



## Ecumenical Voice for Human Rights and Peace in the Philippines (EcuVoice)

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Press Statement

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### **Horrendous Killings on the day of the Lord**

The Ecumenical Voice for Human Rights and Peace in the Philippines (EcuVoice) joins all genuine peace advocates and deplore in highest terms the killings in Southern Tagalog. The killing of nine activists and the arrest of six other persons in the region is most foul, not only atrocious but also a treacherous assault on human rights and the rule of law.

The killings of Dumagat indigenous people Puroy de la Cruz and Randy de la Cruz, particularly hits close to home as Sta. Inez is a mission area. Equally appalling is the killing of Manny Asuncion at the office of EcuVoice Convening organization - Workers' Assistance Center (WAC), an apostolate for workers established by the late Fr. Joe Dizon. This escalation of abuses is saddening. What took place on Sunday is another dangerous precedent of police operation against 'communist terrorist groups'. These dubious police operations, 'tokhang-style,' in the state's counterinsurgency operations against unarmed activists is a fatal combination that leads to more human rights violations.

Even as we express grief and solidarity with the families and communities of the victims, we strive harder to promote and defend human rights in all platforms and work for the achievement of peace based on justice. The Gospel and history will tell us that there will be a reckoning for human rights abusers and violators.

EcuVoice joins the call to stop the killings. We enjoin our friends and partners in the international community - our ecumenical family - to join us in denouncing this latest travesty and push the UN Human Rights Council for an independent investigation on the various human rights violations. ###

Reference:

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