



Communication and Information Sector

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Organisation
des Nations Unies
pour l'éducation,
la science et la culture

Organización
de las Naciones Unidas
para la Educación,
la Ciencia y la Cultura

Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للترقية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

To all the organizational and individual
signatories of the letter

24 September 2020

Ref.: CI/FEJ/2020/CM6036

Dear signatories,

I wish to thank for your letter of 12 September concerning the classification of the cases of the massacre in the Philippines, that killed 32 journalists in 2009, in the framework of the UNESCO's Observatory of killed journalists.

UNESCO recognizes the vital efforts of civil society in promoting the safety of journalists in the Philippines and worldwide. UNESCO has worked on many occasions with civil society actors in the Philippines on activities related to press freedom, freedom of expression and safety of journalists and highly appreciates this cooperation. In particular, UNESCO welcomes the interactions with the families of the victims and their representatives in which the Organization has had the honour to be involved. We also note that, for the due process of law to be preserved in line with international human rights standards, their voices should be taken into account.

UNESCO's annual request to Member States to submit information regarding judicial follow-up on the killings of journalists, and the following record by the Organization in the UNESCO Observatory of killed journalists, is one of UNESCO's principal mechanisms aimed at monitoring impunity for crimes against journalists.

UNESCO learned in early September 2020 that, in this particular case, appeals have been launched. Based on this new information, the legal cases concerned will, therefore, be maintained as "ongoing/unresolved" in the UNESCO Observatory of killed journalists, as well as in the upcoming "Director-General's Report on Safety of Journalists and the Danger of Impunity" until such a moment when a final verdict is reached by the Philippine judicial system.

I remain at your disposal should you have any further questions concerning this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Xing Qu
Deputy Director-General
Assistant Director-General for
Communication and Information a.i.