or data it contains (for example, they had a ready explanation for the fact that Pepe Luneta -expelled, daw- was adviser on Human Rights to the NDF delegation). But we also feel that they used this meeting to increase the pressure on a number of persons. They knew we'd inform those mentioned of the threat. So, we were used to convey this threat, an untasty role given to us, indeed.

The list of bad elements responsible for crimes was long (Rolly, Benjie, Miel, Tabara, Takyō, and a number of others). But the charges were mostly directed at Ric. They mentioned several times that a people's court could be called on his case. Remember they were speaking through us to MEPs and the president of the GUE/NGL! Why then did they not keep as much quiet as possible on Ric, a legal leader of Akbayan, a broad Left party? They cannot be stupid to the point of ignoring that normal MPs, political parties and activists cannot accept such threat.

Stellan made a point, at the end of the meeting, to ask several times if they can guarantee that the NPA will not kill Ric. They first refused to answer by "yes" or "no". They tried to avoid answering by saying that others can kill him and later put the blame on the CPP. But Stellan insisted, and Fidel finally repeated his ultimate argument: if a people's court is called to judge Ric, he will have to be arrested. If he is not armed, then he will not be killed (thanks!). Just arrested. The people's court will judge him. And justice will be done.

It made Stellan and I sick to listen to them, I must say.

The conclusion presented by Stellan was that we shall transmit to our Group's President what they told us and the documents they gave us, but that there was obviously very little chance that he would modify his position after what we heard.

**4.** How to understand the message? I guess (and hope) that it does not necessarily mean that Ric is in immediate danger. In fact, others not mentioned may be much more in danger than Ric (especially some underground ones). But I guess that mentioning Ric in such a way shows how much that the killing of Kintanar was a political decision, an act of terror directed against the whole Filipino plural Left. It indicates that the underground 1992 and 1997 splits from the CPP are not any more the only targets. As mentioned in my Letter of Concern, it is how I understand the fact that they identified Ric as Akbayan head in Rosal's statements. And it is why I write you about this: it becomes everybody's concern.

Fidel said also something which I understood as a softly formulated small threat on me: “We know for long who you are and what is your movement and what you have been at in the Philippines since the early 1980s” (one mistake: he should have said “from the late 1970s”). I guess that I can expect quite a violent character killing campaign against me. As it has already been the case in the 1980s. Memories...

4. The meeting was also an occasion for Fidel and Grace to repeat the standard arguments of the CPP: Kintanar became (or was?) an agent who tried to assassinate Joma in 2000; to kill him was an act of war. There is no “death list”. The CPP never sentenced to death any of its former comrades and never killed any of them in the provinces (or only in retaliation after they were themselves attacked). Crimes committed (twenty years ago) against the party (stealing money, etc.) or against the people (purges) will have to be paid for. The CPP already did all what it could and should to repair the crimes committed during the purges. Etc.

It gives an idea to what arguments we’ll have to answer internationally. If you have any more concrete data on such matters, it will help.

Again, something striking. The argument they insisted most on was that there has been no death sentence (for the juridical reasons mentioned above). This was probably because Francis Wurtz, in his letter to Satur, notes that Kintanar (and others) was first sentenced to death in 1993-1994 and ask the CPP to lift all remaining death sentences. But they should have known that we have the original version of Rosal’s statements, and not only the expurgated version they gave us. And in these statements, Rosal describes at length the process of “people’s court” leading to death sentences in abstentia (I pasted below some of these quotes...).

Why to lie so obviously? It destroys the credibility of all what they say. Maybe they are too accustomed to relate with people not daring to ask questions and to check facts for themselves...

This meeting has confirmed my worst worries, unfortunately.

Hoping nevertheless the best to all of you,

Lets fight for a better world, in the Left too!

Pierre

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## **ROSAL ON DEATH PENALTY:**

*(Just think of a Member of European Parliament reading such literature!)*

« The first cases against Kintanar were filed before the people’s court in 1993. All things considered, the gravity of his cases and criminal accountabilities to the people and the revolutionary movement up to that time were sufficient bases to impose the maximum penalty.

« The Party and the revolutionary movement have a policy where, during the trial or event afterwards, those who show genuine remorse and rectify their errors are granted amnesty. This policy was applied on all those who betrayed the Party and the revolutionary movement, including Kintanar. But he showed not an iota of remorse not did he make any form of rectification. The number of cases filled against him in relation to his criminal and counterrevolutionary activities

continuously grew. In the review of his case conducted by a special people's court in 2002, weight was given to new evidence proving that Kintanar had turned into a rabid criminal and counterrevolutionary (...).

« Having proven that he committed capital crimes, he was sentenced by the special people's court to receive the maximum penalty. Aside from this, as a military intelligence operative (...) he had become a legitimate military target in accordance with the international rules of war as stipulated in Section II, Article 43 of Protocol I of Geneva Agreements (1949) (...).

« I have clarified in my previous statements that the maximum penalty within the framework of the revolutionary justice system is reserved only for persons who have been found guilty beyond reasonable doubt of capital crimes against the people and the revolutionary movement. These are carefully decided and repeatedly reviewed by the people's court to ensure the decision correctness. I have also recently clarified that only a handful of the most rabid criminal and counterrevolutionary elements have been sentenced to receive the maximum penalty.

« But the revolutionary justice system that is so thorough, scientific, just and humane is being distortly portrayed by Malacañang [the presidential palace], the AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines] and psywar manufacturers as arbitrary and worthless »

\* Gregario « Ka. Roger » Rosal, Spokesperson, Communist Party of the Philippines, « On Issues Arising From Kintanar's Punishment », February 7, 2003.