

## **Jaroslav Dobes and Barbora Plaskova need to be urgently released and brought back to their children**

### ***Barbora Plaskova's 20-month old child left without parental custody and support – Jaroslav Dobes' 4-year old daughter deprived of her father***

HRWF (18.03.2016) - Barbora Plaskova and Jaroslav Dobes should be released without delay from the Bagong Diwa Immigration Detention Centre (Manila) as their arrest, detention and request for extradition by the Czech authorities is baseless, according to the Brussels-based NGO *Human Rights Without Frontiers Int'l*. Indeed, on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2015, the High Court of Olomouc (Czech Republic) issued a resolution cancelling the decision of the Regional Court in Brno in its entirety and ordering it to make a new decision. The Brno Court had sentenced Jaroslav Dobes and Barbora Plaskova in absentia respectively to 10 and 9.5 years of imprisonment with strict regime for allegedly committing multiple rapes. No new court decision has been issued in the last ten months.

For one year, the twenty-month old son of single parent Barbora Plaskova, has been left without parental custody since she has been illegally detained in the Bagong Diwa Camp (Manila). The child, who has his mother's Czech citizenship, was left without his nursing mother at the age of five months. Japanese friends of Barbora Plaskova are temporarily taking care of the child.

Since March 2015, the now four-year old daughter of Jaroslav Dobes and a Filipina unemployed mother, has been deprived of the presence and the support of her father.

In the name of these minor children, *Human Rights Without Frontiers Int'l* urges the Filipino authorities to prioritize child's rights and their well-being by releasing Barbora Plaskova and Jaroslav Dobes.

### ***Detention conditions of Barbora Plaskova and Jaroslav Dobes***

#### ***Testimony 1***

Between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> February, Witness 1 (M.K.) had the opportunity to visit the Camp Bagong Diwa immigration detention centre in Manila where the two Czech citizens have been detained for a year.

M.K., a psychologist and a psychotherapist, has some expertise from his work in immigration detention centers in the Czech Republic (SUZ Drahonice), at UMPOD in Brno, at OSPOD, and also from long-term therapeutic work with people and families in difficult life situations.

"Last time I met our spiritual master and Barbora, it was in their spiritual ashram in the southern part of the Philippines in August 2014.

On Friday 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2016, in the afternoon, I went to the detention centre of Camp Bagong Diwa. I was not aware that since autumn 2015 the visiting days had been restricted because of the escape of a Korean prisoner.

I got to a small courtyard of the detention center upon a special request. I was allowed to speak shortly with Barbora. I had also the possibility to greet our master through the bars. He was very skinny, his posture and movements showed a high fatigue. It was obvious from his facial features, although he was happy to see me (all the more so, as my arrival had not been announced).

As I did not come during the visit hours, we spoke together for just about ten minutes. This was possible because of the good relationships that both had managed to secure with the guards.

During the weekend I visited him again, but this time in the first room behind the bars, the so-called visitors' cage.

Our master was really skinny (I guess 10 – 15 kg thinner compared with the summer 2014), he felt so sick for some days that he completely refused any food. Both had a hard flu and fever most of the day. We had to provide them medicines as they did not get any from the local infirmary.

I could clearly see that their strengths were strongly reduced after the 10 month stay here.

Due to their detention conditions that were physically and psychologically very hard, their terrible condition was not surprising. There were unfavourable hygienic conditions, even when the 'visitors' cage' was cleared out. An overall heat, dirt, complete absence of privacy and a lack of personal space are also problematic. Moreover, the interaction with other 'accommodated' people is not good; many of them showed signs of apathy, desperation, psychological disorder. During an afternoon, one of the detained people was swinging with a piece of sharp metal just 10 cm from my head, which made me really nervous as I knew that physical attacks of the 'accommodated' as well as fights appear here on daily basis, even without any logical reason."

### ***Testimony 2***

In February 2016, Witness 2 (M.B.) visited the two prisoners.

"Meals in custody are non-nutritive, mostly consisting of a small portion of rice and overcooked vegetables. They are served in plastic bags. Every day, a yoga student selflessly brings them some food. She is staying in Manila to help them a bit, otherwise they would not survive. During the visits, we always try to bring them quality food, vitamins and necessary medications.

Barbora was suffering from toothache. She also said she is often sick and vomits. At the time of my visit, she had strong fever. At night she fainted due to exhaustion and nurses brought her back to consciousness. Barbora told me how other embassies support their citizens, such as the Korean embassy which regularly brings their people packages of personal care products and food.

Mr Czerny from the Czech consulate has absolutely no interest in helping them. He last visited them in custody when the media reported that our master was dying. Seeing that he was not, he made outrageous remarks."

### ***Testimony 3***

On 29<sup>th</sup> February 2016, Witness 3 (F.M.) went back home after three weeks spent in Manila where he spent almost every day with the two prisoners.

"The interest of the local infirmary, even about serious illness of detainees, is minimal.

In recent days, Barbora suffered significant teeth pain caused by tooth decay and inflammation associated to it. For any visit to the doctor's, a consent of the Czech embassy is required. In the case of the former sickness of our spiritual master, the

opinion of Mr Cerny from the Consulate was negative despite the official request of his attorney.

It should be noted that the interest of other embassies, eg. Australia, Sweden, Korea, China, etc., is quite the opposite. They regularly bring high-quality food, medicines, cigarettes and necessary sanitary equipment to their nationals regardless of the status or severity of the charges.

On the same day, the attorney of our spiritual master came to visit him but the guards did not let him in. It was a first. The guards told him 'Today, there was someone from the Czech Consulate and he said we lied to the newspapers. Nobody will visit him!'"

#### **Testimony 4**

Witness 4 made a short visit to Jaroslav Dobes and Barbora Plaskova in the first days of October 2015.

"The health condition of our master was obviously very serious. He lost a lot of weight. He had no appetite for food or life. He completely rejected food for several days. He was not interested in anything, which I had never experienced with him before. Throughout my visit, he lay on the ground and did not talk much. He himself declared that he was very ill, which I had never heard him say before.

Barbora lost weight significantly due to the harsh environment. She was exhausted, on the verge of her forces. She said that due to the constant stress she had lost half of her hair."

#### **Testimony 5**

Witness 5 (H.M.) visited the prisoners twice in 2015.

"My first visit took place in the last week of July and the first week of August 2015. I was shocked by the terrible conditions in detention custody. The small place was overfull of men. The strong bloody brawls among prisoners were everyday occurrence. We were sitting on the crowded floor, full of trash, cockroaches, stubs and cat excrements. Big rats were also coming by night. The small bag of rice could not be sufficient for an adult man. Our master was suffering from various infections and eczemas. There was no place to have some rest. Nobody was interested in the health of the prisoners and someone's death was not something unusual.

Barbora looked very tired. We could see how she suffered from everyday stress and fatigue, bad hygienic conditions, disputes and fights between female prisoners as well as the bad food. She also suffered from many infections and toothache."

In the absence of a valid court decision in the Czech Republic, charges just remain charges and both defendants are to be considered innocent.

As The Philippines is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, *Human Rights Without Frontiers Int'l* urges the Filipino authorities to bring back Barbora Plaskova and Jaroslav Dobes to their respective children.

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