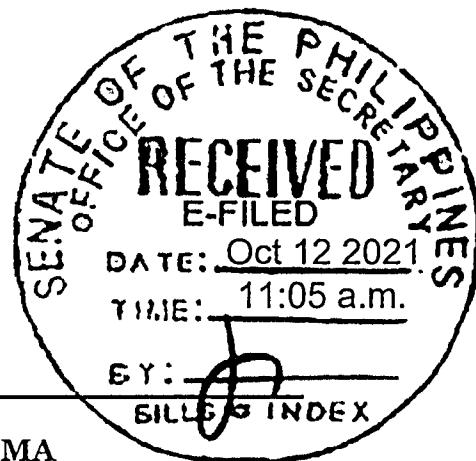


EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Third Regular Session)

SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 930



Introduced by **SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA**

RESOLUTION
CONGRATULATING RAPPLER FOUNDER AND CEO, MARIA RESSA,
FOR BEING THE FIRST FILIPINO RECIPIENT OF THE NOBEL PEACE
PRIZE OWING TO HER EXTRAORDINARY COURAGE AND
UNWAVERING EFFORTS IN FIGHTING FOR TRUTH, DEMOCRACY,
FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND OF THE PRESS

1 WHEREAS, the Philippine Senate has always honored remarkable Filipinos
2 for their outstanding legacy and service to the people;

3 WHEREAS, on Friday, 8 October 2021, it was announced that Rappler’s
4 Founder and CEO, Maria Ressa, was one of two media workers – and the first ever
5 Filipino individual – to win the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize for their work to protect
6 freedom of the press and freedom of expression;¹

7 WHEREAS, back in February 2021, Norwegian labor leader and
8 parliamentary representative Jonas Gahr Støre nominated Ressa, Reporters Without
9 Borders, and the Committee to Protect Journalists for the 2021 Prize. In his
10 nomination, Støre stated that “She [Ressa] is thus both a symbol and a representative
11 of thousands of journalists around the world. The nomination fulfills key aspects of
12 what is emphasized as peace-promoting in Alfred Nobel's will. A free and
13 independent press can inform about and help to limit and stop a development that
14 leads to armed conflict and war”;²

¹ Lalu, G. P. (8 October 2021). *Filipino journalist Maria Ressa one of two 2021 Nobel Peace Prize awardees*. Retrieved 10 October 2021, from <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1499281/filipino-journalist-maria-ressa-one-of-two-2021-nobel-peace-prize-awardees>

² Rappler.com. (8 October 2021). *Rappler’s Maria Ressa, Dmitry Muratov win 2021 Nobel Peace Prize*. Retrieved 10 October 2021, from <https://www.rappler.com/about/winners-nobel-peace-prize-2021>

1 WHEREAS, in its announcement, the Norwegian Nobel Committee said that it
2 has decided to award the prize for 2021 to Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov “for
3 their efforts to safeguard freedom of expression, which is a precondition for
4 democracy and lasting peace.” It added that Maria Ressa is receiving the award for
5 her “courageous fight for freedom of expression in the Philippines”, and for being a
6 representative of all journalists “who stand up for this ideal in a world in which
7 democracy and freedom of the press face increasingly adverse conditions”;³

8 WHEREAS, the Committee highlighted the fact that Maria Ressa “uses
9 freedom of expression to expose abuse of power, use of violence and growing
10 authoritarianism in her native country, the Philippines.”⁴ As a journalist and
11 Rappler’s CEO, the Committee affirmed that Maria Ressa “has shown herself to be a
12 fearless defender of freedom of expression”;

13 WHEREAS, Ressa and Rappler have been the target of attacks for her media
14 organization’s critical coverage of President Rodrigo Duterte’s administration and a
15 key leader in the global fight against disinformation;⁵

16 WHEREAS, the attacks against Ressa and Rappler have reached the world
17 stage when Rappler cast a harsh but truthful light on the extrajudicial killings
18 attributed to President Duterte’s bloody drug war upon assuming office in 2016;⁶

19 WHEREAS, in June 2020, Ressa and former Rappler researcher Reynaldo
20 Santos Jr. were convicted of cyber libel – a judgment Rappler regards as a failure of
21 justice and democracy. Ressa and Santos are out on bail, and have filed their appeal
22 with the Court of Appeals. This is one of at least seven active cases pending in court
23 against Rappler as of 10 August 2021;⁷

24 WHEREAS, prior to her Nobel Peace Prize award, Maria Ressa has also
25 received international acclaim for her courage and work on disinformation and “fake
26 news”. In 2018, she was named Time Magazine’s Person of the Year, was among its
27 100 Most Influential People of 2019, and has also been named one of Time’s Most
28 Influential Women of the Century. She was also part of the BBC’s 100 most inspiring

³ The Nobel Peace Prize (08 October 2021) *The Nobel Peace Prize 2021 Announcement*. Retrieved 10 October 2021 from: <https://www.nobelprize.org/prizes/peace/2021/press-release/>

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Supra* Note 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

1 and influential women of 2019 and Prospect magazine’s world’s top 50 thinkers. In
2 2020, she received the Journalist of the Year award, the John Aubuchon Press
3 Freedom Award, the Most Resilient Journalist Award, the Tucholsky Prize, the Truth
4 to Power Award, and the Four Freedoms Award;⁸

5 WHEREAS, among many awards for her principled stance, she received the
6 prestigious Golden Pen of Freedom Award from the World Association of
7 Newspapers and News Publishers, the Knight International Journalism Award from
8 the International Center for Journalists, the Gwen Ifill Press Freedom Award from
9 the Committee to Protect Journalists, the Shorenstein Journalism Award from
10 Stanford University, the Columbia Journalism Award, the Free Media Pioneer Award
11 from the International Press Institute, and the Sergei Magnitsky Award for
12 Investigative Journalism;⁹

13 WHEREAS, Ressa has been a dedicated journalist in Asia for over 35 years.
14 Prior to founding Rappler, Ressa focused on investigating terrorism in Southeast
15 Asia. She opened and ran CNN’s Manila Bureau for nearly a decade before opening
16 the network’s Jakarta bureau, which she ran from 1995 to 2005. She wrote *Seeds of*
17 *Terror: An Eyewitness Account of al-Qaeda’s Newest Center of Operations in*
18 *Southeast Asia* and *From Bin Laden to Facebook: 10 Days of Abduction, 10 Years of*
19 *Terrorism*;¹⁰

20 WHEREAS, Maria Ressa’s historic feat is definitive proof that press freedom
21 is still universally recognized as a critical component in any functional democracy,
22 and a monumental slap in the face of oppressive and tyrannical regimes, both past
23 and present;

24 WHEREAS, as the Norwegian Nobel Committee has declared in its 2021
25 announcement, “[f]ree independent and fact-based journalism serves to protect
26 against abuse of power, lies and war propaganda” and that “freedom of expression

⁸ Rappler.com. (n.d.). *ABOUT MARIA A. RESSA*. Retrieved 10 October 2021, from
https://www.rappler.com/author/maria-a-ressa?fbclid=IwAR3MoSBmBCLzUWG_ckf1NVHBAXRGWgJJaGHids8w3456GImn1pqRpLgkW-Q

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

1 and freedom of information help to ensure an informed public. These rights are
2 crucial prerequisites for democracy and protect against war and conflict”;¹¹

3 WHEREAS, her win is as remarkable as it is symbolic, especially under severe
4 oppressive circumstances surrounding those who speak truth to power. At a crucial
5 time for journalists in the Philippines, Maria Ressa’s victory sends a message loud
6 and clear: the world is watching and democracy overcomes even the strongest forces
7 to subdue it;

8 WHEREAS, in congratulating and honoring Maria Ressa for her unwavering
9 efforts in fighting for the freedom of expression and of the press, this would signify to
10 the Filipino people that the Senate remains true to its principles as a bastion of
11 democracy, freedom, truth, justice and independence;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, to congratulate
13 Rappler founder and CEO, Maria Ressa, for being the first Filipino recipient of the
14 Nobel Peace Prize owing to her extraordinary courage and unwavering efforts in
15 fighting for truth, democracy, freedom of expression and of the press.

Adopted,


BEILA M. DE LIMA

¹¹ *Supra* Note 3.