October 19, 2018

His Excellency Rodrigo Roa Duterte,
President of the Philippines,
Malacañang Palace, Manila, the Philippines

Dear President Duterte,

Stop The Threat Against Sandigan Volunteer outside the Philippines Embassy, Kuwait

The International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF) is a global federation of domestic workers, with 69 organizations in 55 countries, representing more than 600,000 domestic workers worldwide.

On October 16, 2018, a volunteer of the Sandigan network was aggressively threatened ("mugged") by a group of Filipino nationals occupying the security booths on the premises of the Embassy of the Philippines. He has reported the incident to the Kuwaiti police.

Sandigan is a Kuwait-based community network offering support to Filipino workers in distress and domestic workers in particular. Since 2 years ago, we have collaborated with the Sandigan to implement program of activities to promote migrant domestic workers rights and welfare, including a leadership training.

Sandigan had recently reported this group of individuals to the Embassy of the Philippines for improper activities and believes this mugging was in retaliation. Specifically, Sandigan observed these individuals charging domestic workers and other Filipino nationals exorbitant fees to photocopy documents necessary for official embassy procedures at the embassy, (1-2KD, approx. $3-6 per page). In addition, Sandigan referred to allegations that these individuals had offered domestic workers in distress the service of "rescue for a fee", and to "fix" required immigration paperwork.

Among civil society organizations and even some governments locally and internationally, Sandigan members have a credible track record of support to domestic workers and play a constructive role in the broader community and their allegations should be taken seriously and investigated. We strongly urge you to immediately conduct an in-depth and thorough investigation into the allegations.

We will continue to monitor this situation until the situation is rectified.

Yours truly,

Myrtle Witbooi
President, IDWF

Elizabeth Tang
General Secretary, IDWF