

16 February 2015

Hon. Leila M. de Lima  
Secretary  
Department of Justice  
Padre Faura, Manila

Thru: Hon. Siegfred B. Mison  
Commissioner, Bureau of Immigrations

Madam:

We, the undersigned urgently bring this appeal before Your Office regarding the situation of Mr. Mark Cohen, a 64 year old Canadian national with a disability. This is specifically regarding the proposed order for deportation of Mr. Cohen from the country.

The chronology of events that Mr. Cohen has experienced for the past several months during his stay in the country is long and complex, involving various individuals and entities. We are not in any position to express an opinion on any of these. Neither are we in any position to comment on allegations relating to Mr. Cohen's background, work or previous stints in other countries, particularly relating to his disability.

*However*, we firmly and unequivocally hope and appeal for the following:

1. that **due process** has already been assured, and continues to be ensured to Mr. Cohen, regarding the proposed Deportation order, in the **appropriate legal / judicial venue**; and
2. that **reasonable accommodation and full accessibility** be accorded Mr. Cohen throughout any legal / judicial proceeding, considering his **multiple vulnerabilities as an Older Person, and a Person with Chronic Illness disability**.

The international commitments as well as domestic mandates of the State oblige it to uphold the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals, regardless of age, disability and nationality.

We trust that the Department under your leadership shall continually ensure that the above shall be upheld. We pray that this request may merit the attention and action of your Office.

We appeal in earnest for your urgent intervention -  
Thank you.

Liza B. Martinez, Ph.D.  
Philippine Alliance of Persons with Chronic Illness  
[lizamartinezpapci@gmail.com](mailto:lizamartinezpapci@gmail.com)

Josef de Guzman  
President, PsorAsiaPacific / Psoriasis Philippines  
Treasurer, International Federation of Psoriasis Associations  
Member, Board of Trustees, Medical Transparency Alliance Philippines  
Member, Philippine Alliance of Persons with Chronic Illness  
[josef@psorphil.org](mailto:josef@psorphil.org)

Abner N. Manlapaz  
Life Haven  
[abner.manlapaz@gmail.com](mailto:abner.manlapaz@gmail.com)

Ma. Victoria R. Raquiza  
Assistant Professor, National College of Public Administration & Governance  
University of the Philippines  
[mraquiza@gmail.com](mailto:mraquiza@gmail.com)

Max M. de Mesa  
Chairperson, Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates  
[maxdemesa@gmail.com](mailto:maxdemesa@gmail.com)

Rev. Magnolia Nova V. Mendoza  
Divinity School, Silliman University  
Dumaguete City  
[mnvmendoza@gmail.com](mailto:mnvmendoza@gmail.com)

Gina Rose Balanlay  
Philippine Blind Union  
[balanlayg@yahoo.com](mailto:balanlayg@yahoo.com)

Benjamin Bernardino  
Life Haven  
[junb47@gmail.com](mailto:junb47@gmail.com)

Janice Sarmiento Cambri, M.A.  
Founder, Transforming Communities for Inclusion of Persons with Psychosocial Disabilities - Philippines  
[jancambri@gmail.com](mailto:jancambri@gmail.com)

James Auste  
Patient Advocate / Brain Cancer Warrior / Person with Disability  
[jamesauste@gmail.com](mailto:jamesauste@gmail.com)

Catherine Kamping  
Advocate  
[catherine.kamping@gmail.com](mailto:catherine.kamping@gmail.com)

Batangas Chapter - Cancer Warriors Foundation, Inc.  
c/o Bernardita M. Maralit  
[ditam1203@yahoo.com](mailto:ditam1203@yahoo.com)

Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA)  
c/o Rose Trajano  
[pahra@philippinehumanrights.org](mailto:pahra@philippinehumanrights.org)