

**41st regular session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 2: General debate on the High Commissioner's update**

**Oral statement delivered by Rose Trajano
On behalf of Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA), Franciscans
International, and the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)**

Tuesday, 25 June 2019

Mr President,

FORUM-ASIA, Franciscans International and FIDH welcome the High Commissioner's update. We share her concerns on "the extraordinarily high number of deaths - and persistent reports of extrajudicial killings" in the Philippines' ongoing 'war on drugs'. The government's confirmed number of 5,425 deaths, and the Commission on Human Rights' estimate of over 27,000 are both alarming. A vast majority of the killings remain unresolved due to the lack of independent investigations at the domestic level, and except in a few cases, none of the alleged perpetrators have been criminally prosecuted. The government has taken steps to evade international accountability by withdrawing from the ICC and attacking Special Procedures mandate holders. We call on the Council to adopt a resolution to establish an independent international investigation on these killings. We call on the government of the Philippines to end its 'war on drugs', and all forms of incitement to killings.

We are further concerned by threats and attacks against human rights defenders, journalists, critics and opposition politicians, efforts to constrict the work of civil society, including through mandating invasive registration and financial procedures, and recent threats to restrict access to foreign funding. Inflammatory statements by senior government officials including the president, and disinformation campaigns by the government to discredit and stigmatise human rights defenders, and activists have compromised their safety and security. We call on the Council to mandate the OHCHR to monitor the human rights situation in the Philippines, including threats to freedoms of expression, assembly and association and human rights defenders, and report on this to the Council. We call on the Philippines to cooperate with the Council and its mechanisms, and to end all forms of intimidation and reprisals against those working on human rights.

Thank you.