



# PAMBANSANG SAMAHAN NG MGA NARS NG PILIPINAS, INC.

(PHILIPPINE NURSES ASSOCIATION, INC.)  
Member, INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF NURSES

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## JUSTICE FOR FLORENCE! JUSTICE FOR THE MORONG 43! JUSTICE FOR THE FILIPINO PEOPLE!

### *Statement of the **Philippine Nurses' Association** on the occasion of Human Rights Day (December 2010)*

In commemoration of Human Rights' Day, we remember "Florence," the trainee nurse rape-victim whose perpetrators are still at large; the Morong 43, the health workers wrongfully arrested and continue to be illegally detained 9 months running now; and the poor communities consequently deprived of vital and essential services that "Florence" and the 43 health workers had quietly and dedicatedly rendered until they were unjustly waylaid: They are all victims of human rights violations.

The Philippine Nurses Association continues to pursue the rape case of "Florence" since "Florence" contrary to reports has not fully recovered yet to be able to identify her rapist/s. And even as Justice Secretary de Lima vowed full legal support, the wheels of justice grind exceedingly slow that the principal suspect mocks it by flaunting his power to evade investigation. Meantime, "Florence's" family members are unable to work for fear of their safety. Their lives have unjustly been disrupted.

We also join the demand for the immediate release of the Morong 43 whose arrest even President Noy-noy acknowledged to be "fruit of a poisonous tree." The clamor for the release of the 43 health workers has reverberated through international shores from people and organizations strongly convinced of the injustice and the gross violation of the health workers' human rights, still P-noy chose to take a "hands-off" stance. **In this case, he is reneging from his duty as the highest leader of the land to ensure that an injustice is rectified. The rectification of "evidence wrongly gotten" and illegal arrest is the immediate unconditional release of the 43 health workers.**

As duty-bearers, we are morally bound to pursue the cause of the Morong 43 and the rape-case of trainee-nurse "Florence" because they serve as definitive landmarks in the practice of the service profession. The 43 health workers including a fellow nurse, Gary Liberal, have given up much in material gain and personal comfort in the course of service, yet, they were persecuted by the very State that has miserably failed in its mandate to provide for the health needs of its people.

As for “Florence,” the heinous crime committed against her person was as much a crime against the nursing profession. Her fate seemed to show the ominous truth that the image of the “nurse”, as it were, no longer carries as much respectability and nobility.

“Florence”, Gary and the rest of the Morong 43 sought not glory, money nor fame but just the simple fulfillment of helping others, especially those who are most in need of health service. They were just ordinary people who did extra-ordinary deeds as they trodded through the “straight moral path” despite overwhelming roadblocks.

On the occasion of Human Rights Day, we hail the heroism of Florence, Gary and the rest of the Morong 43 whom society and the State have penalized instead of rewarded. We remember and commend too, other nurses and health workers who continue to render vital service to the Filipino people despite the enormous economic and social challenges, in the form of low wages and poor worklife conditions and other exploitative forms of treatment, including hazards to personal safety.

*ALL NURSES ARE INVITED TO JOIN THE HUMAN RIGHTS’ MARCH-RALLY TO MENDIOLA, DECEMBER 2, 2010, 9:30 A.M. ASSEMBLY IN FRONT OF UST AND RAISE ANEW OUR CALLS. Please wear white uniform.*

**JUSTICE FOR FLORENCE NOW! FREE THE 43 HEALTH WORKERS NOW!**

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**Note:** PNA fund-raising, “Justice for Florence”, is on-going. Those wishing to donate may do the ff:

1. Deposit donation to: Philippine Nurses Association, Inc.  
Banco De Oro-Paco Branch  
CA#1658012348

Send name of donor & contact number and bank deposit slip to fax no. 5251596 to get PNA acknowledgement receipt.

2. For donations from abroad, please deposit to:

Philippine Nurses Association Inc.  
Philippine National Bank (PNB) – PGH Branch  
Dollar Account No. 200-701130-2  
Swift No. PNB MPHMM

To get official receipt, scan deposit slip and e-mail: [maris\\_presto@yahoo.com.ph](mailto:maris_presto@yahoo.com.ph)

3. For further queries, call PNA at (02) 536-1888; (02) 400-4430 and look for Ms. Maristela P. Abenojar, Executive Director or Ms. Emy Tagle, Manager for Programs & Development.