

Paul McCartney

July 19, 2013

His Excellency Benigno Aquino III
President of the Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
Malacañang Palace

Dear Mr. President,

I am writing to add my voice to the many others who are supporting the transfer of Mali, the lonely elephant currently being held at the Manila Zoo, to a sanctuary in Thailand as soon as possible. I respectfully urge you to use your good offices to expedite the transfer as, with every single day that she remains in the zoo, Mali suffers.

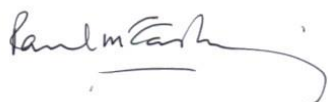
I have great regard for governments that intervene on behalf of animals, just as yours did with the May 2012 directive ordering that Mali be evaluated and considered for transfer. That said, time is passing, and it has been more than a year since that directive was issued—yet Mali seems no closer to enjoying her well-deserved retirement at an approved sanctuary. I have heard from my friends at PETA that various government authorities are continuing to deny that Mali's welfare should be within their jurisdiction and that the veterinarian who was brought in to perform a health assessment failed to address Mali's debilitating foot problems and the unimaginable loneliness of a herd animal kept alone. Action must be taken for this ailing elephant, and you hold the key.

The video footage of Mali is heartbreaking. You only have to have a heart to see what so many experts have already pointed out: that the way she continuously favours one leg is a sign of constant pain. I was shocked to learn that Mali has never even received proper preventive foot care when foot and joint problems are the leading cause of death among captive elephants kept on hard surfaces and when this type of care is something that every reputable zoo in the world offers.

Please know that everyone who cares for elephants is awaiting the day when Mali will leave the zoo for her new retirement home at the sanctuary and—surrounded by other elephants—take her first steps in freedom. With the stroke of a pen, you can bring an end to her suffering, and I urge you, with all my heart, to direct that Mali be given that joy now.

Let me end with a quote from Mahatma Gandhi that I hope you believe in, too: “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul McCartney', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

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