

SENATE

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A RESOLUTION

COMMENDING THE PHILIPPINE RED CROSS IN ALLEVIATING HUMAN SUFFERING IN ITS HUMANITARIAN COOPERATION AND PARTNERSHIP WITH THE HONG KONG RED CROSS DURING THE QUIRINO GRANDSTAND BUS HOSTAGE CRISIS AND ITS AFTERMATH

WHEREAS, on August 23, 2010 dismissed Philippine National Police (PNP) Senior Inspector Rolando Mendoza, from the Manila Police District (MPD) hijacked a tour bus carrying 25 people consisting of 20 tourists and a tour guide all from Hong Kong, and, four Filipinos in what is now called the Quirino Grandstand Bus Hostage Crisis;

WHEREAS, Mendoza said he was summarily dismissed, he was deprived of a fair trial and that he wanted his job back;

WHEREAS, six (6) ambulance teams from the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) National Headquarters and from the PRC chapters of Manila, Pasay and Caloocan cities were immediately dispatched to the Quirino Grandstand that morning and activated other Metro Manila Chapters to render assistance and alerted the Blood Bank to be ready to supply any need for blood;

WHEREAS, PRC Social Services conducted critical incident stress debriefing on the nine (9) hostage victims released that afternoon and facilitated their transfer from the Command Outpost back to the Manila Pavilion Hotel where they were billeted;

WHEREAS, when negotiations broke down ten hours into the siege and the ensuing rescue assault and shootout resulted to the death of eight (8) hostages and Mendoza and injuries to nine (9) other people, the PRC ambulance teams transported four (4) victims to Manila Doctors Hospital and one (1) to Ospital ng Maynila that evening;

WHEREAS, PRC Chairman Richard J. Gordon, who was in Hong Kong at that time immediately communicated with the Hong Kong Red Cross (HKRC) and provided a tracing report of all victims that night;

WHEREAS, the rescue and assault watched by millions worldwide on live television news feeds that were subsequently uploaded on the Internet, on YouTube and Facebook resulted to shame and disappointment of Filipinos worldwide;

WHEREAS, in the aftermath, interviews and articles point out the humanitarian efforts of Filipinos in the Red Cross in coordination with their counterparts in Hong Kong;

WHEREAS, in an August 24 Tuesday morning interview by Cable News Network (CNN) Rosemarie Church in Hong Kong, PRC Chairman Gordon commiserated with the victims and their families saying that "what is most important is that we express our deepest condolences and prayers to the families and victims and I speak for the entire Filipino nation who don't want this tragedy to happen but things went haywire and that is where the investigation will clear a lot of things";

WHEREAS, PRC Chairman Gordon further informed CNN about the PRC's immediate response by sending ambulances and medical personnel, rendering psychosocial support and tracing all victims, and his subsequent communication and meeting with HKRC that day;

WHEREAS, CNN's Anna Cohen from an interview in Manila on August 24 with survivor Li Yik Bun mentioned that it was the PRC who facilitated Bun's release after they were informed of his medical condition by his wife;

WHEREAS, the Chinese newspaper Hong Kong Economic Times (HKET), in an article dated August 28, 2010 mentioned PRC humanitarian care and assistance to victims particularly of Mrs. Fu and her two children, who lost her husband Fu Chuk Yan;

WHEREAS, Mrs. Fu's four-year old daughter Fu Chung Yin could not discern the meaning of death but her ten-year old son Fu Chak Yin could not bear the loss of his father, had nightmares and cried a lot that he had to be comforted to sleep by PRC Social Worker Noemi Abon to whom Mrs. Fu even offered money but which Abon refused to accept, stating that it was their duty to help and instead suggested that Ms. Fu donate to the HKRC;

WHEREAS, HKRC Secretary General KM Chan thanked PRC Chairman Gordon during the latter's visit on August 24 saying "We are also deeply grateful for the care your staff and volunteers had given the Hong Kong hostages," and pledged to pay a visit to the PRC;

WHEREAS, HKRC Acting Head for International Relief Services Betty Lau expressed her deep gratitude for Gordon's visit and for "the timely and much-needed assistance rendered to the needy during the tragic hostage-taking incident in Manila" and even committed US\$ 110,000 as financial assistance for the victims of Typhoon Ketsana (Typhoon Ondoy) when informed by Chairman Gordon of the said victims' continuing plight;

WHEREAS, beyond the criticism and blame-fixing in government, police and media, we must recognize the PRC for their courageous efforts in consonance with their motto "Always First, Always Ready, Always There" during every disaster or tragedy;

WHEREAS, the PRC - from Chairman Gordon, Secretary General Gwen Pang, Social Services Manager Aida Beltajar, Emergency Response Unit National Field Representative Leo Ebajo, Social Worker Noemi Abon, Staff Members Beverly Molina and Marco Abrazado up to the volunteers and personnel of NHQ and the Chapters of Manila, Pasay and Caloocan cities, who rose to the challenge, all deserve our gratitude;

WHEREAS, the PRC and HKRC, in their partnership to extend humanitarian services to alleviate suffering of the most vulnerable, have demonstrated their capacity to rise above whatever strained relationship exists with the Hong Kong Chinese and thereby must be upheld and supported;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, by the Senate of the Philippines, that the Senate commend and support the Philippine Red Cross in alleviating human suffering in its humanitarian cooperation and partnership with the Hong Kong Red Cross during the Quirino Grandstand Bus Hostage Crisis and its aftermath.

Adopted,



JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI