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**KILLINGS OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN THE PHILIPPINES: AN ANALYSIS
OF NON-ADVOCACY PROTECTION TECHNIQUES**

Abstract

The continuously worrying situation of Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) in the Philippines and a lack of governmental efforts to address the human rights violations of killings on HRDs went from bad to worse under the ongoing anti-drug campaign ‘War on Drugs’ by the Philippine Government. Due to this, it became more important for activists to also focus on protection techniques which do not rely on the government’s compliance to advocacy efforts. These techniques, which are neither contradicting nor undermining advocacy work, can be summarized under the term Non-Advocacy Protection Techniques (NAPTs). NAPTs can be the HRDs’ efforts in reducing the own vulnerability by changing certain habits. Furthermore, there exists institutionalized support techniques, such as HRDs trainings, protection grants and others offered by national and international organizations like the European Union (EU) or Front Line Defenders. The research analyzed the usage of NAPTs by Philippine HRDs to identify possible gaps between the intended usage of NAPTs by international organizations and their adoption in the Philippines. Conducting interviews with colleagues and relatives of the HRDs who were killed, as well gathering data from experts in this field, disclosed that a lack of awareness towards these international institutionalized techniques and

a misinterpretation of the credibility of life threats were crucial for the non-usage of NAPT's by the activists. The paper argues that cooperation projects between international and domestic organizations, facilitating defender's trainings on the grassroots level, might help to tackle these problems and thereby enhance the usage of NAPT's and eventually protect the defenders in the Philippines.

Key words: Human Rights Defender, Protection Techniques, Philippines, Killings, NAPT's

I. Introduction and Methodology

The recent review of the Philippines in the Universal Periodic Review unfolded an insight in the countries worsening human rights situation under the new elected President Rodrigo Duterte, especially effecting vulnerable and resisting groups, such as Human Rights Defenders (HRDs). The President elected in May 2016, started introducing a rigid anti-drug campaign, paying no respect to human rights, by promoting merciless killings on people who are alleged drug users or pushers. Claiming these proceedings an appropriate solution to the country's drug problem, the campaign was leading to more than 7,000 killings in the first 7 months of its implementation (Duterte 2017, Amnesty International 2017, p. 11). This environment of killings paired with a culture of impunity for perpetrators is not "just" affecting alleged drug users and pushers but also HRDs, especially if criticizing the President for the commitment of this crime against humanity (Human Rights Watch [HRW] 2017, pp. 86-93; United Nations General Assembly 2017, para. 40). Duterte stated himself: "*I will include you [human rights activists] because you are the reason why their numbers [of drug users] swell*" (HRW 2017, p. 35). Therefore is the number of killings on HRDs currently reaching a spate, victimizing 15 people in the first 3 months of 2017, what makes the Philippines the most dangerous country for HRDs outside America (Front Line Defenders 2017). From such a dangerous situation arises an according urgent need for protection of the defenders' lives.

Protection for HRDs can play out in different ways, whereby advocacy is probably the most common attempt. One characteristic of advocacy for the protection of human rights defenders is the necessity to trust in the eventual fulfilment of the state's obligations, being the main duty bearer for the protection of human rights defenders (United Nations General Assembly 1999, p. 3). Regarding the circumstances in the Philippines, where the government is deeply involved in the killings of HRDs, an additional need for protection next to advocacy arises. This does not entail a loss of importance of advocacy attempts, as nothing but an influence on the decision-making

instances will help to improve the situation of activists in a long run. But being unforeseeable when and how this influence might show effects for the defenders, the usage of protection techniques which are not based on advocacy, but on an immediate protection initiated by the HRDs, emerges next to advocacy needs. This research paper introduces the term Non-Advocacy Protection Techniques (NAPTs) to precisely describe these certain techniques used by HRDs for personal protection without straining advocacy. Being used as an “umbrella term” for all protection attempts by HRDs which do not rely on advocacy, the list of different practices and support mechanisms to protect HRDs that fit under the terminology NAPTs is non-ending. Conclusively the research identified a distinction between different protection techniques of HRDs, separating the approaches which rely on advocacy towards the duty bearer from the ones which can be strained by the HRD her- or himself without the compliance of a government, subsequently called Non-Advocacy Protection Techniques.

Using an exploratory multiple-case research design, the primary data collection of this research was based on interviews with colleagues and relatives of HRDs who have been killed as well as data from experts of the Delegation of the European Union (EU) to the Philippines, Front Line Defenders and the Medical Action Group Philippines. The paper thereby adopts the term HRDs as characterized by the UN and largely acknowledged in the field of academe by setting the requirements of accepting the universality of human rights whilst defending a human right peacefully (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights 2004, p. 8-10). Using single cases of killings on HRDs between 2014 and 2016 as the objects of analysis enables to assess the lack of personal protection in the perspective case. Whereas in cases of successful protection, the protection plan often contains non-advocacy and advocacy based elements, what impedes a distinction of which certain action has caused the success (Conectas Human Rights 2014, p. 370). Based on this design, the research assessed the usage of NAPTs by different killed HRDs. It furthermore analysed the accessibility of institutionalized NAPTs, such as protection manuals, protection/ emergency grants, relocation support and HRD trainings in the Philippines. This theoretical availability of NAPTs and their de facto usage in the regarded cases was compared to identify gaps between the intended usage of institutionalized NAPTs by international organizations and their adoptions by HRDs in the Philippines.

II. Philippine Context

As denoted before, NAPT's include institutionalized measures by organizations supporting HRDs but can also be certain strategies of behaviour, developed by defenders themselves to be less vulnerable towards potential perpetrators. Institutionalized NAPT's are offers for protection support to defenders by certain organizations, such as the EU, Front Line Defenders or Protection International, which are part of the organizations' human rights work and provided as "standardized" tools for the protection of HRDs at risk. Beside these institutionalized measures can all actions of the defenders themselves which are serving the goal of personal protection without straining advocacy be called NAPT's. This shall be portrayed in the following example. Looking at a land rights defender in the Philippines advocating against a forced displacement, the initial human rights goal would be to fulfil the people's rights to their own land (Art. 17 UDHR). This initial advocacy work is opposing the interest of the perpetrator, possibly a company claiming the land or affiliated state authorities. If the perpetrator tries to attack the HRD in order to stop her or him from advocating for the human rights of the people in danger of getting displaced, the government's obligation is to prevent these attack and ensure the human right to life, liberty and security of the defender (Art. 3 UDHR). To claim this protection, the HRD her- or himself, as well as national- or international organizations and supporters might advocate towards the government in a separate advocacy campaign, maybe straining the United Nations (UN) Human Rights Defenders Regime, than the initial land-rights advocacy by the HRD, which might consist of arranging rallies for instance. This process of advocating for the defenders protection might take a long time and requires always a confession by the state authorities but helps to ensure a sustainable personal security for the HRD. NAPT's whereas can apply immediately, being for instance the defender's efforts to avoid surveillance, the instalment of CCTV cameras to discourage offenders, relocation to be non-approachable for the perpetrators, the rewarding of protection grants or the conduction of trainings to learn about protection mechanisms, but they will not change the general circumstance of a dangerous environment for HRDs. NAPT's should therefore rather be regarded as an additional measure to ensure the defender's protection immediately by addressing the threat itself and not the root cause, thereby reducing the vulnerability of the defender independently from the government or perpetrator for a certain period of time.

The UN HRD Protection Regime, created in 1999, is fully advocacy-based. Therefore shortly after its creation, the first international institutionalization of NAPT's was started in 2001

by Front Line Defenders. From then on a broad variety of different international organizations started offering protection support for HRDs in the Philippines, such as the European Instrument of Democratization and Human Rights (EIDHR), Protection International or Forum Asia. On the domestic level, the number of NGOs supporting HRDs in the Philippines is very high and the structures of cooperation and affiliation between them are blur. Just to mention but not to further elaborate is that the Philippine civil society is split into two main groups, the reaffirmist and the rejectionist fraction, emerging from ideological differences after overthrowing the martial-law regime of Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 (Hall 2006, pp. 6-7). This split also explains why there is no single organisation, supporting all HRDs in the Philippines. Having such a broad variety of supporting organizations on national and international level, the question appears why the number of killed HRDs in the Philippines remains still very high.

Reports of diverse organizations confirm the not just recently evolved urgency of HRDs security in the Philippines. From 2003 to 2013 were the Philippines continuously one of the states with the most victims in this field worldwide (ISHR et al. 2016, p. 8). The German NGO “Aktionsbündnis Menschenrechte – Philippinen” (AMP) published statistics and a list confirming at least 147 human rights defenders being killed between May 2012 and September 2016 (2017, p. 8). Therefore the Philippines were ranked, with 33 killings, as the second most dangerous country for human rights defenders worldwide in 2015 by Global Witness (2016, p. 9). This number of killings remained high in the following year, counting 31 killings in 2016 (Front Line Defenders 2016, p. 13). Where the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT) called the active or at least passive involvement of the Philippine authorities in these incidents obvious, the EU went one step further calling official involvement “*evidential*” (OMCT 2009, p. 34; European Parliament 2009, para. G). Eye witnesses link more than two thirds of the regarded incidents to state agents and half of them directly to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) (AMP 2016, p. 3). The problem occurs, once the AFP is involved in killings, that the Philippine National Police seems to be either unwilling or incapable to investigate these cases (OMCT 2009, p. 34). This almost traditional involvement of governmental actors in the killings as well as the culture of impunity develops from bad to worse under the current administration of Rodrigo Duterte. According to this the need for an effective usage of NAPT’s is even more substantial than ever before.

III. Protection techniques of Philippine HRDs

The research was able to observe that the before mentioned institutionalized protection support is still broadly unknown for Philippine HRDs on the grassroots level. Although this is the case, one would be mistaken to believe that defenders on the grassroots level are not using NAPT's. It could be disclosed, that the most commonly used non-institutionalized techniques are everyday habits to reduce the own vulnerability. Unguided, or even in the absence of a concrete strategy to protection, HRDs in the Philippines reduce their vulnerability towards potential perpetrators by changing certain habits, concealing personal information, developing secret warning signals or following the 'buddy-system', in which the HRDs has to be always with a 'buddy' when being outside in the public space. Within these techniques, the necessity of not following the same patterns every day to reduce vulnerability was almost mentioned by all interviewees. This break of pattern can consist of slight changes such as not always getting up and leaving the house at the same time or not sitting at the same spots of a compound every time after coming home. But also more complex actions such as changing the physical appearance by occasionally wearing wigs or sunglasses could be identified (Colleagues of victims, personal communication, 28 March 2017 and 3 May 2017). Monitoring and documenting the environment more consciously, for instance by taking pictures of observers, is used to assess the seriousness of a surveillance and the threat. It is moreover used as a progressive measure to demonstrate awareness of the surveillance and preparedness for potential attacks (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 3 April 2017).

Also common in regarded cases were self-organized temporary relocations. Main use of this measure is to escape in periods of a very high threat or to get a rest and respite from the exhaustive human rights activities in dangerous environments. Besides this, temporary relocation can also be used to earn some extra money, enabling the defenders to support their families and finance their activities (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 3 May 2017). The problem identified with regards to self-organized temporary relocation, as it is often conducted within the same or a neighbouring province, is that the proximity tempts to return for certain exceptions, leading even to a killing in one regarded case (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 3 April 2017). As reducing the HRD's vulnerability, monitoring the environment and temporary relocation could be discovered as implemented NAPT's, it is to mention that their success is highly affected by the personal effort induced, including a brave continuity in following self-imposed limitations.

The most common and also effective institutionalized NAPT which could be identified during the research are Human Rights Defenders trainings, mostly organized by regional or domestic NGOs. Not to confuse are Human Rights Defenders trainings, training the HRDs in protection and personal security issues, with usual Human Rights Trainings, which are even more common and giving the defenders a theoretical background knowledge on human rights, norms and mechanisms or paralegal work (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 3 April 2017). The trainings contain topics as documentation of surveillance and conduction of basic risk assessments. Also learning on how to behave in a situation of immediate danger, trying to leave the situation, or in a generally tensed situation, not appearing as weak and vulnerable, were further parts of these trainings described by interviewees. These security trainings are regarded as very effective, for that reason they are continuously implemented. It was expressed that it's always important to be aware of a situation even though the opponent might be very strong in most of the cases, such as big companies or the AFP, and therefore a full protection will never be achieved (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 25 March 2017). The knowledge of basic NAPTs is mostly spread via HRD trainings conducted by domestic NGOs. Although it is acknowledged that these techniques are not able to prevent killings in every situation, the value of these trainings is regarded as high and therefore appreciated by participants.

IV. Difficulties with institutionalized NAPTs

Analysing the accessibility of institutionalized NAPTs, it could be assessed that protection grants and protection manuals are generally available but due to a lack of awareness and partially an inappropriateness of certain techniques, they are barely used in the Philippines. Regarding protection grants, an availability of this NAPT can be confirmed but a lack of awareness towards the existence of grants affects their usage, whereas financial scarcity creates one of the biggest exposures to vulnerability for the defenders. The EIDHR is providing support to Philippine HRDs coordinated by the EU Delegation. The maximum amount available per application is 10.000 Euro. In total, about 30 Philippine HRDs benefited from these grants so far. In the last call for proposals three grants were awarded and only over a dozen proposals were received (Representative of the EU-Delegation Philippines, personal communication, 23 February 2017). In the past 4 years, 4 to 14 grants annually, with an expense of 10,000 and 22,000 Euro per year, have been provided by Front Line Defenders in the Philippines (Representative of Front Line Defenders, personal

communication, 25 March 2017). Grants are beside others used to provide shelter, support relocations, set up individual security measures or to cover expenses for safe travelling. It was not possible to gather data on what amount could have been spent maximum per year by the organizations. But the mere fact that the amount granted differs strongly between the respective years, leads to the suggestion that the maximum was not exhausted every year. Concluding from this, there are probably more grants available to improve the security circumstances for potential grantees.

Financial problems could be discovered as one main exposure to vulnerability in the regarded cases, because the economic situation disabled defenders to even basically protect their compounds against invaders. The financial situation, especially if responsibilities towards the family exist, lead HRDs, being aware of threats and situations of immediate danger and being described as belonging to the poorest of the poor, to leave their safe environments for the purpose of work in places which are easily accessible from the public (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 3 April 2017). In one regarded case the victim was shot in exactly this unsafe working place and colleagues explained the financial responsibility to be the reason for taking the risk of being exposed to the public (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 28 March 2017). This strong effect of economic problems to the defenders security underlines the importance of protection grants.

The research could furthermore prove the argument of Bennett that there is a lack of awareness for the existence of international support techniques for HRDs. This might result from organizations not pro-actively engaging the HRDs (Bennett 2015, pp. 913-914, 919-920). Actually none of the respondents was aware of the existence of neither protection grants nor protection manuals, in single cases not even after participating in a HRD Training conducted by one of the international organizations providing grants (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 25 March 2017). The grants are mainly promoted via the organizations' websites or via verbal promotion (Representative of the EU-Delegation Philippines, personal communication, 23 February 2017). Especially on grassroots level in the Philippines is has not to be regarded as common that HRDs are using modern media, such as the internet, to inform themselves. Therefore, if following the current way of promoting institutionalized NAPT's, a consistent chain of communication has to be ensured to reach defenders on the grassroots level who are urgently in need of this financial support.

The assumption of HRDs regularly using technical devices is one example out of various, how certain international institutionalized NAPT's might be not fully appropriate to the defenders' needs. Protection manuals are provided beside others by the international NGOs Front Line Defenders and Protection International. Not questioning the quality of these books' content, it has to be acknowledged that their size with over 100 to over 200 pages and the very scientific way of dealing with the issue of defender's protection is not meeting the needs of all defenders (Front Line Defenders 2005; Protection International 2009). Furthermore, are these manuals also available online and written in English. Although in the Philippines the majority of people speaks English, notably on grassroots level a language barrier can be recognized next to the rare usage of technical devices, what makes it difficult for some HRDs to read very long and scientifically written manuals which are available online. The protection handbook by Front Line Defenders tackled this issue, being more concise whereas the language style and accessibility issue continue to exist. To address this issue, a manual has to be manually distributed, being very concise and written in simple English.

A different example of NAPT's not always meeting the needs of HRDs are long term relocations. It has been described by all interviewees that permanent relocation was no option at all for the victimized defenders. Main reason for this is the responsibility of the HRDs towards their families, their organization and the communities or people on whose behalf they are initially advocating the human rights for. The theoretical possibilities of facilitating such relocation, also international, are very creative and advanced, such as emergency visa for HRDs in Ireland or personal protection being organized by the EU on the way to the airport (Front Line Defenders 2007, p. 10; Bennett 2015, p. 914). Nevertheless were the victims of the regarded cases this convinced to not accept relocation, even as a last resort, to state a preference of being killed by the military over being relocated (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 3 April 2017). The inappropriateness of how NAPT's are applied in certain cases does not at all represent an inappropriateness of the protection techniques in general but identifies the need for also other, new NAPT's aside from the already existing ones.

V. Personal impacts in the forefront of killings

Beside the broad lack of awareness towards institutionalized NAPT's and an occasional inappropriateness of certain techniques, the research was able to dismantle specific indicators,

noticed in the forefront of the killings, as well as the pattern of defenders to regards threats as usual and to misinterpret their substantiality. Looking at the cases which have been subject of the research project, certain situations might be regarded as indicators for an increase of danger in the forefront of the killings. The indicators identified are honest warnings by government officials, a strong rise of surveillance, a denying of offered bribes and a rise of the victim's public attraction. Warnings from government officials to the victims have been delivered either through befriended officials or through befriended supporters who knew government officials. Such warnings often reflected a concerned estimation of an official towards the bodily security of the defender. Unfortunately, such expressions of honest concern were occasionally just regarded as an encouragement to even further the activities (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 25 March 2017). Probably the most obvious immediate indicator for an aggravation of the HRDs' situation is an abrupt rise of surveillance (OMCT 2009, p. 32). This abrupt increase can be recognized beside usual surveillance by people strolling around the defenders' compounds to an extent that even family members or friends have been openly asked regarding the whereabouts of the HRDs. Furthermore, attempts to bribery, being often used in order to stop HRDs from their activity as the financial situation of most grassroots defenders was highlighted before, have been offered progressively in the forefront of the killings. The ones offering bribes are often big companies not just offering monetary bribes but also offering further advantages such as medical treatments or well paid jobs. Denying these assets was described as another factor worsening the situation for the affected defender. Lastly also an increase of public attraction, for especially uprising activists, might lead to killings as the perpetrators want to avoid even more public focus on the issue the perspective HRD is advocating for (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 28 March 2017). Especially being new in the field, but also for more experienced activists, it is hard to identify these indicators of increasing warnings, surveillance, bribes and public attraction from a subjective perspective.

In general, it could be confirmed by the participants that the victims were aware of the threats in a way that the threats were noticed before. But still some victims did not change their way of work due to two main reasons. First, it could be recognized, especially after a longer time of activism, that some defenders misinterpreted the validity of threats. Second, a certain level of danger started to be regarded as inherent to human rights work and therefore not avoidable by some HRDs. The victim of one regarded case was listed on a military target list for about two

years. Because there had never been a killing of an activist in the region before, the defenders didn't expect the opponents to go this far (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 3 May 2017). Also was stated by different interviewees that the victims were proceeding the threats with expressions of indifference. This indifference might be either a reaction of not recognizing the seriousness of the threat or a reaction of reactance. Most victims were described as very concerned about their living environment, which also leads to the non-acceptance of permanent relocation as a protection technique. Following this option, reactance might come from a feeling of defencelessness due to a superiority of the opponents. This leads to the second argument that some HRDs don't implement certain protection measures because threats and danger are regarded as inherent to human rights work. These assumptions were shared by many interviewees and illustrated by one participant stating: "*The only way to be not threatened as a HRD, is to do a bad job*" (Colleague of victim, personal communication, 3 May 2017). Misinterpretation of threats or resignation to react due to a perceived situation of defencelessness could be discovered as reasons for victims to not make use of protection techniques which leads to a need of awareness raising on the realness of threats and also a need of sharing successful cases of protection to oppose the reactance.

VI. Inter-organizational Cooperation

Following the statement of the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, techniques as accompaniment, grants and relocation support need to be individually tailored and agreed with the defenders themselves to be effective (United Nations General Assembly 2016, para. 65). This opinion is also shared in Amnesty International's review on the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders. Amnesty states that a close cooperation and communication between supporting organisation and HRDs at grassroots level is one of the key elements to the success of protection techniques (Amnesty International 2008, p. 9). The demanded close cooperation and communication is most often, due to personal resources, not feasible. This paper proposes to approach this problem by enhancing close cooperation projects between international organizations and domestic NGOs. Thereby the domestic NGOs should facilitate a consistent way of communication with a multiplying effect from the international organization to the defenders, thereby making use of economic possibilities brought along with the international actors. This communication is mainly used for awareness raising towards the international support structures

and for an educational process towards a recognition of the indicators being noticed in the forefront of killings. Important is hereby that the approach to this cooperation is not just initiated by the domestic NGOs but also by international organizations in order to find common ground on a same level and to not establish a top down relationship with one donor and one applicant.

Furthermore, might a top down approach limit the space for the domestic NGOs to adopt the content to regional particularities whilst conducting the HRD trainings. Reasonable platform to build this bridge between the contents of the cooperation projects and the defenders on grassroots level are HRD trainings supported by information leaflets, created according to the needs of the defenders and provided by the international organizations. The trainings create a forum to address the lack of awareness towards institutionalized NAPT's, especially in respect to protection grants. The lack of knowledge regarding protection manuals would also be addressed immediately as the leaflet distributed contains not solely information on NAPT's, but basic and comprehensive security information as well. This information is tailored according to the needs of defenders on the grassroots level and furthermore available in a printed, non-digital version, to be able to reach out to every defender. The second important information to be spread is a recognition of the realness of certain threats. Placing this information in trainings on a domestic level, the certain indicators for an increase of the seriousness of threats can be adopted to the respective regional particularities. By this, the financial opportunities of international organizations are meeting the opportunities of domestic NGOs to reach out to the single defenders.

VII. Conclusion

The research was able to answer the research questions by interviewing key informants from the grassroots level and experts working in national and international organizations on HRD protection. It has been demonstrated that NAPT's are currently used by Philippine HRDs although most often not consciously perceived as a different way of protection than advocacy. Main areas of application of NAPT's are thereby measures to reduce HRDs' vulnerability. Raising awareness and thereby sharpening the understanding on the differences between NAPT's and advocacy approaches helps HRDs to assess the own risks and to engage different protection techniques in particular situations.

Furthermore, it could be noticed that certain NAPT's, such as protection grants or manuals, are not always fully appropriate to the situation of all defenders on the grassroots level. An

adjustment of the techniques and an enhanced promotion might also have an effect to make NAPT's more accessible and implemented. Nonetheless, it has to be acknowledged that international organizations cannot be asked to be present in every single situation due to big differences in language, environment and infrastructure even within a single country, such as the Philippines. Therefore, domestic and regional organizations exist, being able to identify the particularities and spread knowledge of threats which have been identified in the certain regions. However, international organizations are more likely to have the economic capability to address one of the main problems, the HRDs vulnerability due to financial scarcity. Comprehensively, non-institutionalized NAPT's are used on the grassroots level in the Philippines but expanding these efforts also towards international institutionalized NAPT's would have a positive influence on the security for the defenders.

These findings conclude to the main argument, stating that an enhanced cooperation between domestic and international organizations would improve the situation of HRDs in the Philippines. By conducting HRD trainings on regional level for grassroots defenders, the strengths of domestic and international organizations can be united. A leaflet, being designed and printed by the international organization but distributed by the domestic organization during the trainings, accomplishes the realization of successful support by giving the HRDs a possibility to review the contents at a later point in time without relying on any technical devices.

Coming back to the current situation in the Philippines, the already mentioned peak of killings on HRDs creates an urgent and immediate need of protection for the vulnerable group of HRDs. That a democratically elected President openly threatens to kill the ones fighting for their rights and freedoms, makes one realize the harrowing environment, created by a culture of impunity and disregard of human dignity. Where the pillars of the Philippine democracy impend to collapse by the rigorous anti-drug campaign, human rights defenders are not letting up from their courageous work. International support can and should continue to help these people to be able to continue this brave and urgently needed resistance, so that the voice of the voiceless won't fall silent as well.

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