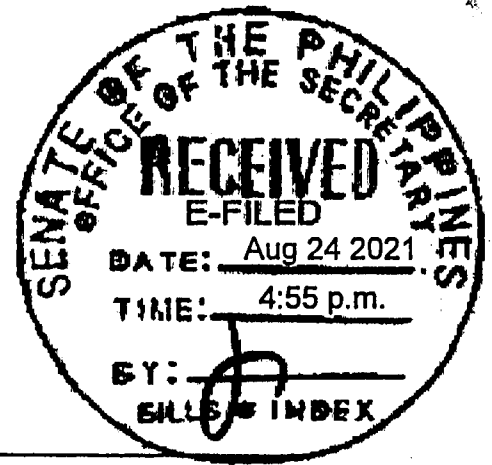


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)

SENATE

P.S.R. No. 881



INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE TO URGE THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH TO EXTEND URGENT AND IMMEDIATE AID, INCLUDING THE OPENING OF BORDERS, TO AFGHAN REFUGEES, ESPECIALLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN, FLEEING THE TALIBAN

WHEREAS, less than a week ago, the world had been stunned by the swift advance of the Taliban in Afghanistan and the capture of its major cities, causing palpable panic among Afghans who scrambled to the Kabul airport in hopes of seeking refuge outside of their country;

WHEREAS, despite the conciliatory tone adopted by the Taliban and its statement that the rights of women and girls will be allowed in Afghanistan and they will be allowed to work and study, the situation on the ground and its actions of the past few years do not reflect this;

WHEREAS, the Taliban has said that 'women are going to be very active within our society' and that it wants women to join its government but reports are coming from some areas of Afghanistan that the Taliban is already ordering women to change the way they dress, sending women home from university, and telling employed women not to return to work;†

WHEREAS, the return to power of the Taliban will severely limit the mobility of women, compromising their ability to perform everyday and lifesaving tasks such as going to hospitals and seeking health services, with reports coming in as early as July that women were ordered not to attend health services without a male guardian in some early Taliban-controlled areas;‡

WHEREAS, reports also surfaced that sexual violence rose in the recent onslaught with Taliban commanders demanding communities to 'turn over unmarried women to become wives for their fighters';‡

WHEREAS, since the start of this year, more than 500 children were killed and 1400 more injured as a result of the conflict, making child casualties in the first half of 2021 the highest ever number since the United Nations began keeping records;‡

WHEREAS, UNICEF foresees that if no urgent action is taken, a million children under the age of 5 will be severely malnourished by the end of 2021 and that recruitment of children by armed groups will become commonplace;^v

WHEREAS, since May 2021, there has been a sharp rise in civilian casualties, in which 46% of the deaths were comprised of women and children^{vi};

WHEREAS, women and children make up 80% of the displaced persons in Afghanistan this year;^{vii}

WHEREAS, Afghan journalists, women human rights defenders, women leaders and other high profile women in the Afghan government have been backed into a corner with little or no options, leaving them with no choice but to flee and hide from the Taliban;

WHEREAS, Zarifa Ghafari, one of Afghanistan's youngest and first female mayors, has said that she is waiting for the Taliban to 'come and kill her', because she was left with no options of where to go and that 'there is no one to help me or my family';^{viii}

WHEREAS, the world risks losing a generation of smart, intelligent, and courageous women leaders if the Taliban succeeds in capturing and persecuting them;

WHEREAS, the Philippines has announced that we are willing to accept refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan;^{ix}

WHEREAS, last August 18, DOJ Sec. Guevarra stated that if Afghan nationals do seek refuge in the country, the DOJ and BI will be managing and accommodating their requests and applications for permanent status as refugees and issuing appropriate documentation;^x

WHEREAS, he further stated that an emergency transit mechanism is in place if Afghan refugees need temporary shelter in the Philippines and that there is no specific quota on the number of refugees that can be accepted by the country;^{xi}

WHEREAS, there is no well-defined order of priority as to who will be granted refugee status and that successful applicants will be essentially left on their own once their refugee status is granted, but DOJ Sec. Guevarra said the Philippine government 'may extend such assistance as it could afford';^{xii}

WHEREAS, the National Government Agencies may be called to assist the refugees and coordinate for the arrangements for their shelter, provision of crucial and emergency health services, especially to expecting women, and expedite the processing of their visas and other travel documents, while keeping in mind the limitations brought by the COVID pandemic;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED TO EXPRESS THE SENSE OF THE SENATE TO URGE THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH TO EXTEND

**URGENT AND IMMEDIATE AID, INCLUDING THE OPENING OF BORDERS, TO
AFGHAN REFUGEES, ESPECIALLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN, FLEEING THE
TALIBAN**

Adopted,

Risa Hontiveros
RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/58231537>

² <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/08/17/asia/afghanistan-women-taliban-intl-hnk-dst/index.html>

³ <https://thediplomat.com/2021/08/talibans-return-has-afghan-women-living-in-fear/>

⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/geneva-palais-briefing-note-current-situation-children-afghanistan>

⁵ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/geneva-palais-briefing-note-current-situation-children-afghanistan>

⁶ <https://www.nbcnews.com/know-your-value/feature/women-girls-afghanistan-are-petrified-what-women-s-rights-organizations-ncna1276988>

⁷ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/08/1098162>

⁸ <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/female-mayor-afghanistan-says-she-s-waiting-taliban-come-kill-n1276914>

⁹ <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2021/8/17/PH-admit-Afghan-refugees-asylum-seekers-Palace.html>

¹⁰ <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1150828>

¹¹ *ibid*

¹² *ibid*