



# Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD)

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**AFAD CONDEMNS THE ASSASSINATION OF FR. MARCELINO PAEZ,**

**DEMANDS TO BRING THE PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE!**

The Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances (AFAD), a regional human rights federation based in the Philippines, strongly condemns the brutal assassination of Fr. Marcelino Paez of the Catholic Diocese of San Jose in Nueva Ecija. Reports say that Fr. Paez was gunned down by unidentified men in Jaen, Nueva Ecija on Monday evening, 4 December 2017.

He died in a hospital nearby San Leonardo where he was taken after being ambushed by the still unidentified assailants.

AFAD is one with the whole human rights community in condemning this abomination and travesty of justice. Its members in 12 Asian countries demand for immediate truth and justice and will never allow this act to be left unresolved and become another manifestation of glaring impunity in a country that boasts of itself of being democratic.

Fr. Marcelino Paez was a devout human rights defender. He stood at the forefront in promoting social issues, particularly the welfare of farmers and the poor. His track record shows his incontestable love for upholding human rights, whereas he served in the different parishes of the Diocese of San Jose for 30 years and was former head of the diocese's Office for Justice and Peace and was a member of its Social Action Commission.

In the 1980s, he was also a leader of the Central Luzon Alliance for a Sovereign Philippines, which campaigned for the removal of the US military bases.

The morning before he was assassinated, Fr. Paez assisted in facilitating the release of political prisoner, Rommel Tucay who was detained at a jail in Cabanatuan City.

Significant to note is that his death occurred barely a week before the 69<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. His death is a huge loss in the fight for defending our rights in the country. However, this should not break the ranks of Church people and other human rights defenders who are upholding the rights of the poor, the deprived and the oppressed. Instead, it must strengthen our clamor for truth and justice for all victims of human rights violations.

The perpetrator and his masters have not silenced a just man just because they have killed him. One death is one too much. We will not stop until the perpetrators are brought to justice.

**JUSTICE FOR FR. PAEZ!**

**JUSTICE FOR ALL VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS!**

**NO TO THE PERSECUTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS!**



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END STATE-SPONSORED KILLINGS!

END IMPUNITY NOW!

Signed by,

**KHURRAM PARVEZ**  
Chairperson

**MARY AILEEN D. BACALSO**  
Secretary-General