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16 September 2023

STATEMENT ON THE ASSASSINATION OF ATTY. MA. SANIATA LIWLIWA V. GONZALEZ-ALZATE

The Philippine Bar Association joins the IBP and the rest of the legal community in condemning the violent death of yet another lawyer. Atty. Ma. Saniata Liwliwa V. Gonzalez-Alzate was assassinated in broad daylight steps from her home.

A public interest lawyer, Atty. Alzate's death is yet another example that in our country, the legal profession has become inherently dangerous.

It wasn't always this way. Yet, in the past 6 years, more than 60 of us were killed. This year, 3 more were added to the tally. When officers of the court are being slaughtered at an alarming rate, it is time to ask difficult questions.

What led to this? Why did it reach this magnitude? And what are we prepared to do to stop further killings?

Until and unless we seriously confront these questions, we will find ourselves writing these kinds of statements. Words cannot bring back Atty. Alzate and the rest of our brethren who were similarly murdered. But we can begin making things right by bringing the perpetrators to justice. And if we are to truly honor them, we must make this profession safe once again. Because serving the public interest should not mean risking a death sentence.