

[Philippines | Protect human rights defenders, stop killing them!](#)

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Zara Alvarez, 39, spent most of her life fighting so that farmers and workers could enjoy their basic rights. A passionate, selfless and dedicated human rights defender and former education director of the Philippines-based human rights organisation Karapatan, she died on 17 August after being shot fatally in Negros. Alvarez is the 13th member of Karapatan to be killed following the election of President Rodrigo Duterte.



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We stand in solidarity with our partner [@karapatan](#) in deep grief and indignation about human rights defender Zara Alvarez' extrajudicial killing yesterday.

[karapatan.org/karapatan+cond...](#)

Since President Duterte's election in May 2016, human rights defenders in the Philippines have been subject to increased violence and killings, the [criminal justice system is abused](#) and laws, such as the [Anti-Terrorism law](#) are being used to grant the Government excessive and unchecked powers to silence and suppress them.

In the prevailing [climate of impunity and attacks against human rights defenders](#), human rights organisations in the country continue to lobby for the passage of a [law for the recognition and protection of human rights defenders](#). That, if passed, would constitute a significant development for their protection.



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How can it be that courageous people who work to realise our common vision of a better world for all continue to be killed by State and non-State actors in the [#Philippines](#) ?

'We urge the government of the Philippines to end the targeting of human rights defenders, whose work is crucial to the safeguarding and protection of human rights in the Philippines', said ISHR's Tess McEvoy. 'Together with UN Special Procedures and [over 500 human rights advocates](#) we strongly condemn these killings and echo the call for an independent investigation mechanism into the human rights situation in the Philippines.'



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Together with national civil society and UN Special Procedures, we urge for an independent investigation mechanism into the human rights situation in the [#Philippines](#)

Contact: Tess McEvoy, t.mcevoy@ishr.ch

Photo: Cristina Palabay/Facebook

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