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S E N A T E

P.S. Resolution No. 707

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Introduced by **SENATOR JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI**

RESOLUTION

STRONGLY CONDEMNING THE CONTINUED HARASSMENT OF FILIPINO FISHERMEN AND THE INCURSIONS IN THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA BY THE CHINESE COAST GUARD AND MILITIA VESSELS, AND URGING THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION IN SECURING OUR SOVEREIGN RIGHTS TO OUR EXCLUSIVE ECONOMIC ZONE AND TO CALL ON CHINA TO STOP ITS ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES IN THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA AND THE 2016 RULING OF THE PERMANENT COURT OF ARBITRATION

WHEREAS, on 12 July 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in the Hague, Netherlands rendered a landmark Award that rejected the People's Republic of China's expansive claims to historic, sovereign rights, and jurisdiction in areas in the South China Sea covered by the Nine Dash Line;

WHEREAS, in contravention of the provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), China's Nine Dash Line claim encroaches on the maritime entitlements of other coastal states, including the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and Extended Continental Shelf (ECS) of the Philippines;

WHEREAS, in clear violation of the Arbitral Award, China has built artificial islands in various parts of the West Philippine Sea - fortified with airstrips, military installations, hardware and equipment, and has militarized at least three artificial islands, arming them with anti-ship and anti-aircraft missile systems, laser and jamming equipment and fighter jets in an increasingly aggressive move;

WHEREAS, despite numerous filing of diplomatic protests by the Philippine Government, China, through its Coast Guard and Chinese Militia vessels continue to harass and block access by Filipino fishermen to the West Philippine Sea, preventing them from fishing in the West Philippine Sea, in clear violation of the Arbitral Award and the UNCLOS, and in recent months this continued violation intensified with the swarming of Chinese Coast Guard and militia vessels in the West Philippine Sea;

WHEREAS, the continued harassment and aggression by the Chinese Coast Guard recently manifested on February 6 of this year with the pointing of military grade laser to the Philippine Coast Guard crew resulting to their temporary blindness;

WHEREAS, in June and July of this year, our Coast Guard and military saw an increase of Chinese Coast Guard and militia vessels swarming the area in the Recto Bank and Mischief Reef, and turning away Filipino fishermen from fishing in the areas, despite the fact that Recto Bank and Mischief Reef are 80 and 129 nautical miles away from the

coast of Palawan, respectively, and well within the 200 nautical miles that mark the country's EEZ;

WHEREAS, China has always tried to block the Philippine's resupply mission to the marooned BRP Sierra Madre in the Second Thomas Shoal, which serves as the outpost of the Philippine Military in the area, threatening to tow the said vessel;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Government, through the Department of Foreign Affairs must continue to assert its sovereign rights over the EEZ in the West Philippine Sea and intensify efforts to engage the international community in upholding its hard-won gains at the Hague;

WHEREAS, the Department of Foreign Affairs, is expected to continue to hold dialogues with the Chinese government to respect the Philippines' sovereign rights in our EEZ in the West Philippine Sea and pursue the formulation of the Code of Conduct for the South China Sea based on international law and UNCLOS, and if continuously ignored by China and the harassment of our fisherfolk, Navy, and Coast Guard continues, we urge the government to take the following course of action: 1. Continue to bring international attention to the harassment of Filipino fishermen in the Philippines' EEZ in the West Philippine Sea by the Chinese Coast Guard and militia vessels, and China's continued violation of the Hague Ruling and the UNCLOS; 2. Utilize international fora to rally support for the enforcement of the Hague Ruling and raise awareness on the real situation in the West Philippine Sea; 3. Engage like-minded countries to call on China in various international fora and meetings to respect and follow the Hague Ruling and the UNCLOS; and subject to necessity and prudence, 4. File a Resolution before the United Nations General Assembly, to put forth the Philippines' cause for the cessation of all activities that harass Philippine vessels and violate the Philippines' established rights in the West Philippine Sea:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate of the Philippines to strongly condemn the continued harassment of Filipino fishermen and the incursions in the West Philippine Sea by the Chinese coast guard and militia vessels, and urge the Philippine Government to take appropriate action in securing our sovereign rights to our exclusive economic zone and to call on China to stop its illegal activities in the West Philippine Sea, in accordance with the United Nations Convention On The Law Of The Sea and the 2016 ruling of the Permanent Court Of Arbitration.

Adopted,


JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI
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