



**54th Session of the Human Rights Council
Item 4: General Debate**

27 September 2023

**Delivered by Ms Amelia Santos
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Thank you, Mr President,

Franciscans International, and this statement's co-sponsors, would like to draw the Council's attention to the situation in the Philippines.

I am Amelia Santos. My husband was a victim of an extrajudicial killing in 2016, and I am still seeking justice.

Impunity persists throughout the country, where killings are perpetrated under the continuing "war on drugs" despite the new administration's promise of a more humane approach.

In addition to the more than 6,000 victims of the previous government, over 400 victims have been summarily killed under the current administration.

Forty-five percent died in anti-drug operations by state agents. Torture, enforced disappearance, and child abuse have also punctuated cases of extrajudicial killings.

I, with thousands of other victims' families, am still fearful for our lives due to the retaliation and intimidation by the State. Families of victims are visited by local authorities who intimidate us.

The OHCHR report on the Philippines in 2020 recommended the revocation of the Police Memorandum on Double Barrel, an end to extrajudicial killings, arbitrary detention, and other violence targeting drug suspects; an end to drug watch lists and a review of related law and policies, and the implementation of a rights-based approach. The High Commissioner urged assistance for families, including financial aid, legal support, and psychosocial services.

In the past three years since the report, there has been little progress on these issues. An assessment of the implementation of these recommendations is critical, including a review of whether the technical cooperation program has appropriately put in place mechanisms towards enforcing accountability and ending impunity.

Thank you.