

**United Methodist Philippine Reunion**  
**Lake Junaluska, North Carolina**  
**August 4 - 7, 2006**

**A Statement of Concern**

To: The Government of the Republic of the Philippines  
The Government of the United States of America  
The Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church  
The Board of Church and Society of the United Methodist Church

We speak as church people and as U.S. citizens. We are a gathering of approximately sixty current or former church workers in the Philippines representing many years of experience working with the Filipino people. We wish to add our voices to those already speaking out about the tragic events presently occurring in the Philippines. We do so on the basis of our biblical and theological convictions.

The eminently credible statements of concern by church councils and leaders, including the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, a recent Human Rights delegation of the World Council of Churches and the Christian Conference of Asia, The United Church of Christ in the Philippines, a high-level delegation of top Methodist leaders from Europe, Africa, and Russia, as well as statements by bishops of The United Methodist Church and United Church of Christ in the Philippines, have made us painfully aware of the extra-judicial killings, illegal detention and even torture of persons who have been critical of the government in its failure to address poverty, corruption, and the abuse of power. We wish to express our profound sympathy for the victims of these abuses and their families.

We acknowledge that the complex legacy of colonialism has contributed to many of the ubiquitous issues of poverty and injustice in the Philippines.

We express our appreciation for the courageous Filipino church leaders who continue to speak prophetically to this tragic crisis at great personal risk. We pledge to them our advocacy and our prayers.

We call upon the Philippine government to investigate the extrajudicial killings and illegal detentions immediately, seriously, and impartially; to avoid labeling those working for economic justice, particularly among the poor, as "subversives;" and to expose the linkages between the current abuses and the police or the military.

We call upon the United States government to bring pressure to bear upon authorities in the Philippines to respect civil liberties and human rights and to enforce effective policing and judicial process; and to use its influence to prevent the imposition of martial rule or other severe means which would hinder democratic process in addressing abuses. We wonder to what extent arms, ammunition, training, and encouragement given in our name and with our tax money are exacerbating this crisis.

And, finally, we ask the general agencies and decision-making bodies of The United Methodist church, particularly the General Board of Global Ministries and the General Board of Church and Society to make this an utmost priority of concern, using the resources of their offices to fulfill the biblical and church mandates which call us to address this tragedy.

The President, Republic of the Philippines  
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The President of the United States of America  
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