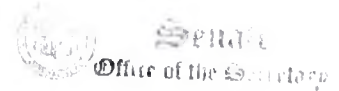


NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



23 FEB 15 P3:26

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: _____

[Signature]

COMMITTEE REPORT No. 29

Submitted by the Committee on Foreign Relations on FEB 15 2023.

Re : P.S. Resolution No. 485, prepared by the Committee upon recommendation of the Subcommittee on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

Recommending its approval without amendment.

Sponsor: Sen. Loren Legarda

MR. PRESIDENT:

The Committee on Foreign Relations, upon the recommendation of the Subcommittee on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, to which was referred the Agreement, entitled:

**"REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT"**

has considered the same and has the honor to report it back to the Senate with the recommendation that Proposed Senate Resolution No. 485, prepared by the Committee upon recommendation of the Subcommittee, entitled:

has considered the same and has the honor to report it back to the Senate with the recommendation that Proposed Senate Resolution No. 485, prepared by the Committee upon recommendation of the Subcommittee, entitled:

**"RESOLUTION
CONCURRING IN THE RATIFICATION OF THE
'REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC
PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT'"**

be approved without amendment.

Respectfully submitted:

Chairpersons



SEN. LOREN LEGARDA
*Senate President Pro Tempore
Subcommittee on the Regional
Comprehensive Economic Partnership*

SEN. IMEE R. MARCOS
Committee on Foreign Relations

Vice Chairperson



SEN. FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

Members

SEN. CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

SEN. CHRISTOPHER "BONG" GO

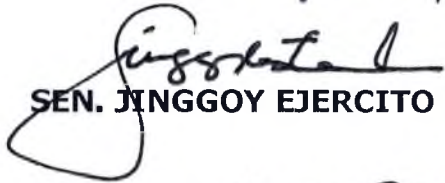


SEN. ROBINHOOD C. PADILLA



SEN. MARK VILLAR

may interpellate



SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA



SEN. MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID

may answer

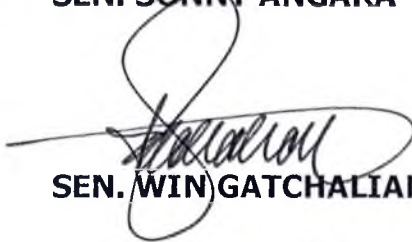


SEN. RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.




SEN. SONNY ANGARA

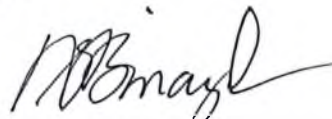
SEN. FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO



SEN. WIN GATCHALIAN




SEN. JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO



SEN. MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY

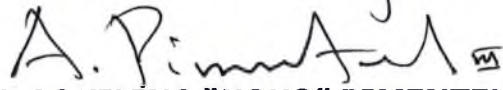
SEN. RISA HONTIVEROS

Ex Officio Members



SEN. JOEL VILLANUEVA
Majority Leader

with interpellate



SEN. AQUILINO "KOKO" PIMENTEL III
Minority Leader



HON. JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI
Senate President



SEN. RONALD "BATO" DELA ROSA



SEN. GRACE POE

SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA SEN. MANUEL "LITO" M. LAPID

SEN. RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR. SEN. SONNY ANGARA

SEN. FRANCIS G. ESCUDERO SEN. WIN GATCHALIAN

SEN. JOSEPH VICTOR G. EJERCITO SEN. MARIA LOURDES NANCY S. BINAY

SEN. RISA HONTIVEROS

Ex Officio Members

SEN. JOEL VILLANUEVA
Majority Leader

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Minority Leader

HON. JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI
Senate President

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



23 FEB 15 P 3:26

SENATE

P.S. Resolution No. 485

RECEIVED BY: _____

Prepared by the Committee on Foreign Relations

**RESOLUTION
CONCURRING IN THE RATIFICATION OF THE
"REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT"**

WHEREAS, Article VII, Section 21 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution states that, "No treaty or international agreement shall be valid and effective unless concurred in by at least two-thirds of all the Members of the Senate";

WHEREAS, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement was virtually signed during the 4th RCEP Leaders' Summit on 15 November 2020 with the following Parties as signatories: ASEAN member states (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam), and their five major trading partners (Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand, and Republic of South Korea);

WHEREAS, the Agreement, which is currently the world's largest trade and investment agreement, accounts for almost a third of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and a combined market that covers a third of the world's population;

WHEREAS, the Agreement builds upon existing economic linkages among the Parties to further broaden and deepen economic integration in the region, strengthen economic growth, promote equitable economic development, and establish clear and mutually advantageous rules to facilitate trade and investment, including participation in regional and global supply chains;

WHEREAS, the Agreement aims to: *(i)* establish a modern, comprehensive, high-quality, and mutually beneficial economic partnership framework; *(ii)* liberalize and facilitate trade in goods through the progressive elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers; *(iii)* progressively liberalize trade in services to achieve substantial elimination of restrictions and discriminatory measures; and *(iv)* create a liberal, facilitative and competitive investment environment in the region;

WHEREAS, the Agreement contains specific provisions on: *(i)* trade in goods; *(ii)* rules of origin; *(iii)* customs procedures and trade facilitation; *(iv)* sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures; *(v)* standards and technical regulations and conformity assessment procedures; *(vi)* trade remedies; *(vii)* trade in services; *(viii)* investment; *(ix)* intellectual property; *(x)* electronic commerce; *(xi)* competition; *(xii)* small and medium enterprises; *(xiii)* economic and technical cooperation; *(xiv)* government procurement; and *(xv)* dispute settlement, among others, which are necessary for establishing a conducive business environment;

WHEREAS, the Philippines stands to benefit from the Agreement through enhanced market access for its export products; wider area for cumulation of raw materials; trade facilitation; time-bound consultations to resolve issues on SPS measures as well as technical barriers to trade (TBT); improved market access for services including financial and telecommunication services; stable and predictable rules necessary to attract investments; strong support for the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs); stronger protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights; and greater opportunity for economic and technical cooperation among the Parties;

WHEREAS, the President of the Philippines ratified the Agreement on 28 November 2022 and has submitted it to the Senate for concurrence, in accordance with the Constitution;

WHEREAS, in the meetings and hearings conducted by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on 8 September 2022, 12 December 2022, 5 January 2023, 7 February 2023, and 13 February 2023, the following government agencies endorsed the concurrence to the ratification of the Agreement:

1. Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA);
2. Department of Trade and Industry (DTI);
3. Department of Agriculture (DA);
4. Department of Justice (DOJ);
5. Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR);
6. Department of Energy (DOE);
7. Department of Finance (DOF);
8. Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR);
9. National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA);
10. Bureau of Customs (BOC);
11. Government Procurement Policy Board (GPPB);
12. Intellectual Property Office (IPO);
13. Philippine Competition Commission (PCC);
14. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC); and
15. Tariff Commission.

Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the Philippines concur, as it hereby concurs, in the Philippine ratification of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement among Brunei Darussalam, Kingdom of Cambodia, Republic of Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Singapore, Kingdom of Thailand, Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, Australia, People's Republic of China, Japan, Republic of Korea, and New Zealand;

RESOLVED, further, That for the effective implementation of the RCEP Agreement and other Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) to which the Philippines is a

party, the Senate of the Philippines deems it necessary that the following be adopted and implemented:

1) Readiness, support, parallel, access, and reform programs and initiatives to cultivate, improve and promote efficiency, productivity, profitability, and competitiveness of the concerned sectors –

(a) Intensified border and quarantine controls to prevent smuggling and entry and spread of pests and diseases through the establishment of adequate border inspection facilities, upgrading of existing testing facilities, continuous capacity building, and a more active public-private oversight committee on anti-smuggling;

(b) National Rice Program (NRP), National Corn Program (NCP), National High Value Crops Development Program (HVCDP), National Livestock Program (NLP), National Organic Agriculture Program, National Fisheries Program (NFP), Agricultural Machinery, Equipment, Facilities and Infrastructure Program under the Agriculture Modernization Plan of the DA, and other developmental inclusive programs including: (i) pest and disease control; (ii) general, technical and specialized/targeted training, extension and advisory services; (iii) marketing and promotion activities; (iv) development, construction, rehabilitation, and repair of production, market and other infrastructure; (v) access to credit by Land Bank of the Philippines and other financial institutions, and provision of agricultural insurance; (vi) provision of soft-loans and grants for agricultural investment; (vii) mechanization and acquisition of machines, equipment, and post-harvest facilities; (viii) rehabilitation and development of irrigation systems; (ix) provision of access to farm inputs and other forms of subsidies; and (x) support for diversified sustainable production systems and cluster/cooperative/ community based approaches in value-adding and marketing to achieve economies of scale;

(c) DA adherence to heed the calls under the United Nations Decade for Family Farming to stimulate the development of public policies and investments in favor of family farming from a holistic perspective, unlocking the transformative potential of family farmers and balance the benefits expected to large scale agriculture under RCEP;

(d) Science, Technology, Innovation-driven Industrialization Strategy (STI), Shared Services Facility (SSF), Philippine Halal Export Development and Promotion Program, Doing Business in Free Trade Areas (DBFTA), Philippine Export Competitiveness Program, Regional Interactive Platform for Philippine Exporters Plus (RIPPLES Plus), SheTrades Philippines Hub, Startup Pilipinas, and other trade promotion and facilitation programs;

(e) Consultancy for Agriculture Productivity Enhancement (CAPE) Program, Food Safety Program, Packaging and Labeling Assistance Program, Innovation System Support Fund (ISSF) Program, Manufacturing Productivity Extension (MPEX) Program, and other productivity enhancement and innovation programs;

(f) Local government support services programs including Province-led Agriculture and Fisheries Extension System (PAFES), among others; and

(g) Awareness, information and communication campaigns, and capacity building programs to assist entrepreneurs, cooperatives, professionals, and other stakeholders to harness opportunities for trade and investment, improve utilization of FTAs and enhance recourse to trade remedies, as necessary;

2) Good governance measures to foster trust, transparency, accountability, and learning –

(a) Genuine representation and participation of farmers, fisherfolk, agrarian reform beneficiaries (ARBs), indigenous peoples (IPs), women and other marginalized sectors in government agri-fisheries boards, councils, and other pertinent committees;

(b) Improved public-private partnership and participation of stakeholders in multi-sectoral committees such as the Committee on International Trade of the Philippine Council for Agriculture and Fisheries (PCAF);

(c) Enhanced access of stakeholders to policy and program development, budget preparation, allocation, utilization, monitoring and evaluation in ensuring the efficient and judicious use of public funds;

(d) Effective feedback mechanism to monitor and evaluate government programs;

(e) National Information Network, with the use of information technology and data management, to facilitate access to relevant trade data for evidence-based policymaking, institution of reforms, and empowerment of stakeholders in maximizing opportunities for trade and investment as well as maximizing the use of trade remedies to minimize unfair trade practices; and

(f) Appointment of a Chief Trade Enforcement Officer to strengthen the implementation of the country's trade agreements;

3) Job generation and human capital development programs to ensure the competitiveness of the Filipino workforce, including continuous capacity building, reskilling, upskilling and cross-skilling of workers to adapt to technological development and evolving business models and industries;

4) Effective enforcement of environmental laws, rules, and regulations, adherence to multilateral environmental agreements in the conduct of trade or investment, and implementation of stringent measures against industrial waste, hazards, and illicit activities which are destructive and degrading to the environment; and

5) Effective use of trade remedies to address unfair trade practices or sudden surge of imports that adversely affect or threatens to adversely affect the concerned local industry, and such other trade measures necessary to ensure compliance with the country's laws, rules, and regulations affecting health, safety, and environment, among others;

RESOLVED, furthermore, That the Senate Special Oversight Committee on the RCEP Agreement is hereby created, which shall be headed by the Senate President *Pro Tempore* and with the following members: the Senate Majority and Minority Leaders, and the Chairpersons of the Senate Committees on Foreign Relations; Agriculture, Food and Agrarian Reform; Economic Affairs; Trade, Commerce and Entrepreneurship; Finance; and Ways and Means. The Oversight Committee shall monitor that all the targets of the different government departments, agencies, and bureaus set forth above are met. Concerned government agencies shall, in consultation with stakeholders, continuously monitor and submit a periodic impact report to the Oversight Committee. The Oversight Committee may come up with legislative proposals to pursue structural reforms and address implementation gaps, as necessary;

RESOLVED, finally, That the President of the Philippines may, with the concurrence of the Senate, withdraw from the Agreement.

Adopted,


LOREN LEGARDA



MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

28 November 2022

**The Honorable Senate President
and Members of the Senate**

Senate of the Philippines
Pasay City

Gentlemen and Ladies of the Senate:

I have the honor to submit, for the Senate's consideration and concurrence, the *Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement*, which was adopted on 15 November 2020 on the occasion of the 4th RCEP Leaders' Summit via video conference.

The RCEP Agreement aims to (i) establish a modern, comprehensive, high-quality, and mutually beneficial economic partnership framework; (ii) progressively liberalize and facilitate trade in goods through, *inter alia*, the progressive elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers; (iii) progressively liberalize trade in services to achieve substantial elimination of restrictions and discriminatory measures; and (iv) create a liberal, facilitative, and competitive investment environment in the region.

The RCEP Agreement builds upon existing economic linkages among the Contracting Parties to further broaden and deepen economic integration in the region, strengthen economic growth and equitable economic development, and establish clear and mutually-advantageous rules to facilitate trade and investment, including participation in regional and global supply chains.


The RCEP Agreement contains specific provisions on trade in goods and rules on origin, trade in services, customs procedures and trade facilitation, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, trade remedies, investment, intellectual property, competition, small and medium enterprises, and dispute settlement, among others.

The Philippines stands to benefit from the RCEP Agreement through enhanced market access for its export products; wider area for cumulation of raw materials; enhanced rules on non-tariff measures; strong customs cooperation and advanced trade facilitation; time-bound consultations to resolve issues on sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures as well as technical barriers to trade (TB); improved market access for services; stable and predictable business environment to attract investments; strong support for the development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs); stronger protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights; and greater opportunity for economic and technical cooperation among the Parties.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

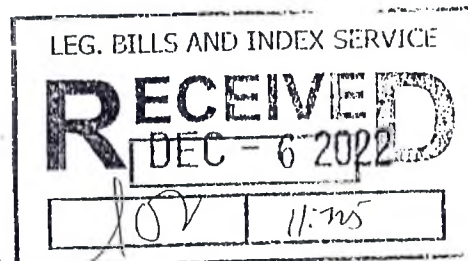
During the Cabinet Meeting on 04 October 2022, the Department of Agriculture, Department of Education, Department of Energy, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Department of Finance, Department of Health, Department of Information and Communications Technology, Department of Justice, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Migrant Workers, Department of Science and Technology, Department of Tourism, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Transportation, and the National Economic and Development Authority, have been consulted on, and have concurred with, the proposed ratification of the RCEP Agreement.

After examining the text thereof, I find it advisable to ratify the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement and seek the concurrence of the Senate.



FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.

MALACAÑANG
MANILA



INSTRUMENT OF RATIFICATION

TO WHOM THESE PRESENTS SHALL COME, GREETINGS:

KNOW YE, that whereas, the *Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement* (Agreement) was adopted and signed on 15 November 2020 on the occasion of the 4th RCEP Leaders' Summit;

WHEREAS, the Agreement aims to: (i) establish a modern, comprehensive, high quality, and mutually beneficial economic partnership framework; (ii) progressively liberalize and facilitate trade in goods through, *inter alia*, progressive elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers; (iii) progressively liberalize trade in services to achieve substantial elimination of restrictions and discriminatory measures; and (iv) create a liberal, facilitative, and competitive investment environment in the region;

WHEREAS, the Agreement builds upon existing economic linkages among the Contracting Parties to further broaden and deepen economic integration in the region, strengthen economic growth and equitable economic development and establish clear and mutually advantageous rules to facilitate trade and investment, including participation in regional and global supply chains;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it known that **I, FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR.**, President of the Republic of the Philippines, after having seen and considered the *Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement*, do hereby ratify and confirm the same and each and every article and clause thereof.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Republic of the Philippines to be affixed.

GIVEN under my hand at the City of Manila, this 28th day of November in the year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-Two.

A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by the official seal of the President of the Philippines. The seal is circular and features a central emblem surrounded by the text "OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES" and "1986".

By the President:

A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by the printed name and title of the Executive Secretary.

LUCAS P. BERSAMIN
Executive Secretary

