Menardo I. Guevarra

Department of Justice, Philippines

Padre Faura Street, Ermita

Manila 1000

**PHILIPPINEN**

Maria Ressa

Dear Secretary Menardo Guevarra

The news website and **journalists of "Rappler" and its executive editor, Maria Ressa**, are on trial in the Philipines. The critical news service has illustrated what the "war against drugs" of the government under president Duterte means: thousands of poor people have been executed extrajudicially by police and unknown players.

Maria Ressa and Rey Santos Jr, another former employee of "Rappler" still face several other lawsuits and investigations, including alleged tax violations and violations of the prohibition against foreign control over mass media.

One year ago, on 15 June 2020, both Maria Ressa and former Rappler researcher Rey Santos Jr were found guilty of misinformation on the internet. They are the first journalists in the Philippines who have been convicted of this issue.

I urge you immediately to drop all charges against Maria Ressa and her colleagues from Rappler. Please respect their right to freedom of expression and the media in policy and practice!

Yours sincerely