

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

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RECEIVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 330

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

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RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS AND THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE INCREASING INCIDENCE OF PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL ABUSES AGAINST OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS IN DUBAI

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 18 mandates that: "The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare";

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 13, Section 3 further provides that: "The State shall afford full protection to labor, local and overseas, organized and unorganized, and promote full employment and equality of employment opportunities for all";

WHEREAS, according to labor attaché Vicente Cabe, Filipino women have been flooding into Dubai, United Arab Emirates to work as domestic workers, earning as little as US\$160 a month;

WHEREAS, Cabe estimated that there are some 36,000 domestic helpers among more than 200,000 Filipinos working in the expatriate-dominated UAE; these Filipina maids work for local Arabs as well as European and Asian families;

WHEREAS, the influx of Filipino domestic workers has led to a doubling of those seeking shelter in the consulate, with as many as five runaways everyday; around 60 Filipina housemaids live in a makeshift shelter at the consulate, taking refuge from beatings, sexual harassment, and unpaid wages;

WHEREAS, abuse of domestic helpers and other low-paid migrant workers has long been a problem in Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other wealthy gulf countries where foreigners dominate the work force;

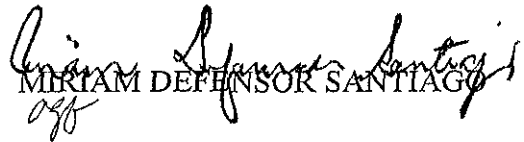
WHEREAS, the Human Rights Watch revealed that Asian workers in Saudi Arabia face systematic abuse, with some working under conditions that are close to slavery;

WHEREAS, the Philippine government has begun discouraging domestic helpers and other unskilled workers from migrating to the UAE because of the high incidence of physical abuse, sexual harassment, and nonpayment of wages against migrant workers;

WHEREAS, the government is duty-bound to ensure that the rights of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWS) are protected in their respective countries, and to guarantee proper and immediate attention/assistance to OFWs' seeking help from consulates abroad;

WHEREFORE, be it resolved, as it is hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and the Senate Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on the increasing incidence of physical and sexual abuses against Overseas Filipino Workers in Dubai.

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/dpm