

Statement of CHR spokesperson, Atty. Jacqueline de Guia, calling for the urgent passage of the bill that seeks to protect human rights defenders

The Commission on Human Rights joins the clamor to prioritize the passage of the Human Rights Defenders (HRD) Protection Bill or House Bill No. 9199. The bill's enactment into law should be a high priority considering the unceasing attacks, threats, and the general climate of hostility faced by human rights defenders and advocates.

We echo the recent statement of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Ms. Mary Lawlor, stressing that the bill shall concretely show our country's commitment to human rights obligations. Passing the bill will demonstrate our government's recognition of the essential work of the human rights defenders.

Concrete legal protection and mechanisms will enable the important work of the human rights community as they continue to be steadfast amid the relentless challenges on many fronts. Further, upholding the welfare and rights of human rights defenders will redound to the promotion of the rights of all especially the vulnerable sectors, which they serve. ###