

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Batasan Hills, Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 468

Introduced by
ACT Teachers Party-List Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO,
BAYAN MUNA Party-List Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE,
Rep. FERDINAND GAITE and Rep. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT,
GABRIELA Women's Party Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS,
and **KABATAAN Party-List Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**

RESOLUTION
CONDEMNING THE FRUSTRATED EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLING OF TEACHERS ZHAYDEE AND RAMIL CABAÑELEZ BY SUSPECTED AGENTS UNDER THE 8TH INFANTRY BATTALION OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES AND DIRECTING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RIGHTS TO CONDUCT AN URGENT INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO THE SAME

WHEREAS, on October 15, 2019, teacher Zhaydee Cabañelez, 32, was shot by four suspected agents under the 8th Infantry Battalion of the Armed Forces of the Philippines inside Dalit Elementary School at around 8:00 Tuesday morning;

WHEREAS, one of the assailants, who were wearing full-faced bonnets, went upstairs to the second floor and inside the classroom of Mrs. Cabañelez, looking for Mr. Cabañelez, alleging that he has contacts with the New People's Army. Mrs. Cabañelez denied this claim as she and her husband are both public school teachers, and she insisted that they can confirm this fact with the barangay authorities. When she turned away from the men, the gunman fired thrice at Mr. Cabañelez, who was inside the room next to Mrs. Cabañelez's;

WHEREAS, Mr. Cabañelez was not hit as he was able to duck. The bullets hit the printer and thus destroyed school property;

WHEREAS, the gunman then turned to and shot at Mrs. Cabañelez, six times and at close range. She suffered severe injuries in the legs, hip, and chest;

WHEREAS, the shooting was also committed in front of about eight students aged six to seven years old;

WHEREAS, the other assailants acted as lookouts, one outside the classroom on the first floor and the school, keeping the engines of their two motorcycles running the entire time;

WHEREAS, the masked assailants immediately fled the area;

WHEREAS, members of the community assisted Mr. Cabañelez in bringing her to the next barangay then to the hospital, a travel which required a habal-habal drive and then a boat ride to cross the river. The teachers and people at the school tried to call for help but were not able to due to poor signal;

WHEREAS, barangay kagawads who tried to follow the gunmen said that the assailants disappeared into an area where a detachment controlled by the 8th IB is located;

WHEREAS, teachers Zhaydee and Ramil are both members of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers-Philippines, which is the subject of illegal profiling and vilification by the Philippine National Police, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and security agencies including the National Task Force to End Local Communist Armed Conflict on the absurd and baseless claim that ACT is a "legal front";

WHEREAS, teacher Zhaydee was awarded most outstanding teacher by the Department of Education Region X in 2016. As attested to by residents of Sitio Dalit and nearby Barangay Lumbayao, both Cabañelezes are much loved by the community, the children, their two co-faculty, and school personnel;

WHEREAS, the attacks against the two teachers have not stopped with the shooting, with the presence of both armed, and unarmed and plainclothes agents of the police and military. On October 17, a female soldier who identified herself as a member of the 8th Infantry Battalion visited the couple at the hospital;

WHEREAS, the Cabañelez couple had sudden visits and ambush interviews in their hospital room by reporters of the Philippine News Agency, which later on published false reports that the couple are not ACT members as well as other allegations of links to the NPA. The couple complained of the PNA and PNP's twisting of their statements, and prior police media and social media releases;

WHEREAS, the couple also complained about being deceived by the police who took photos of Mrs. Cabañelez in the hospital supposedly for police investigation, but were later released to the media without her consent;

WHEREAS, these ambush interviews and unwelcome presence by politics and military agents led the couple to seek from the local government a security detail for them;

WHEREAS, however, this "security detail" is shown to be in fact a tool for their further harassment, when the Alliance of Concerned Teachers and ACT Teachers Party-List held a solidarity visit on October 23 to the Cabañelezes at the hospital. Despite following protocols and securing the prior consent of the Cabañelezes, the group, accompanied by a representative of the Commission on Human Rights Region X, was blocked by heavily armed policemen. Plainclothes women agents are also posted outside the hospital room;

WHEREAS, prior attempts of the DepEd Valencia City School Division Superintendent and members of the couple's community were also blocked;

WHEREAS, eight uniformed and armed policemen and others in plainclothes headed by one who identified himself as "Lt. Anghel Vergara," an intelligence officer, blocked the Cabañelezes' hospital room door to prevent the solidarity visit from visiting the couple. Despite the assertions of the group, particularly and Rep. France Castro and the Commission on Human Rights, Lt. Vergara strongly blocked access to the victims, citing orders from the "higher ups," which he later on admitted to be National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon;

WHEREAS, the solidarity visit was aimed to extend urgent psychological, financial, legal and moral support to those who have been affected by the shooting incident, most especially Mr. Ramil Cabañelez and Mrs. Zhaydee Cabañelez;

WHEREAS, Mr. Ramil Cabañelez and Mrs. Zhaydee Cabañelez are twice victimized, as the police and military have effectively blocked access to them by their friends, members of the community, and government authorities including the Department of Education, the Commission on Human Rights, and a Member of the House of Representatives. As seen by the solidarity group which attempted to extend to the victims financial and moral support, the police and military are practically placing Mr. Ramil Cabañelez and Mrs. Zhaydee Cabañelez under hospital arrest;


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives condemn the frustrated extrajudicial killing of teachers Zhaydee Cabañales and Ramil Cabañelez by suspected agents under the 8th Infantry Battalion of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives Committee on Human Rights conduct an urgent investigation in aid of legislation into the same.


Adopted,



Rep. **FRANCE L. CASTRO**
ACT Teachers Party-List




Rep. **CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE**
BAYAN MUNA Party-List



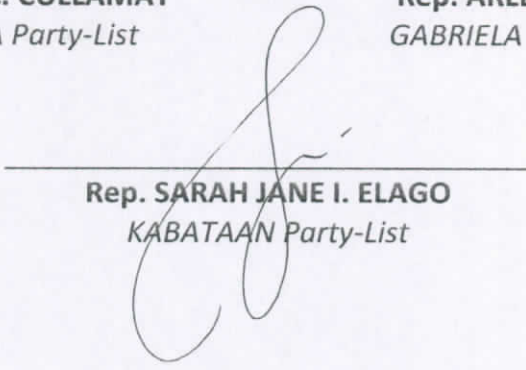
Rep. **FERDINAND GAITE**
BAYAN MUNA Party-List



Rep. **EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT**
BAYAN MUNA Party-List



Rep. **ARLENE D. BROSAS**
GABRIELA Women's Party



Rep. **SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**
KABATAAN Party-List