

[Sample letter](#)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to you to register my concern on the continued detention of Riel Custodio, Michael Masayes, Axel Pinpin, Aristides Sarmiento and Enrico Ybañez, collectively known as the Tagaytay 5, and the improper treatment accorded them while still in detention.

It has come to our knowledge that Custodio, Masayes, Pinpin, Sarmiento and Ybañez have been abducted by elements of the Philippine National Police and the Navy Intelligence Security Force on 28 April 2006 on allegations that they are about to carry out a plot to destabilize the national government. I understand that they were subjected to mental and physical torture, were interrogated without aid of counsel nor were advised of their constitutional and civil rights, and were held in *incommunicado* detention until 05 May 2006 when they were presented and charged with rebellion at the Tagaytay City Regional Trial Court Branch 18 presided over by Judge Edwin G. Larida, Jr.

I have learned that they remain in prison and that charges against them have not been dropped nor dismissed even as the Tagaytay 5 manifested that they have been wrongfully and unlawfully arrested and were denied due process. It has also come to my attention that while in prison, their visitation rights are greatly restricted, their facility to proper and adequate medical attention restrained, and their access of recreation facilities utterly denied even after the detainees and their relatives have called the attention of the court and dialogued with police authorities on the matter.

I have also learned that Custodio, Pinpin and Sarmiento were organizers and consultants of the Kalipunan ng mga Magsasaka sa Kabite (Kamagsasaka-Ka) and other peasant and farm workers organizations in Cavite and Batangas, provinces south of Manila, while Masayes and Ybañez were farmers and ordinary residents of Tagaytay City, Cavite who were driving the former to their destination in Batangas when forcibly taken.

I am gravely concerned about such political repression and disregard of due process and civil rights against peasant and political activists and organizers in the Philippines.

I strongly believe and urge you to take immediate action to effect justice and freedom for the Tagaytay 5 and to ensure that their civil and democratic rights are observed.

Specifically, I urge you to:

1. take the necessary step towards the withdrawal of charges against Custodio, Masayes, Pinpin, Sarmiento and Ybañez and their release from prison
2. while their release is being processed, that their rights as detainees be properly observed.

Sincerely,