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HUMAN
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Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo Japan

President Shinichi Kitaoka
Japan International Cooperation Agency
Nibancho Center Building 5-25
Niban-cho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 102-8012 Japan

Re: Japanese government funding for drug rehabilitation in the Philippines

Dear Foreign Minister Kishida and President Kitaoka,

Human Rights Watch is an independent, nongovernmental organization that investigates and reports on violations of international human rights in more than 90 countries around the world. Since the late 1980s, Human Rights Watch has worked on human rights issues in the Philippines and provided input to the Philippine government.

We understand that the Japanese government is significantly increasing its financial support for the Philippine government following the January 12, 2017 summit between Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and President Rodrigo Duterte. We are concerned about Prime Minister Abe's offer of "meaningful assistance measures to address the issue of illegal drugs" given the serious human rights violations linked to the Duterte's "war on drugs." Since President Duterte took office in June 2016, police and unidentified gunmen have killed more than 7,000 suspected drug users and drug dealers.

Human Rights Watch's field research found no evidence that the government has undertaken serious investigations into these killings. The Philippine National Police said an independent inquiry into the 2,662 killings attributed to the police would harm police "morale." Nor have the 3,603 killings attributed to "vigilantes" and drug gangs been seriously investigated and those responsible brought to justice. Although the Philippine National Police has classified 922 killings as "cases where investigation has concluded," there is no evidence that inquiries resulted in the arrest and prosecution of alleged perpetrators.

Our research has concluded that President Duterte and his chief subordinates, including Philippine National Police Director-General Ronald dela Rosa, could be held criminally liable in the Philippines or by a court abroad for their role in extrajudicial killings occurring during the anti-drug campaign. Applicable crimes could include instigating or inciting murder and being responsible for mass murder as a matter of command or superior responsibility.

Human Rights Watch also found that the serious crimes committed, because they are part of a widespread or systematic attack on a civilian population – drug suspects – could amount to crimes against humanity. President Duterte and his

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chief subordinates, including Director-General dela Rosa, could be held liable for crimes against humanity as defined by the International Criminal Court, of which the Philippines is a member.

The Philippine government has persisted in its abusive anti-drug campaign despite increasing global outrage.

We understand that the Japanese government has offered to assist the Philippine government with drug rehabilitation services through its Programme for Consolidated Rehabilitation of Illegal Drug Users (CARE). While we believe that the response to the challenges posed by drugs should be driven by public health considerations—and include the provision of evidence-based drug treatment—we have several concerns about this offer of assistance.

Human Rights Watch has conducted extensive research in countries such as Cambodia, China, Laos and Vietnam on drug detention camps. While the governments of these countries presented these camps as “treatment centers,” our research found that the “treatment” provided consisted of forced labor and military drills rather than evidence-based treatment interventions; that torture and ill-treatment were rampant; and that people were detained at these camps without any kind of due process.

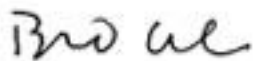
The Philippine government’s response to the surge in demand for drug rehabilitation facilities – the December 2016 launch of a China-funded “10,000-bed mega treatment and rehabilitation center” within the Fort Magsaysay military base outside Manila – raises concerns that instead of evidence-based drug treatment services, the rehabilitation services may be similar to those we documented elsewhere in Southeast Asia. In that case, Japanese funds would end up supporting serious human rights abuses rather than appropriate health services.

The Philippines desperately needs voluntary community-based drug dependence treatment services that comport with international standards and human rights principles.

We urge you to ensure that Japanese funding for drug rehabilitation supports the establishment or expansion of these kinds of programs.

Please contact me if you would like us to provide you more information about human rights abuses related to the Philippines’ “war on drugs” or if you would like to discuss these matters further.

Sincerely,



Brad Adams
Asia Director



Kanae Doi
Japan Director