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SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 443

RECEIVED BY:

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

RESOLUTION CALLING ON THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO PURSUE THE CONVENING OF THE JOINT COMMISSION MEETING WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA TO ADDRESS MATTERS AFFECTING OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS IN SAUDI ARABIA, INCLUDING THE RECENT ISSUE ON THE SUSPENSION OF THE PROCESSING AND VERIFICATION OF APPLICATIONS BY FILIPINO DOMESTIC WORKERS BOUND FOR SAUDI ARABIA, AND OTHER MEASURES TO EXPAND TECHNICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE PHILIPPINES AND THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

WHEREAS, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is host to over 1.5 million Filipinos;

WHEREAS, a yearly average of 268,590 workers left for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the period 2007 to 2009;

WHEREAS, 110,580 workers or 41% of the deployed workers for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia from 2007 to 2009 were new hires;

WHEREAS, remittances from Filipinos in Saudi Arabia reached US\$1.5 billion in 2010 alone;

WHEREAS, the Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a *note verbale* on 12 March 2011, temporarily suspending the processing and verification of applications by Filipino domestic workers "until further notice";

WHEREAS, this development have implications upon departing Filipino domestic workers bound for Saudi Arabia and those whose contracts are bound to expire in the coming months;

WHEREAS, the Philippines has been deploying Filipinos to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia since the 1970s;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Migrants Workers Act, as amended, provide that it shall be the policy of the State to deploy overseas Filipino workers only in countries where the rights of overseas Filipinos are protected;

WHEREAS, the Department of Foreign Affairs should undertake efforts for the convening of the Philippines-Saudi Arabia Joint Commission to meet on a wide range of matters affecting overseas Filipino workers in Saudi Arabia, including

the Transfer of Sentenced Persons;

WHEREAS, the third and last Philippines-Saudi Arabia Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) was held on 14-15 October 2008;

WHEREAS, the Philippine government needs to build on the results of the last JCM, in cooperation with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with the view to addressing matters affecting Filipino workers in Saudi Arabia;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to call on the Department of Foreign Affairs to pursue the convening of the Joint Commission Meeting with the government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to address matters affecting overseas Filipino workers in Saudi Arabia, including the recent issue on the suspension of the processing and verification of applications by Filipino domestic workers bound for Saudi Arabia, and other measures to expand technical cooperation between the Philippines and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.



LOREN LEGARDA