

## **Unwavering Commitment**

*Ka Randy* is once again threatened by the Arroyo government mainly due to his unwavering commitment and resolve to uphold the rights and welfare of the Filipino masses. He was charged with rebellion in February 2006, along with progressive party-list Representatives Satur Ocampo, Rafael Mariano, Crispin Beltran, Teddy Casiño, Liza Maza, and Joel Virador who are collectively known as the Batasan 6. This rebellion charge was dismissed by the Supreme Court in July 2007.

On January 28, 2008, he was abducted by masked military and police at Bago City, Negros Occidental **while consulting the poor sugar worker-members of National Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW) and Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (UMA) about the Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill or House Bill 3059 proposed by the Anakpawis Partylist.** He could have been a victim of forced disappearance if not only to the courageous effort of supporters from church and leaders to accompany him aflight the helicopter towards Leyte.

### **WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP:**

- Join FREEDOM and actively participate in campaigning for his release
- Visit Ka Randy at prison
- Sign the petition for Ka Randy's release
- Convince and enlighten government officials to release Ka Randy
- Donate material needs to alleviate his condition in detention
- Give financial assistance for campaigns for his release

**FREE RANDALL ECHANIS  
AND ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS!  
FIGHT AGAINST US-ARROYO POLITICAL PERSECUTION!  
JUSTICE FOR ALL THE VICTIMS OF  
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS!  
STRUGGLE FOR GENUINE AGRARIAN REFORM!**

**FREEDOM** **FREE RANDALL  
ECHANIS MOVEMENT  
AND ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS**  
**KILUSANG MAGBUBUKID NG PILIPINAS (KMP)**  
**PAMALAKAYA - PILIPINAS \* UMA \* AMIHAN  
NNARA-YOUTH \* ANAKPAWIS PARTYLIST  
TANGGOL - MAGSASAKA**



**O**n January 28, 2008, Ka Randy was arrested by suspected military and police elements wearing bonnets (ski masks) and in civilian clothes, at the Builders Training Center in Barangay Calumangan, Bago City, Negros Occidental, while attending a consultation with farmers and farmworkers belonging to the National Federation of Sugar Workers and Unyon ng mga Manggagawa sa Agrikultura (UMA) on the Genuine Agrarian Reform Bill (House Bill 3059) and in preparation for the 2nd National Rural Congress to be spearheaded by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) on July 7-8, 2008.

Ka Randy was accused as a member of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) Central Committee. Along with National Democratic Front Chief Political Consultant Jose Maria Sison and Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, Echanis was accused of multiple murders in connection with the so-called mass graves discovered in Hilongos, Leyte. He was detained at the Leyte Provincial Jail, in Brgy. Kauswagan, Palo, Leyte from January 28 to July 29, 2008. Then moved to Camp Crame on July 29, subsequently, illegally transferred to the congested Manila City Jail on August 2, 2008.

Randall “Ka Randy” Echanis came from a lower-middle class family. His father was a native of Ilocos Sur, while his mother was from the nearby province of Abra. Randall’s wife, Erlinda Lacaba-Echanis, is active in the workers and peasants’ movement and the chief-of-staff of Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano. Randall had two children, Ranmil and Amanda Echanis. They are both active in the youth and students’ movement and children’s rights advocacy.

## **Student Activism**

Ka Randy was exposed to activism as a student of then Philippine College of Commerce (now Polytechnic University of the Philippines) when he joined rallies condemning the United States’ war of aggression against Vietnam and immersed in student issues. In college, he joined the Kabataang Makabayan (KM – Patriotic Youth) and became chairperson of KM – University of the East Chapter in 1970, and a participant of the First Quarter Storm of 1970.

In the late 1970, Ka Randy was among the batches of activists who responded to the KM’s call to “Serve the People.” He went to the countryside and helped in peasant education and organizing work in Cagayan Valley, Cordillera, and Ilocos regions until his arrest in July 1983.

He was arrested without warrant by elements of the then Ministry of National Defense Security Group under Cols. Gregorio Honasan, Red Kapunan, and Rodolfo Aguinaldo.

## **Solitary Confinement**

From 1983 to 1984, Ka Randy was detained under solitary confinement and held incommunicado in Camp Aguinaldo. Even his close relatives and lawyers were not allowed to visit him.

From 1984 to 1986, he was transferred to Camp Adduru, Regional Command 2 Stockade in Tuguegarao, Cagayan until his release in March 1986. For two years, Ka Randy was under solitary confinement.

He was among the political prisoners released after People Power 1. After his release in 1986, Echanis joined the Samahan ng mga Ex-Detainees Laban sa Detensyon at para sa Amnestiya (SELDA) and became a member of its national council. Aside from SELDA, he was also a founding member of Partido ng Bayan (Peoples’ Party) and a member of its preparatory organizing committee.

In 1987, Ka Randy went back to peasant organizing until his second arrest in 1990 by combined elements of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP), the Naval Intelligence and Security Force (NISF), and the NCRDC.

He was held in a safe house for one week and subjected to physical and emotional torture before his transfer to Camp Crame Custodial Center together with his wife Erlinda Lacaba and their daughter, then two-year old Amanda Echanis, the youngest political prisoner at that time.

## **Human Rights and Peasant Advocacies**

He was released from detention in 1992 after a case filed against him for violation of PD 1866 (illegal possession of firearms in furtherance of rebellion) was dismissed by the Manila Regional Trial Court. He became active once more with SELDA and helped in processing claimants in a class suit against the Marcos dictatorship. Randall also played an active part in human rights work and in the pre-formation of the human rights watchdog Karapatan – Alliance for the Advancement of Human Rights.

Due to his steadfast commitment to serve the Filipino peasant masses and rich experience in advancing the struggle for genuine and thoroughgoing land reform, Randall was appointed deputy secretary general of the militant peasant organization Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) or Peasant Movement of the Philippines in its 5th National Congress in June 1999 in Quezon City.



In the year 2001, he was elected member of the national council of the First Quarter Storm Movement in its First Congress.

Since 2002, Ka Randy helped in the peace negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines as a member of the NDFP Reciprocal Working Committee for Social and Economic Reforms.

As being appointed as KMP deputy secretary general for external affairs on April of 2005, Ka Randy attended and represented KMP in international peasant assemblies and conferences such as the World Farmers’ Assembly in France, the World Social Forum in Brazil, the World Anti-Imperialist Conference in Indonesia, the United Nations – FAO - International Planning Committee in Italy and a delegate to the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> Assembly of the International League of Peoples’ Struggle in The Netherlands.