



## **ASIA/PHILIPPINES – The activist killed in Boracay was a lay Catholic of the Vincentian Family**

Manila (Agenzia Fides) – Dexter Condez was a lay Catholic and belonged to the religious Family of the Society of St. Vincent de 'Paul (Religious Vincentian Family) he was a 26-year-old activist who was killed with eight shots on the island of Boracaya on 22 February. Condez defended the rights and prerogatives of the indigenous group Ati, who are opposed to the exploitation of the land on behalf of construction companies (see Fides 28/02/2013). The Vincentian Family in the Philippines (which includes men, women congregations and lay orders), condemning the brutal killing of one of its lay members, calls for firm action by the police and the government: "While the police have started investigations, those behind this cowardly act are still at large. Condez leaves his family, but also the entire community of Ati, who were trying to regain possession of their land, " writes Fr. Francisco Vargas, President of the Council of the Vincentian Family in the Philippines in a statement sent to Fides.

The text recalls that Condez was committed to the protection of the identity and dignity of the Ati tribe and was in close contact with the local Church of the Diocese of Kalibo. "His murder is a blow to the country's history and of the Church of the Philippines," remarked the statement, inviting everyone to pray.

The last thought is for the community of Ati, which Condez "served with courage and altruism." The Vincentians urge to continue "the work which he left in the name of charity and justice", ensuring their support and solidarity with the indigenous. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 04/03/2013)