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Senate
P.S. Resolution No. **877**

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Introduced by: Senator Paolo Benigno "Bam" A. Aquino IV

RESOLUTION

COMMENDING AND HONORING FILIPINO UN PEACEKEEPERS IN GOLAN HEIGHTS FOR DEMONSTRATING EXEMPLARY COURAGE AND RESOLVE IN THE RECENT STAND-OFF AGAINST SYRIAN REBELS, SUCCESSFULLY CARRYING OUT THEIR PEACE KEEPING MISSION, AND REFLECTING THE PROFESSIONALISM AND COMPETENCE OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES

Whereas, peacekeepers from the Philippines form an integral part of the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) Mission that has been monitoring a ceasefire agreement between Syria and Israel. The other countries contributing troops to the UNDOF Mission include Fiji, India, Ireland, Nepal and the Netherlands;

Whereas, Syrian rebels entered the UN-patrolled buffer zone between Syria and Israel, capturing forty-four (44) Fijian peacekeepers and demanding the surrender of Filipino peacekeepers occupying two UN encampments in the Golan Heights last 28 August 2014. Despite being surrounded and outnumbered by the Syrian rebels, the Filipino peacekeepers refused to surrender their arms and continued to defend their position, leading to a four-day stand off;

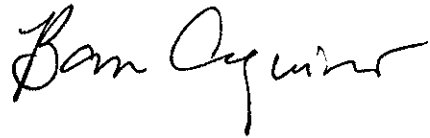
Whereas, the first group of thirty-five (35) peacekeepers stationed at the UN encampment in Breiqa (Position 69) were rescued by Irish and Filipino forces on 30 August 2014. The second group of forty (40) Filipino peacekeepers remained in the second UN encampment in Rwhihan (Position 68), where they fought back against the Syrian rebel force. According to Philippine military officials, the Filipinos returned fire in self-defense after more than one hundred (100) gunmen attacked the camp's gates and fired mortar rounds;

Whereas, after withstanding seven (7) hours under heavy fire, the Filipino peacekeepers, low on ammunition, successfully planned and implemented their escape on the night of 30 August 2014 under cover of darkness, with guidance and support from Philippine military and defense leaders, the UN Force Headquarters, and from Syrian, Israeli, US and Qatar governments. Burdened with heavy weapons and the cold weather, they walked for nearly two hours to meet up with other UN forces who escorted them to safety;

Whereas, the Filipino peacekeepers from Position 68 and 69 have now been repositioned to Camp Ziuoani behind UN lines. According to Philippine officials, the Filipino peacekeepers would remain in Golan until their mission ends in October 2014, despite the escalating violence, in fulfillment of the Philippine's commitment to international security and to the community of nations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved that the Senate of the Philippines commend and honor the Filipino UN peacekeepers stationed in Golan Heights for demonstrating exemplary courage and resolve in the recent stand-off against Syrian rebels, successfully carrying out their peace keeping mission, and reflecting the professionalism and competence of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Adopted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Aquino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.