

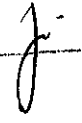
SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC )  
OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Second Regular Session )



Senate  
Office of the Secretary

15 MAR 11 P3:27

SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 1230

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID  
OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORT THAT FOREIGN POACHERS ARE SPOTTED  
DAILY IN THE KALAYAAN ISLAND GROUP

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 16, provides: "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Star* on 2 March 2015 reported that boats of foreign poachers are spotted daily in Kalayaan Island Group;

WHEREAS, the officials reportedly said that more than 300 boats carrying foreign poachers can be seen every day in the Kalayaan Island Group, but could not be arrested by government forces due to lack of equipment;

WHEREAS, Kalayaan Mayor Eugenio Bito-onon reportedly said that poachers from countries like China, Vietnam, and Malaysia outnumber local fishermen in their area, which is part of the disputed Spratlys archipelago;

WHEREAS, Bito-onon claimed that there are 300 boats per day from China, Vietnam, and Malaysia that did not secure a mayor's permit and they are not registered in the Philippines;

WHEREAS, one study said that the island is losing about ₱18 billion worth of marine products per year;

WHEREAS, Bito-onon explained that since the Philippines has a lot of internal waters, many fishermen do not see the need to venture into the West Philippine Sea and the ones who reportedly benefit from the marine resources are poachers;

1           WHEREAS, Bito-onon said some poachers even use dynamite, smuggle endangered  
2 turtles, and harvest and destroy clams, and if the destruction of the environment continues, the  
3 marine resources will run out;

4           WHEREAS, the Scarborough Shoal, known locally as Panatag Shoal, is located only 124  
5 nautical miles from its nearest point in Zambales;

6           WHEREAS, Chinese ships started occupying the area in 2012 after the Philippine Navy  
7 tried to arrest Chinese poachers who had harvested endangered marine species, as Bito-onon  
8 explained, China and Vietnam have strong mobile phone signals here that would allow arrested  
9 poachers to ask help from their respective countries;

10           WHEREAS, China has since barred local fishermen from entering what was once  
11 considered a traditional fishing route;

12           WHEREAS, Armed Forces Western Command Chief Vice Admiral Alexander Lopez  
13 admitted that the lack of naval assets prevents them from enforcing the country's laws against  
14 poaching;

15           WHEREAS, it is unfortunate that while we are monitoring these poachers and the  
16 degradation of our marine resources, we simply do not have the resources to monitor them on a  
17 24-hour basis;

18           WHEREAS, since they are at sea, we need to have water assets;

19           WHEREAS, Kalayaan is a fifth-class municipality in Palawan located in Pag-Asa, the  
20 biggest Philippine island in the Spratlys archipelago, which is also being claimed in whole or in  
21 part by China, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan;

22           WHEREAS, the government should provide the Army Navy with enough naval assets to  
23 assist and help them in enforcing the our existing laws against poaching;

1           WHEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE PHILIPPINE SENATE to direct  
2 the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the report that  
3 poachers are spotted daily in the Kalayaan Island Group.

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO  
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