



**REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**

**S e n a t e**

**Pasay City**

# **Journal**

**SESSION NO. 63**

Wednesday, February 23, 2005

**THIRTEENTH CONGRESS  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

**SESSION NO. 63**  
Wednesday, February 23, 2005

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 3:57 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Franklin M. Drilon, called the session to order.

**PRAYER**

Sen. Sergio R. Osmeña III led the prayer, to wit:

*"I saw well why the gods do not speak to us openly, nor let us answer. Till that word can be dug out of us, why should they hear the babble that we think we mean? How can they meet us face to face till we have faces?"*

-- C. S. Lewis

Hear, O God Almighty,  
our humble exaltation of Your Name,  
And let us glorify Your love,  
wisdom and compassion.  
Accept, O Lord, our unspoken gratitude  
for your blessings –  
Our life, our family, our nation,  
and others yet, deserved or not.  
Forgive us, dear Father,  
our inadequacies and weaknesses,  
Look not upon our human selfishness  
and blight.  
Teach us, instead, the mystery  
of Your fortitude and love,  
And lead us to the path You have drawn  
for us to tread.  
Hearken unto us, Teacher and Friend,  
Calming our trembling hands and guide them,  
That we may always do what is best  
for our nation,  
So our people may live and breathe  
and smile again.  
Feed our minds, feel our hearts,  
and fill our souls,  
Lend us Your wisdom and sincerity  
That we may truly transform this bit of earth

Into a "land whose fragrance we sniff  
at the edge of our dreams."

All these in earnest prayer we ask,  
So that one day we can meet You  
face to face.

Amen.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary of the Senate, Oscar G. Yabes, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Arroyo, J. P.	Lapid, M. L. M.
Drilon, F. M.	Magsaysay Jr., R. M.
Ejercito Estrada, J.	Osmeña III, S. R.
Ejercito Estrada, L. L. P.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Enrile, J. P.	Pimentel Jr., A. Q.
Flavier, J. M.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Gordon, R. J.	Roxas, M.
Lacson, P. M.	Villar Jr., M. B.

With 16 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senators Angara, Biazon, Lim, Madrigal and Recto arrived after the roll call.

Senator Cayetano was on official mission abroad.

Senator Defensor Santiago was absent on account of illness.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF  
THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS**

Senator Pangilinan acknowledged the presence of the following guests: Mayor Lourdes Señar of Magarao, Camarines Sur and members of the municipal council; representatives of Jesus Movement led by National Director Pastor Gus Lising; officers of *Bangon Pilipinas* Movement led by Deputy Director General Pastor Dong Cocho and chair Ms. Tracy C. Sison.

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JG

**APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body dispensed with the reading of the Journal of Session No. 62 and considered it approved.

**REFERENCE OF BUSINESS**

The Secretary of the Senate read the following matters and the Chair made the corresponding referrals:

**BILLS ON FIRST READING**

Senate Bill No. 1925, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BUSINESS ENTERPRISES BY OVERSEAS FILIPINOS (OFs), PROVIDING INCENTIVES AND BENEFITS THEREOF, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Pangilinan

**To the Committees on Economic Affairs; Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development; and Ways and Means**

Senate Bill No. 1926, entitled

AN ACT TO INTEGRATE IN THE CURRICULA OF ALL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS INCLUDING NON-FORMAL, INDIGENOUS LEARNING AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMS, A COURSE ON PHILIPPINE SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

**To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; and Environment and Natural Resources**

Senate Bill No. 1927, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AN EMERGENCY RICE RESERVE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada

**To the Committees on Agriculture and Food; and Finance**

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Committee Report No. 12, prepared and submitted by the Committee on foreign Relations on Proposed Senate Resolution No. 195, entitled

RESOLUTION CONCURRING IN THE RATIFICATION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON TOBACCO CONTROL,

recommending its approval without amendment.

Sponsor: Senator Defensor Santiago, Miriam

**To the Calendar for Ordinary Business**

**ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS****BILLS ON FIRST READING**

Senate Bill No. 1928, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A COUNCIL FOR DEBT RELIEF TO REVIEW BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL LOAN AGREEMENTS AND TREATIES ENTERED INTO BY THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT AND INVOKE THE RELEVANT PRIVILEGES THAT WOULD FACILITATE CANCELLATION OF ODIOUS DEBTS AND/OR RESTRUCTURING OF DEBTS TO EASE DEBT PAYMENTS

Introduced by Senator Villar, Jr.

**To the Committees on Finance; and Economic Affairs**

Senate Bill No. 1929, entitled

AN ACT REVISING REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9136 ENTITLED AN ACT ORDAINING REFORMS IN THE ELECTRIC POWER INDUSTRY,

AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE  
CERTAIN LAWS AND FOR OTHER  
PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Enrile

To the Committees on Energy; and Public  
Services

**RESOLUTION**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 196, entitled

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR,  
EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN  
RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT TO  
CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID  
OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE  
RATIONALE OF E.O. 182, AS  
AMENDED BY E.O. 392,  
MANDATING THE TRANSFER OF  
OFW MEDICARE FUNDS FROM THE  
OWWA TO PHILHEALTH

Introduced by Senator Jinggoy Ejercito  
Estrada

To the Committee on Labor, Employment  
and Human Resources Development

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

With the permission of the Body, the Chair  
suspended the session.

*It was 4:03 p.m.*

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 4:03 p.m., the session was resumed.

**PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR LIM**

Availing himself of the privilege hour,  
Senator Lim delivered the following speech:

You and I, I know, were revolting ...  
furious and despaired, when last Valentine's  
Day was tragically turned into red by the  
proud and bragging Abu Sayyaf Group, the  
terrorists group who refused to confine their  
ravage, sack and pillage in the mountains.

Adding ignominy to their bloody attack...  
they went to the radio and proclaimed their  
rejoicing because they gifted her Excellency,  
President Gloria Arroyo, with its red symbol  
in bloody red at the expense of those six (6)  
innocent fatalities, who drenched in blood  
along with the other passengers of the ill-  
fated RRCG bus that exploded, while slowly  
moving underneath the Edsa-Ayala Station  
of Metro Rail Transit, just a few meters  
from the Hotel Intercontinental where the  
Chief Executive of the land and the First  
Gentleman Mike Arroyo, were supposed to  
celebrate their Valentine's Day dinner.

But those who died refused to rest in  
peace, unless their vicious, brutal and  
ruthless killers are identified, publicly  
condemned and punished for their  
abominable crimes no matter how, as long  
as the lives that they mercilessly snuffed-  
out in blood are bestowed with the  
compelling requital, no matter how in the  
soonest possible time.

This clamor for justice is not a dream.  
It is as real as the gigantic feet of those  
consummate, agile and dedicated officers  
and men in the combined forces, under the  
AFP Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Efren Abu and  
also Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan of the Armed  
Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and Director  
Avelino Razon Jr. of the National Capital  
Region Police Office (NCRPO), under  
Major General Roberto Delfin, had given us  
a gratifying result within a commendable  
short period of time. They were undoubtedly  
mocked, insulted, derided and dared. Our  
*men-in-uniform* accepted and they won in  
their dauntless, clever and decisive fight  
against these terrorists.

Only a week after their bloody red  
bomb attack on the said ill-fated RRCG bus  
in Makati City, the two (2) suspects, Abu  
Khalil alias Angelo Trinidad and Gamal  
Baharan alias "Tapay" were arrested... still  
roaming in the metropolis. But they can no  
longer sow terror... they are now behind  
military bars recounting their confessed job  
that was assigned to them by their ASG  
leader Jainal alias Abu Solaiman, and no  
longer in glee, for having assembled their

two-kilo TNT with a Nokia cellphone as the triggering device, as in fact, they may no longer be given even a last chance to assemble any other explosive, for as long as the indefatigable and dedicated Anti-Terrorism Task Force (ATTF) agents who ably, impressively and expeditiously turned them into the folds of law and wrote *finis* to the criminal atrocities of these terrorists within our midst.

These officers and men deserve our respect... our appreciation ... our gratitude. I could not resist telling them, "*Thank You.*" Thank you for the efforts to bring back the faith of the citizenry to the rule of law... Thank you for proving that there are survivors of that uniform, which I once donned and of which I have been honored to wear as a policeman... Thank you for your fulfillment of other death-defying tasks, where your lives were volunteered to be at stake... Thank you for winning it just like our esteemed DILG Secretary Angelo Reyes, for the commendable arrest of the alleged "Kidnap for Ransom group" of the then powerful ex-Congressman Dennis Roldan of Quezon City. The awesome dispatch by which the apprehension of a 3-year old Filipino-Chinese boy, in the premises of his nursery school in Ortigas for a P250 million ransom, is compelling not mere praises but public commendation, for these unnamed but dedicated officers and men, who are still on the tail of the reported mastermind of the heist, Suzette See Huang, whose days of freedom from jail must have been counted. They are indubitably worthy of elation and recognition because they are living proofs of dedicated men in the police who fulfill their sworn duty with such consummate dispatch and competence. Keep it up and rekindle the faith of our constituents to the POLICE FORCE. I stand to say a heartfelt congratulations. We salute you. Thus, I request, with your indulgence, a standing ovation for such emulatory and inspiring achievements of these officers and men, the gallant officers and men of the PNP.

After all, as the adage says: "In this little world, men, mostly in uniform, knew how to die." Just like the Philippine Air

Force (PAF) 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Moreno Servito of the 730<sup>th</sup> Combat Group who was gunned down while on a dauntless security patrol at Puting Kahoy in Barangay Cumba, in Lian, Batangas. His wounded comrades failed to save him to the glory of his unidentified NPA-ambushers whose killing spree, admittedly, has no term, as yet. His demise is a great loss to us just like that of the 47-year old SPO1 Antonio Arzala, an intelligence officer of the District Intelligence Unit (DIU) of the WPD, who was felled by a lone fatal bullet of an still unknown assassin, while fulfilling his death-defying task, along with his four (4) colleagues in the evening of February 21, 2005, in the crime-prone Quiapo area. His death was tragic and untimely. But he bequeathed not only to his bereaved family, but to us, a badge of a dead hero embellished with the good and commendable deed of another man-in-uniform, a badge which is a mute witness that good cops are not yet mythical in this society, although, I hope his killer or killers will not go scot-free, forever sneering at his fellow police cops in uniform, just like our almost forgotten Police Col. Manolo Martinez, who was brutally shot ... slain ... murdered, in the immediate vicinity of the station on which he was at the helm. The killers are still at large and the case has not been solved.

Beyond cavil ... we abhor crimes ... we cannot compromise these evils ... and we can not succumb to its pressures ... no matter what. There is nothing in my fingers for me to count ... during my most memorable police-era in my youth ... even a single case where slain policeman was ever laid to rest, without his murderer or murderers resting too in coffin or coffins. If ever ... those were short periods of freedom from the clutches of the same DEATH, that he or they imposed on any man in the police force. I know such sacred proof of bonded camaraderie among the men-in-uniform, not only in our country but also in all nations, should not be lost in oblivion. It must not be exploiting ... let us be positive that the REAL KILLERS, THE REAL PERPETRATORS ... the GENUINE CRIMINALS pay for the crimes. Otherwise, we cannot

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EXTOL those who ARRESTED them... we cannot, in conscience, tolerate "fall-guys" ... we cannot feign pretense or hypocrisy ... because as legislators ... we can only adhere by the law... by equity ... and by JUSTICE.

We salute the men in uniform of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF SENATOR PIMENTEL

Also availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Pimentel delivered the following speech:

Yesterday, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* has a secondary headline on the front page that says "RP mutes criticism of Burma's rights record." This has to do with the stand taken by a good number of senators in this Chamber to support the move to prevent Burma or Myanmar from assuming the chairmanship of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) next year. We can understand the position of the President. We cannot expect the President of this country to be as forthright in her criticisms of a member of the ASEAN like we, senators, can sometimes do. At the same time, we believe that considering the track record of Burma or Myanmar in the treatment of its own citizens, we submit that this country has no moral ascendancy whatsoever to entitle it to occupy the chairmanship of the ASEAN in the year 2006.

In this connection, for background purposes, may we just put on record that on May 27, 1990, the National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Aung San Suu Kyi won the majority of the parliamentary seats in the elections held in Burma. That was 15 years ago.

What happened was that the NLD, including Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of that league, as well as the winners in that parliamentary election, were prevented from assuming their seats by the Burmese Military Junta or by the Myanmar Military

Junta. And, not only that, they arrested and detained not only Aung San Suu Kyi but the greater number of the NLD members of parliament who were unfortunate not to have fled the borders of Burma or Myanmar to some other nations. The Myanmar government is a dictatorial government. There is no other way to describe it except that they are there by force of bayonets. In effect, they are sitting on a throne of bayonets. Therefore, such a situation does not augur well for the stability of that country as well as for democracy to flourish as we have known that system in our own country.

In fact, as late as 24 August 2004, Aung San Suu Kyi and other NLD leaders were held *incommunicado* in their residences. Foreign diplomats who wanted to visit them were denied permission to do so.

Mr. Soe Win, the newly installed Prime Minister of Burma, was here on a state or official visit two days ago. I would like to mention that I am very well pleased by the statement given by the Senate President that there is a need to speed up the democratization process in Myanmar. I understand that Mr. Soe Win met with our Senate President and without mincing words, our Senate President told Mr. Soe Win that the Philippine government would be under constant pressure to reconsider the policy of constructive engagement with Myanmar unless its leaders defined its timetable for the implementation of its so-called "Road Map to Democracy."

Now, let me explain that this policy of constructive engagement was the policy that then President Fidel Ramos expounded on and adopted as our official attitude towards the Myanmar problem. That was about two administrations ago, and yet Myanmar continues to abuse its own citizens. Therefore, it is now time, I believe, that the policy of constructive engagement be revisited by our officials who have to do with diplomatic relationships with Myanmar under the new prime ministership of Mr. Soe Win. Since Myanmar is a member of the ASEAN, I think it is incumbent upon us to tell a

sister-nation in the ASEAN that we do not like what is happening in their country. Some people might think that this is a matter of interference but as Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago said sometime ago — when the issue of human rights is raised, the question of interference may no longer hold water. If the issue of non-political interference with other nations were still to hold water then why did America invade Iraq? Why did America bomb Afghanistan back to the Middle Ages? If non-interference were a matter that we should all bow to, then why did Singapore call our attention to some anomalies in our so-called democratic system? Why did Singapore complain to Indonesia when there was a huge forest fire that engulfed many of the major forest reserves of Indonesia causing smoke to blight the atmosphere as it were?

What I am trying to say, therefore, is that there are some instances which would enable a country to call the attention of its neighbor to certain violations of human rights that would justify the revisiting of the so-called policy of constructive engagement. The Senate President himself has told Mr. Soe Win that the question of how long the road map to democracy can be achieved and complaints about alleged human rights abuses in Myanmar will always be a part of the debate in the Philippine Senate.

It is for this reason that I would like to recall that sometime in the last week of November of last year, I had the privilege of attending a conference of ASEAN parliamentarians in Kuala Lumpur that talked about the Myanmar problem. There were parliamentarians coming from Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Singapore, Malaysia and, of course, our own country. That particular conference came up with a resolution urging member-states of ASEAN to block the assumption of Myanmar to the chairmanship of the ASEAN in the year 2006. I can understand the diplomacy that the President of this country employed in dealing with Mr. Soe Win because I suppose she was acting in accordance with traditional Filipino hospitality given the fact Mr. Soe Win was a guest. But then again,

between civility and our obligation to uphold the human rights of our neighbors, I think that at some point, we have to speak out against that matter.

I am very happy to say that on Tuesday, Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago will sponsor a committee report which will, in effect, call attention to this problem of continued violations of human rights in Myanmar in the hope that we can do something, at least, to mitigate the cruelty that the Military Junta in Myanmar is perpetrating upon its own people.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 4:26 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:26 p.m., the session was resumed.

#### INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR ANGARA

Senator Angara commended Senator Pimentel for raising a very important issue, pointing out that there is a tradition within the ASEAN that one member-state does not comment or take any stand on what another member-state claims to be its internal affairs. Fortunately, he noted, the so-called hands-off policy has been breached. Therefore, he said that it is not unusual even for a head of state such as Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohammad to take issue on the state of affairs of another ASEAN member-state. He observed that Senator Pimentel has set a pact-breaking trend by bringing to the attention of the Senate and the Filipino people that the Philippines could not live within an ASEAN community where one member-state, especially a regime that disregarded a democratically elected leader in the person of Aung San Suu Kyi, is blatantly violating the human rights of its people.

Asked on the implication of Senator Defensor Santiago's resolution on the rest of the ASEAN, Senator Pimentel noted that because the resolution is a very strong expression of the disinclination of the Senate to endorse the assumption of Myanmar

of the chairmanship of the ASEAN in 2006, it might create some feeling of hostility among the members of the Myanmar military junta, but by and large, he asserted that the people of Myanmar would appreciate that a country like the Philippines, which is known for its firm advocacy of the democratic rights of its people, has finally taken a stronger stand than just constructive engagement. He surmised that President Macapagal Arroyo could have told Prime Minister Soe Win that nobody controls the Philippine Senate in its advocacies, and the prime minister might have been adequately forewarned about the resolution. He said that while President Macapagal Arroyo was very cordial and polite in bringing up the issue on Myanmar, the Senate is not bound to act in such manner. It could speak more freely on the issue, he stated.

In case the Philippine Senate adopted the resolution, Senator Angara stated that it would not be in an isolated and unique situation because the European Union also refuses to deal with the ASEAN so long as Myanmar has not released Aung San Suu Kyi.

Senator Pimentel said that in a conference held in November, Prime Minister Mahathir wanted to call the attention of Myanmar to its blatant violation of human rights, contrary to an earlier position that the ASEAN should not interfere with the internal affairs of a member-state. In view of reports that the military junta is forcing teenagers into the military service, he underscored that Myanmar should do something about its problems before it can expect to be treated as a respectable member of the ASEAN.

While recognizing the right of the Senate to publicly express its sentiment, Senator Angara wondered, however, whether the President should be the one to articulate it in view of the fact that she formulates foreign policy.

Senator Pimentel agreed; however, he emphasized that in this particular case, the Senate wanted the President to take a stronger position to show support for the just aspirations of the people of Myanmar, especially in the light of the arbitrary arrest of Burmese pro-democracy leaders and disrespect by the ruling military junta for the democratic processes. He asserted that the strong position of the Senate would strengthen the hand of the President in dealing with the issue of Myanmar.

Considering that consultation and consensus are primordial in ASEAN, Senator Angara queried whether it would be prudent to ask other ASEAN member-states to put pressure on Myanmar's military dictators to stop the illegal arrest and detention of pro-democracy leaders. Specifically, he asked whether the resolution could urge the other ASEAN member-states to express the same sentiment and thus put collective pressure on the military junta.

Senator Pimentel agreed to the proposal as he recalled that in the ASEAN conference in Kuala Lumpur last November, parliamentarians agreed to ask Myanmar to hew to the democratic processes. He suggested that the Myanmar issue be discussed also in the IPU Conference in Manila this coming April.

Senator Angara commented that the inaction of the military junta to the global clamor for the institution of democracy in Myanmar is against the international trend especially in the light of the experience of Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine whose once monolithic, dictatorial regimes have given way to democratic processes.

Senator Pimentel pointed out that before a country aspiring for membership is accepted into the European Union, it must first ensure that its constitution and laws adhere to the democratic principles.

Senator Angara lamented that Myanmar, which is one of the most beautiful countries in Southeast Asia with its long history, ancient civilization and one of the best bureaucracies in the region, is now considered a pariah in the international community.

#### **POINT OF INFORMATION BY THE CHAIR**

At this juncture, the Chair informed the Body that it had received a communication from the IPU of Switzerland asking what action the Senate has taken on the Myanmar issue. It said that the Senate would submit a report on the matter, citing the speech of Senator Pimentel and the proposed resolution of Senator Defensor Santiago.

#### **INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR BIAZON**

Senator Biazon recalled that in the early 1980s, the United Nations launched a three-pronged



campaign that sought to: 1) strengthen the role of the United Nations in the resolution of conflicts all over the world; 2) globalize the economy; and 3) democratize all countries under dictatorial regimes. In this regard, he pointed out that the present situation in Myanmar is symbolized by Aung San Suu Kyi, the freedom fighter and leader of the pro-democracy group; and it has prompted the Senate to express its sentiment on the issue that hopefully, the Department of Foreign Affairs would translate into concrete action.

Asked if Myanmar is a regular member of the ASEAN, Senator Pimentel replied that Myanmar was accepted into ASEAN along with Cambodia; therefore, it is bound by the terms of the agreement.

Queried on the selection process involving the chairmanship of the ASEAN, Senator Pimentel replied that the selection is on a rotation basis and it is the turn of Myanmar in 2006, as agreed upon by the member-states.

On whether an objection by a member-state could negate the agreement on the chairmanship of the ASEAN, Senator Pimentel replied that the policy of rotating the chairmanship of the ASEAN council was done a long time ago and it was presumed that by the time Myanmar assumed the chairmanship, it shall have instituted democratic reforms; unfortunately, he said, the military junta rearrested last year the leaders of the National League for Democracy.

As a mechanism to overturn the agreement, Senator Pimentel posited that the issue could be brought to the proper fora like the ASEAN forum of ministers. He underscored the importance of the Senate's action on the Myanmar issue as it would influence the DFA.

Senator Biazon recalled that in the Asian-Pacific Parliamentarians Forum last month, the idea of putting the Myanmar issue on the table was never taken up.

Upon further query, Senator Pimentel replied that a parliamentarians' group among ASEAN countries was formed last November in Kuala Lumpur precisely to deal with the Myanmar issue. He said that it was the resolution of that group, shared with the members of the IPU, that gave rise

to the decision that prior to the formal opening of the IPU Conference in April, the ASEAN ministers would devote a day or two to the Myanmar issue.

As regards holding a separate ASEAN forum during the IPU conference, Senator Pimentel disclosed that Senate President Drilon, the main organizer of the conference, had, in fact, received communication from Switzerland inquiring into the possibility of having the ASEAN forum within the IPU. He added that a number of member-states have yet to confirm their participation.

Asked if the ASEAN forum can formally come up with a resolution to serve as reference for member-states in dealing with the Myanmar issue, Senator Pimentel pointed out that legislators have more freedom to express their views than the Executive. He said that as policy-makers, the senators could suggest what directions the administration should take on the Myanmar issue.

Senator Biazon opined that there should be a consensus among the ASEAN member-states as regards the chairmanship of Myanmar of the ASEAN in 2006. Senator Pimentel agreed.

On whether the ASEAN forum could come up with a resolution strengthening the position of the foreign policy-makers of each member-state, Senator Pimentel replied in the affirmative.

Finally, Senator Biazon emphasized that as host of this year's IPU, there must be a maximum attendance by Philippine legislators. Senator Pimentel stated that he would strongly suggest it.

## SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 4:59 p.m.*

## RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:02 p.m., the session was resumed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS

At this juncture, Senator Pangilinan acknowledged the presence of local officials from

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Roxas, Isabela: Vice-Mayor Joaquin Ramós, Sangguniang Bayan Member Ben Soriano and Barangay Officials of Lanting, headed by *Punong Barangay* Eugenio Rosqueta.

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

**ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Chair declared the session adjourned until 2:30 in the afternoon of Monday, February 28, 2005.

*It was 5:03 p.m.*

  
OSCAR G. YABES  
Secretary of the Senate  
*to* *mlu* *A*

Approved on February 28, 2005