



Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON MEDIA SECURITY



22 December 2025

MS. BEH LIH YI

Asia – Pacific Director
Committee to Protect Journalists

Dear Ms. Beh Lih Yi,

On behalf of His Excellency President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr., the Presidential Task Force on Media Security (PTFOMS) responds to your letter dated December 8, 2025. We assure you of our commitment to safeguarding the life, liberty, and security of media workers, ensuring that journalists can perform their duties without fear of reprisal.

While the Executive Branch holds significant powers, these are limited by Philippine law. The country upholds the rule of law and respects the independence of the Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary branches. As such, the President's executive powers cannot be invoked at this time to secure Ms. Cumpio's release. However, the Executive, through its agencies, is dedicated to protecting her rights and upholding due process to ensure a legitimate and lasting resolution.

Several vital actions have been taken regarding Ms. Cumpio's cases:

Monitoring and Engagement: The PTFOMS has closely monitored Ms. Cumpio's situation. On August 30, during National Press Freedom Day, we visited her and Mr. Domequil, accompanied by their counsel, Atty. Ruben Palomino. This visit was a commitment made during the Media Freedom Coalition's engagement with our office last June, emphasizing our dedication to transparency and accountability.

Rights and Detention Conditions: The Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), in partnership with the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP), has ensured that Ms. Cumpio's rights and detention conditions meet established standards. Moreover, the DILG has facilitated multiple visits from foreign diplomatic missions, enhancing transparency and demonstrating the government's openness to international dialogue on press freedom and human rights.

Legal Defense: The Public Attorney's Office (PAO), particularly the Laoang District Office under Atty. Erwin Drio and Atty. Mae Lisette Espina, has played a crucial role in Ms. Cumpio's defense. They successfully filed a Motion to Quash in three cases at the Laoang Regional Trial Court, protecting her rights and ensuring due process.





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Judicial Outcomes: The Judiciary has upheld due process, with significant outcomes including the Court of Appeals' reversal of the forfeiture case last October and the granting of the Motion to Quash. Ongoing hearings in RTC Tacloban City are being closely monitored, with key judgments expected in January and February that will be critical for recognizing her rights.

We commend all those who have supported Ms. Cumpio, including her counsel, family, local community, media organizations, and the international community, particularly the Committee to Protect Journalists. This collective dedication highlights the importance of solidarity in defending press freedom.

The President has directed that the safety and security of media workers be prioritized at all times. In line with this directive, the Executive Branch remains steadfast in upholding constitutional guarantees and both international and domestic human rights obligations. Any charges or acts of harassment against media workers must be addressed through proper judicial processes to ensure lawful and enduring remedies.

We appreciate your continued advocacy for press freedom. Updates on this matter will be conveyed to your office.

Sincerely,


JOSE A. TORRES JR.
Undersecretary

cc: The Presidential Management Staff
Tracking ID No. PMS-202512-0803

