

Menardo I. Guevarra
Secretary, Department of Justice,
DOJ Building, Padre Faura Street,
Ermita, Manila,
1000, Philippines
Email: communications@doj.gov.ph

Dear Secretary Guevarra:

I am writing to draw your attention to the plight of the hundreds of workers of Japanese-owned Sumitomo Fruit Corp. (Sumifru). Since 27 November 2018, they have been staying at makeshift camps in Manila to protest the working conditions on Sumifru's plantations. Workers claim that Sumifru has refused to provide government-mandated wages and other benefits as well as security of tenure, despite a court order in their favour.

Since declaring a strike on 1 October 2018, the workers have experienced threats and attacks. As a result of the violence, one member, Danny Boy Bautista, was killed on 31 October 2018. Further to the violence, the union office and houses of some of their members were burned down on 15 December 2018. The workers continue to experience threats up to now and remain at risk as they carry out their peaceful protests.

I urge your office to act swiftly to ensure the workers' safety. Specifically, I urge you to:

- Immediately conduct a prompt, thorough and impartial investigation into the attacks against workers and the murder of a union member, and bring suspected perpetrators to justice according to international fair trial standards;
- Uphold and protect the safety of workers carrying out their strike, by taking measures to guarantee their right to freedom of expression and assembly.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,