



# Christian Conference of Asia

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## **Statement on the Release of Detained Overseas Missionaries in the Philippines**

The Executive Committee of the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) meeting at the Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia in Antelias, Lebanon from 1 to 4 July 2018 expresses its grave concern on the detention of the three peaceful and justice-loving young adult missionaries who are serving in the Philippines and are now not allowed to leave the country.

The members of the CCA Executive Committee heard the plights of the three young missionaries who are members of the Global Mission Fellows programmes of the United Methodist Church - Mr. Tawanda Chandiwana(Zimbabwe), Ms. Miracle Osman Nkhata(Malawi), and Mr. Adam Shaw(United States of America).

In February 2018, all three were taken into police custody and detained at police checkpoints when they were part of an international ecumenical human rights fact-finding mission in General Santos City, which is under martial law. Tawanda Chandiwana's only fault was tardiness in filing the renewal of visa to continue his stay in the country.

The Executive Committee of the CCA urges the Government of the Philippines to release Tawanda Chandiwana who is still under detention and allow the three missionaries to leave the country.

The CCA Executive Committee learnt from our ecumenical partners in the Philippines and the United Methodist Church that the three missionaries have not been causing any problems to the peace and security of the country. In this situation, the CCA Executive Committee urges the Philippine government to release Tawanda Chandiwana from detention and all three of them be permitted to leave the country at the earliest.

CCA believes that reaching out to the victims and survivors of human rights violations by taking part in an international fact-finding mission in any situation are part of the missionary work of these three young missionaries.

CCA calls on all peace-loving people of goodwill around the world to pray and work for the release of Tawanda and the departure of all the three missionaries from the Philippines.