

INSERT ORGANISATIONAL LOGO (if relevant)

INSERT NAME OF FOREIGN MINISTER AND OFFICIALS

INSERT DATE

**RE: Massacre in the Philippines – One Year On**

Dear Honourable Minister,

I am writing as [insert your title], on behalf of all journalists in our country, to urge you to do everything in your power to press the Government of the Philippines to ensure the perpetrators of the massacre of a confirmed 58 people in the southern Philippines on November 23, 2009, are brought to justice.

Among the group murdered in Ampatuan town, Maguindanao province, Mindanao, were 32 journalists and media workers. It is the worst mass killing of journalists and media workers ever recorded.

As an affiliate of the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), which represents 600,000 journalists in 125 countries, we are fully aware of the dangers our colleagues in the Philippines have long faced.

Under the administration of former president Gloria Arroyo, the Philippines was notorious as one of the most dangerous places in the world for media personnel. Before the 2009 massacre, at least 75 journalists were murdered during the administration's nine-year tenure, with only four convictions recorded for media killings through this time.

The election of Benigno Aquino in May 2010 presented an opportunity to end the culture of impunity in the Philippines. The change of government led the IFJ and its affiliate, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), to present a 13-point Action Plan to President Aquino outlining the steps that needed to be taken to achieve positive change (see <http://asiapacific.ifj.org/en/articles/ifj-action-plan-for-president-aquino-to-end-impunity-in-the-philippines> ).

However, the slow progress in the massacre trials, continuing attacks and intimidation of media personnel across the Philippines, and the murders of four journalists since the massacre underscore the fact that the Aquino administration has a long way to go to address insecurity for media workers.

It is essential therefore that the international community and our own Government take a strong stand to condemn violence against the media in the Philippines, and exert every effort to assist the Aquino administration to instigate concrete actions to end the culture of impunity and ensure justice is done, and seen to be done.

We respectfully urge you to express our country's horror at the Ampatuan outrage in the strongest possible terms, noting that the international community of journalists will be uniting in a Global Day of Action on November 23, 2010, to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the massacre in solidarity with our colleagues in the Philippines.

Yours Sincerely,

**INSERT NAME AND CONTACT DETAILS FOR YOUR ORGANISATION**