



MISYON NG PILIPINAS SA MGA NAGKAKAISANG
BANSA AT IBA PANG SAMAHANG PANDAIGDIG

PHILIPPINE MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

NO. OGO - CBR - 2015

15 April 2015

Sir/Madam,

I wish to refer to your joint communication dated 8 January 2015 (ref. AL PHL 1/2015) concerning the alleged disbarment procedure pending against human rights lawyer Atty. Harry Roque.

The Philippine Mission has the honor to submit the following response, based on information provided by the Human Rights Office of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, to clarify the issues raised in the joint communication:

- It has never been the intention of both the military organization and the defense establishment to exert undue interference on the effective performance of Atty. Roque's role as a human rights advocate and defender.
- It was his very act of gaining unlawful entry into a restricted military camp and installation, with manifest disregard for existing rules and regulations, caught in public view on 22 October 2014, that prompted the military organization to consider the breach as a serious security concern.
- Serious breach of military camp security and disregard of military camp rules and regulations are acts not expected of Atty. Roque, whose stature as an esteemed member of the Philippine Bar makes him, at all times, duty and oath-bound to uphold the majesty of the law and to exhibit healthy respect for the rules, be this inside military camps or elsewhere.
- The action taken (i.e. the filing of a complaint), is not intended as a targeting measure nor should it be deemed as a harassment suit designed to impede his effective representation of any client who engages his services as a lawyer.

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Mr. Michel Forst

Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders

Ms. Gabriela Knaut

Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

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OHCHR REGISTRY

17 APR 2015

Recipients : *SPD*

- The action by the military organization to file a disbarment complaint against Atty. Roque was taken, not arbitrarily, but based on its conviction that Atty. Roque's demeanor on 22 October 2014 amounted to a violation of the lawyer's Code of Professional Responsibility.
- This disbarment complaint has been filed and is still pending before the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), a private organization of lawyers in the Philippines. It is a function of the IBP to investigate the complaint and decide on its merits. In the exercise of this function, the IBP acts independently from the Philippine Government.
- Atty. Roque continues to practice his profession freely, without censorship or any undue interference.

Accept, Sir, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.



CECILIA B. REBONG

Ambassador and Permanent Representative