

**REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES**

**S e n a t e**

**Pasay City**

# **Journal**

**SESSION NO. 49**

Wednesday, January 30, 2008

**FOURTEENTH CONGRESS  
FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

**SESSION NO. 49**  
Wednesday, January 30, 2008

**CALL TO ORDER**

At 3:48 p.m., the Senate President, Hon. Manny Villar, called the session to order.

**PRAYER**

Sen. Alan Peter "Compañero" S. Cayetano led the prayer, to wit:

*Let us remember that we are in the Holy presence of our Lord.*

*"The plans of the heart belong to man but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord;*

*"All the ways of a man are pure in His own eyes; but the Lord weighs his spirit."*

**Proverbs 16:1-2**

Lord, Father God, we give You praise and honor, and lift up to Your spirit. We ask, Lord, that You purify all our intentions. We ask, Lord, Father God, that we may be able to speak, to write, to stand up, Lord, for Your righteousness in this country.

Lord, we pray for each and every senator here and each and every constituency that he or she is representing all around the country.

We pray for the leadership of this House as well as the leadership of the country.

We lift these all up to You, in the Name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior.

Amen.

**ROLL CALL**

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary of the Senate, Emma Lirio-Reyes, called the roll, to which the following senators responded:

Aquino III, B. S. C.	Lapid, M. L. M.
Biazon, R. G.	Legarda, L.
Cayetano, A. P. C. S.	Madrigal, M. A.
Cayetano, C. P. S.	Pangilinan, F. N.
Ejercito Estrada, J.	Pimentel Jr., A. Q.
Enrile, J. P.	Revilla Jr., R. B.
Gordon, R. J.	Roxas, M.
Honasan, G. B.	Villar, M.
Lacson, P. M.	Zubiri, J. M. F.

With 18 senators present, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

Senator Escudero arrived after the roll call.

Senators Angara and Arroyo were on official mission abroad.

Senator Defensor Santiago was absent on account of sickness.

Senator Trillanes was unable to attend the session.

**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. 48 and considered it approved.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUESTS**

Senator Pangilinan acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Barangay Chairman Gary Gripo and the *kagawad* of Barangay Oobi, Majayjay Laguna; political science students from the City of Malabon University and New Era University; and representatives from CEDAW Watch Network, NCRFW, PILIPINA, PINASAMA, PATAMABA, SALIGAN, PLCPD and *Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Kababaihan sa Kanayunan.*

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Senate President Villar welcomed the guests to the Senate.

## 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. 2015, entitled

AN ACT TO REQUIRE THE DESIGNATION OF THE SAFEST ROUTES FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS AND NUCLEAR WASTES

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

**To the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources**

Senate Bill No. 2016, entitled

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH AN INTER-GOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE FOR INTERNATIONAL VISITOR ASSISTANCE TO MAKE THE PHILIPPINES THE PREMIERE TRAVEL AND TOURISM DESTINATION IN THE WORLD

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

**To the Committees on Tourism; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 2017, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING QUALITY STANDARDS IN MAMMOGRAPHY

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

**To the Committee on Health and Demography**

Senate Bill No. 2018, entitled

AN ACT TO STRENGTHEN THE AUTHORITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY REGARDING FRAUD COMMITTED IN CONNECTION WITH SALES MADE WITH A TELEPHONE

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

**To the Committee on Trade and Commerce**

Senate Bill No. 2019, entitled

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL CENTER FOR INFORMATION AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RELATING TO ALL TYPES OF FAMILY RESOURCE AND SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

**To the Committees on Health and Demography; Youth, Women and Family Relations; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 2020, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING AT LEAST ONE (1) SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTER FOR EACH SCHOOL DIVISION AND AT LEAST THREE (3) SPECIAL EDUCATION CENTERS IN BIG SCHOOL DIVISIONS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS, GUIDELINES FOR GOVERNMENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND OTHER INCENTIVES AND SUPPORT

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

**To the Committees on Education, Arts and Culture; Ways and Means; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 2021, entitled

AN ACT GRANTING DISCOUNTS TO UNDERPRIVILEGED COLLEGE ~~ST~~

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STUDENTS ON BASIC AND  
EDUCATION SERVICES

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Education, Arts and  
Culture; Ways and Means; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 2022, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING SECTION 70 OF  
PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1529  
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE  
PROPERTY REGISTRATION DECREE

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Justice and Human  
Rights; and Youth, Women and Family Relations**

Senate Bill No. 2023, entitled

AN ACT TO PROVIDE CRIMINAL  
PENALTIES FOR UNAUTHORIZED  
PICTURES IN A MOTION PIC-  
TURE EXHIBITION FACILITY,  
AND CIVIL PENALTIES FOR  
UNAUTHORIZED PRERELEASE  
COPYRIGHTED WORKS, AND  
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Public Information  
and Mass Media; and Trade and Commerce**

Senate Bill No. 2024, entitled

AN ACT EXEMPTING THE BANK  
DEPOSITS OF SENIOR CITIZENS  
FROM THE TWENTY PERCENT  
(20%) WITHHOLDING TAX ON  
INTEREST INCOME, AMENDING  
REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7432

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Ways and Means;  
Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development**

Senate Bill No. 2025, entitled

AN ACT INTRODUCING EDUCATIONAL  
REFORMS AND SUPPORTING THE  
PLANNING AND IMPLEMENT-  
ATION OF EDUCATIONAL REFORMS  
IN SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Education, Arts and  
Culture; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 2026, entitled

AN ACT AMENDING EXECUTIVE  
ORDER NO. 209, ALSO KNOWN AS  
THE FAMILY CODE OF THE PHILIP-  
PINES, ARTICLES 221 AND 236

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Youth, Women and  
Family Relations; and Constitutional Amend-  
ments, Revision of Codes and Laws**

Senate Bill No. 2027, entitled

AN ACT DEFINING THE RIGHTS AND  
LIABILITIES OF PARTIES IN  
ELECTRONIC FUND TRANSFERS

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committee on Banks, Financial  
Institutions and Currencies**

Senate Bill No. 2028, entitled

AN ACT PROVIDING GRANTS TO  
PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITU-  
TIONS IN ORDER TO ALLOW SUCH  
INSTITUTIONS TO PROMOTE  
CERTAIN EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committee on Education, Arts and  
Culture**

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Senate Bill No. 2029, entitled

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TEACHER  
CORPS PROGRAM IN ORDER TO  
STRENGTHEN THE TEACHING  
PROFESSION

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Education, Arts and  
Culture; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 2030, entitled

AN ACT TO PENALIZE RACKETEERS  
AND CRIMINAL ENTERPRISES,  
PROHIBITING SUCH CRIMINAL  
ENTERPRISES AND RACKETEER  
INFLUENCED AND CORRUPT  
ORGANIZATIONS FROM INFIL-  
TRATING, CONTROLLING OR  
OTHERWISE INFLUENCING PHILIP-  
PINE COMMERCE

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Justice and Human  
Rights; and Constitutional Amendments, Revision  
of Codes and Laws**

Senate Bill No. 2031, entitled

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH WITHIN  
THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
A PERMANENT COUNCIL ON  
NUTRITION AND HEALTH

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Health and Demo-  
graphy; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 2032, entitled

AN ACT PROHIBITING PUBLIC  
OFFICERS, EMPLOYEES AND  
THEIR FAMILIES FROM CHARGING  
TO THE GOVERNMENT THE  
SALARIES OF THEIR PERSONAL  
PRIVATE SECURITY GUARDS

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committee on Civil Service and  
Government Reorganization**

Senate Bill No. 2033, entitled

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE  
ANALYSIS OF THE INCIDENCE  
AND EFFECTS OF PRISON RAPE  
AND TO PROVIDE INFORMATION,  
RESOURCES, RECOMMENDATIONS,  
FUNDING, AND PUNISHMENT TO  
PROTECT INDIVIDUALS FROM  
PRISON RAPE

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committees on Justice and Human  
Rights; Public Order and Illegal Drugs; and  
Finance**

Senate Bill No. 2034, entitled

AN ACT TO ASSURE MEANINGFUL  
DISCLOSURES OF THE TERMS OF  
RENTAL PURCHASE AGREEMENTS,  
INCLUDING DISCLOSURES OF ALL  
COSTS TO CONSUMERS UNDER  
SUCH AGREEMENTS AND TO  
PROVIDE CERTAIN SUBSTANTIVE  
RIGHTS TO CONSUMERS UNDER  
SUCH AGREEMENTS

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor  
Santiago

**To the Committee on Trade and Commerce**

Senate Bill No. 2035, entitled

AN ACT REQUIRING THE REGULAR  
MAINTENANCE AND PRESERVA-  
TION OF ALL PUBLIC INFRASTRUC-  
TURES, ESTABLISHING MECHANISMS  
FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION, AND  
FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Benigno S. Aquino III

**To the Committee on Public Works**

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Senate Bill No. 2036, entitled

AN ACT INCREASING THE PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE OF THE PRESCRIBED INCREASES AND ADJUSTMENTS IN THE WAGE RATES OF WORKERS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6727, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "WAGE RATIONALIZATION ACT," AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Benigno S. Aquino III

**To the Committee on Labor, Employment and Human Resources Development**

### RESOLUTIONS

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 284, entitled

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE CONVENING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE IN THE SENATE IN ORDER TO BE BRIEFED BY THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC MANAGERS ON THE POSSIBLE SCENARIOS AND EFFECTS OF THE LOOMING RECESSION IN THE UNITED STATES TO OUR COUNTRY, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF LEGISLATING PERTINENT MEASURES THAT WILL SERVE AS SAFETY NETS TO HELP MITIGATE ANY NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES TO OUR ECONOMY

Introduced by Senator Gregorio B. Honasan II

**To the Committee on Rules**

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 285, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE SUPREME COURT OF THE PHILIPPINES ON THE CREATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL "GREEN" COURTS AS SPECIAL COURTS FROM AMONG FIRST AND SECOND LEVEL TRIAL COURTS FOR THE SPEEDY ADJUDICATION AND RESOLUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CASES

Introduced by Senator Juan Miguel F. Zubiri

**To the Committee on Rules**

### ADDITIONAL REFERENCE OF BUSINESS

#### BILLS ON FIRST READING

Senate Bill No. 2037, entitled

AN ACT INSTITUTIONALIZING THE YOUNG FARMERS PROGRAM, PROVIDING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

**To the Committees on Agriculture and Food; Youth, Women and Family Relations; and Finance**

Senate Bill No. 2038, entitled

AN ACT CREATING A COFFEE RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSION CENTER, AUTHORIZING THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" f. Trillanes IV

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

Senate Bill No. 2039, entitled

AN ACT PROMOTING THE PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL, AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF THE FILIPINO YOUTH THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE YOUTH CORPS PROGRAM, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Introduced by Senator Antonio "Sonny" F. Trillanes IV

**To the Committees on Youth, Women and Family Relations; Social Justice, Welfare and Rural Development; and Finance** *AS*

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**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 3:58 p.m.*

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 3:59 p.m., the session was resumed.

**APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1874 ON THIRD READING**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Third Reading, Senate Bill No. 1874, printed copies of which were distributed to the senators on January 17, 2008.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, Secretary Reyes read only the title of the bill, to wit:

AN ACT DECLARING MAY 7 OF  
EVERY YEAR AS "HEALTH  
WORKERS' DAY."

Secretary Reyes called the roll for nominal voting.

**RESULT OF THE VOTING**

The result of the voting was as follows:

*In favor*

Aquino	Lacson
Biazon	Legarda
Cayetano (A)	Madrigal
Cayetano (P)	Pangilinan
Ejercito Estrada	Pimentel
Enrile	Revilla
Escudero	Roxas
Gordon	Villar
Honasan	Zubiri

*Against*

None

*Abstention*

None

With 18 senators voting in favor, none against and no abstention, the Chair declared Senate Bill No. 1874 approved on Third Reading.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 4:01 p.m.*

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 4:02 p.m., the session was resumed.

**REPORT OF SENATOR BIAZON**

Availing himself of the privilege hour, Senator Biazon rendered a report on his participation in the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), to wit:

Last January 20 to 24 of this year, this Representation attended the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum. Representatives from 21 member-parliaments participated in said conference which was held in Auckland, New Zealand. The Philippine delegation was composed of this Representation and Sen. Panfilo Lacson, representing the Senate, and Representatives Manuel Mamba, Glenn Chong and Rozzano Rufino Biazon, from the House of Representatives.

*The Conference*

Presentations and discussions during the four-day conference focused on three general topics: (1) political and security issues; (2) economic and trade issues; and (3) cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region.

On the topic of political and security issues, there were papers that tackled the subject matters on the situation in the Korean Peninsula, cluster munitions, the Middle East peace process, the situation in Iraq, and the situation in Myanmar. The delegate from the parliament of Korea apprised the members of the body on the positive developments of efforts to disarm North Korea of its nuclear weapons. A member of parliament from the host country, New Zealand, brought to the attention of the body the need to address the use of cluster bombs during military operations because of their devastating effects predominantly on civilians. Papers that were presented on the Middle East process and the situation in Iraq were one in

urging the member-parliaments to contribute and intensify efforts in the search for solutions to finally bring peace to that region.

Economic and trade issues included subject matters such as climate change and sustainable development, energy security, international and regional trade developments, South Pacific regional fisheries management, people-centered information, and science and technology. Speakers on climate change and environmental problems were one in expressing that these challenges are global in nature and one of the most severe that humankind is presently faced with.

As regards energy security, speakers pointed out the need to look for alternative energy sources, taking into account sustainability and the protection of the environment. Sustainability was also the overriding theme of the papers delivered by the speakers on South Pacific regional fisheries management. This was evident in their assertions on the need to conserve, manage and properly exploit fish stocks, straddling fish stocks, highly migratory fish stocks and discrete high-seas fish stocks. The delegate from South Korea emphasized that “*advances in information, communication and technology should be directed at improving an individual’s human rights and promoting the welfare of all mankind in a more human-centric manner.*”

On the topic of cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, presentations and discussions focused on disaster preparedness and pandemic disease, inter-faith dialogue and the alliance of civilizations. Issues of long-term concern to the region such as demographic changes, water management, human rights, the abduction of citizens, poverty alleviation, mutual recognition of occupations, free speech, HIV/AIDS, child labor, marine pollution and the treatment and protection of migrant workers were also discussed within the context of cooperation.

This is where the Philippines participated heavily as it proposed and sponsored three resolutions for the consideration of the body. These were resolutions on: (1) the Treatment and Protection of Migrant Workers; (2) Mitigating Child Labor; and (3) Combating HIV/AIDS. All of these resolutions were adopted.

As an information on the side, all of these were supposed to be presented by this Representation and Sen. Panfilo Lacson, but we thought of asking our colleagues from the House to participate and they were the ones who presented these papers.

## Resolutions

In the end, the Conference adopted a total of 23 resolutions covering the issues that I have just enumerated. I will no longer dwell on a discussion on each of these resolutions, except for one.

In a discussion on climate change, this Representation raised the issue of what is happening in Oceania – there are 11 countries in Oceania, the smallest of which is Kiribati, a country populated by just 1,200 people – because if global warming and the shrinking of the Antarctic ice and the rising of the ocean level will continue, it is not only the Philippines that will lose some of the islands but Oceania can be erased from the map.

I raised this because the issue of the search for alternative energy was discussed very thoroughly, and there has been a mad rush to adopt biofuels in the search for alternative energy. The delegates from New Zealand, Canada, and some other countries including, I think, Indonesia, supported the proposition that in the adoption of policies to pursue alternative energy, we must be careful, because there are already indications that the adoption of biofuel production in some countries has resulted in the increase in the price of corn and other agricultural products and it has, as a matter of fact, increased the prices of milk and meat and even chicken in some countries.

I am reminded of an information from Cebu that right now, the price of corn had risen to P12 from P6 per kilo. I think we need to take heed of the warnings raised in this international body of parliamentarians.

Allow me to cite some resolatory portions of some of the resolutions that Congress, through the leadership of the Senate, might want to consider as it crafts relevant legislation and exercises its oversight functions.

The resolution on climate change and the environment calls on the government of member-countries “to develop and implement programs that will reduce reliance on fossil fuels and greenhouse production.” It also encourages them “to ensure that biofuel is produced and used sustainably, taking into account an adequate balance between food security and biofuel production.”

In the field of science and technology, understanding its strategic importance as an essential tool for economic growth and furthering goals on social welfare, it was resolved to

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recommend to member-parliaments "to provide legislative support for venture capital and to encourage the creation of 'business incubators' and science and technology parks while, at the same time, to consolidate ties between state research centers and private industrial enterprises, and to employ the potential of regional and international research and development networks."

Living in a country often confronted by natural disasters, the call of the 16<sup>th</sup> APPF Meeting on member-governments "to include in their development plans and programs, measures on mitigating the effects of natural disasters..." might be worthy of our consideration. As we consider crafting legislation on this issue, we may also want to consider designing and developing a preparedness plan for a potential outbreak of a major pandemic or strengthen such a plan, if one already exists. This would conform to a call made on member-governments during the meeting.

The resolution sponsored by Indonesia, New Zealand, Russia and Vietnam on poverty alleviation recommends the implementation of debt swap and debt reduction programs amongst the APPF member-countries.

As far as water management is concerned, this Representation strongly recommends that the Body take into serious consideration the crafting of legislation or strengthening existing laws, to ensure the sustainability and management of our water resources. This Representation has always maintained that any nation that has the capacity to produce or provide food and water to its people will be the most secure nation in the future.

Beyond paying lip service to our overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) who infuse precious dollars in our country, I would also strongly recommend that in the exercise of our oversight functions, we need to ensure that mechanisms for the mutual recognition of occupations, including related qualifications and experience, must be continuously worked out by our government with recipient countries. This would be in consonance with the "Resolution on Mutual Recognition As A Mechanism To Expand Regional Economies."

These are the recommendations that I would like to submit for the consideration of this Body and Congress as a whole.

In closing, Senator Biazon urged the Senate leadership to provide an understudy for Mrs. Carmen

R. Arceño, director-general of the Senate International Relations and Protocol Office, who has provided the members with the expertise, contacts and institutional memos in all international engagements in which the Senate has participated.

#### INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR ENRILE

Asked by Senator Enrile what tangible benefits the Philippines would derive from these foreign trips apart from those gained by members of the delegation, Senator Biazon explained that it is during such conferences that participants are able to gain first-hand insights into the positive practices of other members. For instance, he related that his delegation learned about the problems faced by Filipino migrant workers in the Middle East and New Zealand. He also stressed the importance of interaction among nations as he noted that the primary interaction of organizations in the Asia-Pacific Region takes place within the organization of executives such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) with the APPF as its legislative counterpart.

Senator Biazon stated that he had also raised the issue concerning the absence of an APPF Secretariat as well as the need for the organization to hold meetings on a regular basis considering that the last APPF was held after the September 11, 2001 World Trade bombing. He maintained that the country needs to interact with other countries as he believed that no nation can exist as a hermit.

To the observation that interaction with foreign governments is a function of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Senator Biazon pointed out that the DFA, being part of the Executive department, is more involved in the affairs of the APEC. He disclosed that he had requested during the conference that there be an interrelationship between the APEC and APPF.

To the contention that it would have been more economical if a researcher had been assigned to gather the information gleaned from the conference such as the dangers of using biofuel, Senator Biazon replied what is important is the personal exchange of views among participants.

Senator Enrile asked how much was being spent on foreign trips such as the APPF conference.

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## SUSPENSION OF SESSION

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

*It was 4:27 p.m.*

## RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:27 p.m., the session was resumed.

Senator Enrile clarified that he raised the question not because he disapproved of senators going to foreign conferences, but only because information can be gathered through research or on the Internet. For his part, Senator Biazon suggested that the Senate determine whether attendance in such foreign conferences is irrelevant and set a specific policy on it.

Senator Enrile pointed out that aside from being expensive, such trips also impede the Senate's functions as he noted that bicameral conferences on pending bills could not be held because the congressmen were abroad. However, Senator Biazon pointed out that the APPF trip took place during the congressional recess; nonetheless, he posed no objection to having a policy prohibiting such foreign trips.

At this juncture, the Chair gave assurance that the issue on foreign trips would be studied.

## INTERPELLATION OF SENATOR ZUBIRI

Asked by Senator Zubiri whether food security should be the nation's priority at all times, Senator Biazon agreed.

Saying that he is not against the production or use of biofuels, Senator Biazon underscored that in the process, however, food production should not suffer as had been experienced by Latin American countries and even by the United States itself. In Cebu, for instance, he noted that the price of corn increased from P6 to P12 because of the biofuels program.

As regards the price of corn, Senator Zubiri informed the Body that there is a peak season from June to December and it is when there is a price drop because of the bumper harvest; on the other hand, during dry months which is considered lean season, price increases because farmers cannot plant corn. He explained that the price is jacked up by the

traders who have silos where they can store the crop and sell it during the lean season. He maintained that the rise in corn price cannot be blamed on the biofuels program since the law was passed only recently.

On the issue of biofuels production, Senator Zubiri explained that the United States is using corn as a food source but in the Philippines, the biofuels program encourages the use of alternative crops other than sugarcane.

To the observation that taking out the tariff protection on sugar would reduce its price by 40% locally and thereby benefit the consumers, Senator Biazon agreed. However, he underscored the need for a thorough debate on the issue of food versus fuel because it was raised by no less than the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

Senator Biazon reiterated that the production of biofuels should not have adverse impact on food production. With respect to the conversion of land for biofuels production, he suggested that Congress examine existing laws as well as pending measures. In addition, he pointed out that biofuels production also have impact on the environment because as studies have shown, the process releases gasses into the air.

Senator Zubiri stated that the U.N. Report does not condemn biofuels per se but differentiates between good feedstock that does not compete directly with food, and bad feedstock. He informed the Body that there is cellulosic bioethanol that does not use any food product but garbage. He said that the development of alternative fuels should be encouraged to address the problem of high oil prices, adding that according to the ADB and World Bank, the price of oil per barrel could reach \$200 in the next couple of years or roughly P100 per liter of fuel.

Further, Senator Zubiri adverted to the statement of Father Villarín of Xavier University that for the last 100 years, science had been focused on engineering, physics and chemistry but it would be on bioenergy and biology for bioproducts in the next 100 years. Further, he quoted Father Villarín as saying, "The beauty of this program is that the poorer countries can now take advantage of its tropical climate to be able to do these types of technology and first world nations will now be begging on our doorsteps for these types of technology. The poor people can now benefit." *W P*

Asked if the conversion of the existing sugarcane land for bioethanol production would be an agreeable program, Senator Biazon replied that the plan should be examined scientifically. He stated that in Malaysia, 92 companies were given franchises or permissions to produce biofuel but these are now down to 14 companies and in Indonesia, the program to seek alternative energy suffered the same fate. Senator Zubiri reasoned that Malaysia was using the very expensive palm oil as feedstock.

Senator Zubiri informed the Body that earlier that day, he met with students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) who have come up with a program converting *malunggay* seeds or moringa oil into biofuel which is 99% biodiesel compatible and can be loaded directly to vehicles. Throughout the country, he said, there are vast hectares of cogonal lands, once forested areas, that cannot sustain agricultural crops but can be planted to *malunggay* or *jatropha* for biofuel production. He said that with such reforestation program, farmers do not need to cut down trees because the seeds of these plants alone can be used to fuel their stoves. The program, he added, would give income and livelihood to communities in the mountains of Bukidnon, Misamis Occidental and Oriental, Davao del Sur, Pampanga and Tarlac. He stated that in these areas where no call centers or micro-processing plants can be put up, agro-industrializing is the only alternative industry.

Asked by Senator Zubiri if he would be amenable to support a program that would not touch prime agricultural land and, instead, utilize the existing sugar lands for ethanol, and, at the same time, provide the indigenous people in the barangay and far-flung areas with alternative livelihood, Senator Biazon answered in the affirmative. He said that he would support the propagation of *malunggay* which is a good source of nutrition and that he has nothing against the propagation of *jatropha*. However, he said that the conversion of lands from purposes of food production to bioethanol/biodiesel production should be controlled, as he expressed concern that bioethanol or biodiesel emits chemicals which are ten times more dangerous than carbon monoxide.

Senator Zubiri clarified that bioethanol and biodiesel are carbon negative, adding that when fuel from plants is utilized, it leaves a very good scent because it is oxygenated. He said that he was willing to debate on the matter of biofuels, and to discuss the policies on an issue-by-issue basis.

Senator Zubiri informed the Body that 18 bio-ethanol and biodiesel plants have applied with the Department of Energy (DOE) and each plant can bring in P2 billion worth of investments and open thousands of jobs and livelihood for Filipinos. He said that the price of biodiesel from *jatropha* and *malunggay* would be cheaper by P3 compared to the P47 per liter of premium fuel. He added that if production is done sustainably, biofuel would cost only P28 per liter and there could be a drop in fuel prices by P7 to P8 across-the-board if the E-10, E-20 or E-30 blend would be utilized; and if *jatropha* is planted in all the mountainous areas and used as biomass, less production cost can go down to P22 per liter. He pointed out that the Philippines is in a unique situation to give its people some short- and long-term solutions by coming up with renewable energy and, at the same time, give them added income. He stated that doing so would free the Philippines from oil-producing countries and join the ranks of countries like India, Australia, United States and Brazil which have already invested in renewable energy.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 5:00 p.m.*

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:01 p.m., the session was resumed.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE PRESENCE OF GUEST

Senator Pangilinan acknowledged the presence in the gallery of Nonito "Filipino Flash" Donaire, the International Boxing Federation Flyweight Champion who successfully defended his title on December 1, 2007. He stated that the Senate adopted, on December 1, 2007, Resolution No. 42, commending and congratulating Mr. Donaire.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended to allow Senate President Villar to present a copy of the resolution to Mr. Donaire.

*It was 5:02 p.m.*

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**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 5:03 p.m., the session was resumed.

**REFERRAL OF SPEECH  
TO COMMITTEE**

Senator Pangilinan stated that Senator Pimentel has withdrawn his reservation to interpellate on Senator Enrile's privilege speech on PHILCOMSAT.

In view thereof, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Chair referred the privilege speech of Senator Enrile to the Committee on Government Corporations and Public Enterprises.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 5:04 p.m.*

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 5:05 p.m., the session was resumed.

**SPECIAL ORDER**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 7 on Senate Bill No. 1659 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to Calendar for Special Orders.

**COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 7  
ON SENATE BILL NO. 1659**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 1659 (Committee Report No. 7), entitled

**AN ACT ALLOWING FILIPINO WORLD WAR II VETERANS TO CONTINUE RECEIVING PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT PENSIONS AND BENEFITS EVEN WHEN SIMILAR PENSIONS AND BENEFITS ARE PROVIDED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, AMENDING SECTION 10 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6948, AS AMENDED, FOR THIS PURPOSE.**

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, with the permission of the Body, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, only the title of the bill was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

The Chair recognized Senator Biazon for the sponsorship.

**SPONSORSHIP SPEECH  
OF SENATOR BIAZON**

In sponsoring Senate Bill No. 1659, Senator Biazon delivered the following speech:

The Committee on National Defense and Security, jointly with the Committee on Finance, is honored to present before this Chamber Senate Bill No. 1659, under Committee Report No. 7 in substitution of Senate Bill No. 142.

Senate Bill No. 1659, entitled "An Act Allowing Filipino World War II Veterans to Continue Receiving Philippine Government Pensions and Benefits Even When Similar Pensions and Benefits are Provided by the United States Government, Amending Section 10 of Republic Act No. 6948, as Amended, for This Purpose," is originally authored by your committee's vice chairperson, the Honorable Richard J. Gordon.

As a brief background, this bill seeks to allow Filipino World War II veterans to receive the old-age pension from the Philippine government even when, at the same time, they also receive similar benefits from the U.S. government.

To do this, the bill will introduce further amendments to the governing law on veterans' benefits which is Republic Act No. 6948, dated 09 April 1990, and entitled "An Act Standardizing and Upgrading the Benefits for Military Veterans and their Dependents." There had been two amendments to this law: first was RA 7696 signed on 09 April 1994, and the second was RA 9396 dated 10 March 2007. This latest amendment redefines the term "veteran."

In these proposed amendments, two changes are being introduced. The first deals with pegging the amount of old-age pension at P5,000.00 which is, in fact, the amount of pension as it stands at present. We are only legislating what is being presently received by the veterans.

In the original law enacted in 1990, this pension amounted to only P500.00 monthly. *AS*

*AS*

When the law was amended in 1994, this amount was increased to P1,000.00 with the proviso that said monthly pension shall be increased annually by not less than P500.00 per month until the total old-age pension shall be at least P5,000.00 per month.

The second change concerns a provision which has been carried by the original law and this is about restricting the veterans from receiving the said pension if the veteran is already receiving a similar pension from the U.S. government. The bill aims to do away with this restriction and therefore allow our veterans to receive the old-age pension from the Philippine government despite receiving a similar benefit from the U.S. government.

It must be noted, however, that the bill will benefit only a specific group of veterans: the Filipino World War II veterans. The simple reason behind this is that they are the only veterans under the new definition who are entitled to receive benefits and other gratuities from the U.S. government.

As has been explained by the author, in the bill's Explanatory Note:

"... We owe the Filipino World War II veterans a tremendous debt of gratitude such that a monthly pension is the least we could do to show our appreciation and improve their quality of life, especially now that they are in their advanced age, weak, sickly and some dying. It would be a great disservice to the Filipino World War II veterans if the Philippines withdraws the pensions and benefits it grants to them when something similar is given to them by the United States Government."

Those are the words of our esteemed colleague, Sen. Richard J. Gordon.

This simple amendment will go a long way in this Chamber's efforts to improve the well-being of our veterans. By enacting this bill, this Chamber will once again live up to the constitutionally mandated duty to "provide immediate and adequate care, benefits, and other forms of assistance to war veterans and veterans of military campaigns, their surviving spouses and orphans.

In view of the foregoing considerations, your Committee on National Defense and Security, jointly with the Committee on Finance, submits for the Chamber's consideration Senate Bill No. 1659 under Committee Report No. 7.

## SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 5:11 p.m.*

## RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 5:12 p.m., the session was resumed.

## SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 1659

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

## SPECIAL ORDER

Upon motion Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 8 on Senate Bill No. 31 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

## COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 8 ON SENATE BILL NO. 31

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 31 (Committee Report No. 8), entitled

### AN ACT PRESCRIBING A FIXED TERM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, with the permission of the Body, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, only the title of the bill was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

The Chair recognized Senator Biazon for the sponsorship.

## SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR BIAZON

In sponsoring Senate Bill No. 31, Senator Biazon, delivered the following speech: #

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Your Committee on National Defense and Security is honored to present before this Chamber Senate Bill No. 31, under Committee Report No. 8, taking into consideration Senate Bill Nos. 704 and 758.

This bill was approved on Third Reading by this Chamber in the 13<sup>th</sup> Congress. A Bicameral Conference Committee Report thereon has, in fact, been approved as well. To add to that, this Chamber had ratified that conference committee report. However, it is unfortunate that our colleagues then at the House of Representatives, for reasons known only to them, failed to approve the Bicameral Conference Committee Report.

This Representation therefore re-filed this bill for the Body's consideration once again. Perhaps seeing the wisdom of and the necessity for the bill, two other senators – Senate President Pro Tempore Jinggoy Ejercito Estrada and Sen. Antonio F. Trillanes IV – filed similar bills which were also considered by your Committee during the public hearing held on 07 September 2007.

In the recent past, we have witnessed the erosion of certain institutions and institutional processes in our country. The gravest of these were those that affected our electoral and judicial processes.

One institution which ideally should be the instrument in stabilizing the nation but instead became part of the problem, is the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). The AFP as a military institution, as the Constitution itself requires, should be shielded from partisan politics. It is therefore incumbent upon Congress to protect and uphold this constitutional mandate. In so doing, we must introduce reforms that will strengthen the faith of our people in the Armed Forces and make it truly a professional armed forces of the country.

Your Committee on National Defense and Security today presents for the Chamber's consideration Senate Bill No. 31, entitled "An Act Prescribing A Fixed Term For The Chief Of Staff Of The Armed Forces Of The Philippines (AFP) And For Other Purposes," under Committee Report No. 8. It is noteworthy that this bill is practically the same bill that the Chamber approved on Third Reading during the last Congress and which was approved by the Bicameral Conference Committee, the conference committee report of which was also ratified by this Chamber.

The bill is in consolidation of three similar bills, namely:

- ♦ *Senate Bill No. 31* – An Act Prescribing A Fixed Term For The Chief Of Staff The Armed Forces Of The Philippines (AFP) And For Other Purposes (by Senator Biazon);
- ♦ *Senate Bill No. 704* – An Act Amending Section 9 of R.A. No. 291 So As To Provide That No Officer Shall Be Appointed Chief Of Staff If Said Officer Has Less Than A Year Remaining In the Active Service (by Senator Estrada); and
- ♦ *Senate Bill No. 758* – An Act Prescribing Fixed Terms For The Chief Of Staff And Major Service Commanders Of The Armed Forces Of The Philippines (AFP) And For Other Purposes (by Senator Trillanes IV).

Simply put, the objectives of this bill are:

1. To prevent the trivialization of the position of the Chief of Staff and thereby preserving its integrity; and
2. To provide stability in the leadership of the Armed Forces by fixing the duration of the term of the Chief of Staff so as to ensure continuity and consistency in the formulation and implementation of programs.

And, of course, we will never see again the "revolving door" policy that had been put into practice recently.

The 1987 Constitution, under paragraph (7), Section 5 of Article XVI, prescribes that the "tour of duty of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces shall not exceed three years. However, in times of war or other national emergency declared by the Congress, the President may extend such tour of duty." And a third one is provided – if there is a declared state of national emergency.

The above provision has been interpreted as prescribing a limitation on the term of office of the Chief of Staff. It does not preclude Congress from fixing a term of office which, however, should not exceed three years as stated in the Constitution.

The problem lies in the practice of appointing chiefs of staff who have very little time left in the active service such that they reach the compulsory retirement age even before they were able to put in place their respective reform programs in the AFP. *AB*

*FD*

Under this bill, the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines shall have a fixed term of office of three (3) years.

The term shall commence on the date of appointment by the President and will end upon completion of the three-year term.

The pool of officers from which the Chief of Staff shall be chosen is also changed. Whereas, the old Constitution states that any colonel can be appointed as Chief of Staff, this bill provides that the President shall select from among the officers with the grade of Major General/Rear Admiral to Lieutenant General/Vice Admiral the officer who, in his or her opinion, is best qualified for the position of Chief of Staff. Because of a law that restructured the general ranks in this country, the selection pool will consist of about 52 generals. This means that only those from the rank of two-star general or rear admiral to three-star general or vice admiral are qualified to be the Chief of Staff.

Of course, the President will still have the power to remove, for loss of confidence, any Chief of Staff so appointed even before the end of the three-year term.

Needless to say, this bill will do away with appointing chiefs of staff who merely have months remaining in the active service before they are due for compulsory retirement. The position of Chief of Staff is a very vital link in the chain of command. Stability in this position must be preserved.

Fixing the term of the Chief of Staff to three years will, in a sense, give security of tenure to this sensitive position and allow it to plan, test, and execute meaningful programs. It will also seek to shield the selection process for such positions from political and personal considerations by ensuring that merit and fitness prevail. The days of the so-called "revolving door policy," which trivializes the position of the Armed Forces Chief of Staff, will then come to an end.

In view of these considerations, your Committee on National Defense and Security humbly submits for the Chamber's consideration, Senate Bill No. 31 under Committee Report No. 8.

#### **SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 31**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

#### **SPECIAL ORDER**

Upon motion Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body approved the transfer of Committee Report No. 12 on Senate Bill No. 233 from the Calendar for Ordinary Business to the Calendar for Special Orders.

#### **COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 12 ON SENATE BILL NO. 233**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered, on Second Reading, Senate Bill No. 233 (Committee Report No. 12), entitled

AN ACT AMENDING THE ADMINISTRATIVE CODE OF 1987 BY PROHIBITING A PERSON FROM BEING APPOINTED AS THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENSE WITHIN THREE (3) YEARS AFTER RETIREMENT FROM ACTIVE DUTY AS A COMMISSIONED OFFICER OF A REGULAR COMPONENT OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE PHILIPPINES (AFP).

Pursuant to Section 67, Rule XXIII of the Rules of the Senate, with the permission of the Body, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, only the title of the bill was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

The Chair recognized Senator Biazon for the sponsorship.

#### **SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF SENATOR BIAZON**

In sponsoring Senate Bill No. 233, Senator Biazon, delivered the following speech:

Your Committee on National Defense and Security is honored to present before this Chamber Senate Bill No. 233, taking into consideration Senate Bill No. 283 under Committee Report No. 12.

This bill is entitled "An Act Amending The Administrative Code of 1987 By Prohibiting A Person From Being Appointed As The Secretary Of The Department Of National Defense Within

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Three (3) Years After Retirement From Active Duty As A Commissioned Officer Of A Regular Component Of The Armed Forces Of The Philippines (AFP)" and principally authored by this Representation.

Senate Bill No. 283, on the other hand, is entitled "An Act Amending Section 42, Chapter VII, Sub-Title II, Title VIII of Executive Order No. 292, As Amended, Otherwise Known as the Administrative Code of 1987" and authored by your Committee's Vice Chairman, Sen. Richard J. Gordon.

This proposed legislation is very simple in its purpose. The 1987 Constitution, Executive Order No. 292 or the Administrative Code of 1987, and other laws provide for the general qualifications and inhibitions of the members of the Cabinet. The purpose of such requirements is to ensure that the appointees possess the necessary skills, expertise and integrity essential to the job.

The particular section of Executive Order No. 292, otherwise known as the Administrative Code of 1987, which is sought to be amended, provides for the general qualifications required of all department secretaries in addition to those prescribed in their respective charters, if there is any. An additional qualification is now proposed in the case of the Secretary of the Department of National Defense to further emphasize the constitutional mandate regarding civilian supremacy over the military.

By prohibiting a former military officer from being appointed as Secretary of National Defense (SND) within three (3) years after relief from active duty as a commissioned officer of a regular component of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the position of SND will be shielded from controversies arising from appointments and assignments within the AFP. By having no prior personal and professional relationships with the officers directly under him, directly known or familiar with him, the SND would be more objective and impartial in policy determination and recommendations. On the part of former military officers, the prohibition shall also afford them sufficient time to adapt to civilian life.

In fact, this specific disqualification for retired military officers is contained in the recommendations by no less than two commissions tasked to investigate military uprisings. In the Davide Report dated October 1990, it is stated:

"The supremacy of civilian authority over the military should be established by the appointment, as soon as practicable, of civilians with the capability, integrity and leadership to head the Department of National Defense, the National Security Council (NSC), and the National Intelligence coordinating Agency (NICA)." (*Davide Report, pp. 600-601*)

For its part, the Feliciano Report which investigated the so-called Oakwood Mutiny stated:

"A civilian Secretary of National Defense – This Commission reiterates the recommendation of the Davide Commission to have a civilian appointed to the position of Secretary of National Defense. Beyond the need to institutionalize the supremacy of civilian authority over the military, the appointment of persons who have not held positions in the military establishment that itself needs to be reformed, is essential if a reform program is to succeed. Although military officers acquire a civilian status upon retirement, they are likely to bring the rigidity of hierarchy, seniority, camaraderie, and other aspects of military culture into the office of the SND that would obstruct reform." (*Feliciano Report, 2003, p 42*)

It also bears stating that in the United States, a person may not be appointed as Secretary of National Defense within ten (10) years after relief from active duty as commissioned officer of a regular component of the U.S. armed forces.

The constitutional principle that "civilian authority is, at all times, supreme over the military" must always be respected. There is no cogent reason to deviate from this policy and must forever be upheld and preserved.

## RESERVATIONS TO INTERPELLATE

Senator Pangilinan manifested that Senators Enrile and Lacson have made reservations to interpellate on Senate Bill No. 233.

## SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION OF SENATE BILL NO. 233

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

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*At this juncture, Senate President Villar relinquished the Chair to Senate President Pro Tempore Ejercito Estrada.*

**COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 7  
ON SENATE BILL NO. 1659**

*(Continuation)*

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body resumed consideration, on Second Reading, of Senate Bill No. 1659 (Committee Report No. 7), entitled

AN ACT ALLOWING FILIPINO WORLD WAR II VETERANS TO CONTINUE RECEIVING PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT PENSIONS AND BENEFITS EVEN WHEN SIMILAR PENSIONS AND BENEFITS ARE PROVIDED BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, AMENDING SECTION 10 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 6948, AS AMENDED, FOR THIS PURPOSE.

Senator Pangilinan stated that the parliamentary status was the period of interpellations.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD  
OF INTERPELLATIONS**

There being no interpellation, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of interpellations and proceeded to the period of amendments.

**TERMINATION OF THE PERIOD  
OF AMENDMENTS**

There being no committee or individual amendment, upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body closed the period of amendments.

**APPROVAL OF SENATE BILL NO. 1659  
ON SECOND READING**

Submitted to a vote, there being no objection, Senate Bill No. 1659 was approved on Second Reading.

**SUSPENSION OF CONSIDERATION  
OF SENATE BILL NO. 1659**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body suspended consideration of the bill.

**RESERVATION TO INTERPELLATE**

Senator Pangilinan manifested that Senator Aquino made reservation to interpellate on Senate Bill No. 31.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 5:32 p.m.*

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 5:32 p.m., the session was resumed.

**PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 261**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 261, entitled

RESOLUTION HONORING AND REMEMBERING ADRIAN E. CRISTOBAL SR. FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS TO PHILIPPINE JOURNALISM AND THE LITERARY ARTS.

With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

**ADOPTION OF PROPOSED  
SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 261**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 261 was adopted by the Body.

**PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 270**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 270, entitled

RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF MOHTARMA BENAZIR BHUTTO, AND CONDEMNING HER ASSASSINATION.

With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

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**ADOPTION OF PROPOSED  
SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 270**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 270 was adopted by the Body.

**PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 276**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 276, entitled

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE TO HONOR THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN ITS CENTENNIAL YEAR AS THE NATION'S PREMIER UNIVERSITY, AND TO CALL FOR HIGHER BUDGETARY APPROPRIATIONS AND THE IMMEDIATE PASSAGE OF THE UP CHARTER BILL TO AID THE UNIVERSITY IN MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF THE NEXT 100 YEARS.

With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

**ADOPTION OF PROPOSED  
SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 276**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 276 was adopted by the Body.

**PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 279**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 279, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE SUPREME COURT OF THE PHILIPPINES FOR DESIGNATING ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN TRIAL COURTS AS ENVIRONMENTAL COURTS TO HEAR CASES INVOLVING VIOLATIONS OF LAWS PROTECTING THE COUNTRY'S NATURAL RESOURCES,

taking into consideration Proposed Senate Resolution No. 285, entitled

RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE SUPREME COURT OF THE PHILIPPINES ON THE CREATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL "GREEN" COURTS AS SPECIAL COURTS FROM AMONG FIRST AND SECOND LEVEL TRIAL COURTS FOR THE SPEEDY ADJUDICATION AND RESOLUTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CASES.

With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

**ADOPTION OF PROPOSED  
SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 279**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 279, taking into consideration Proposed Senate Resolution No. 285, was adopted by the Body.

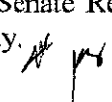
**PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 282**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Body considered Proposed Senate Resolution No. 282, entitled

RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING AND COMMENDING THE TWO FILIPINO WORLD CLASS GOLFERS MS. DOROTHY DELASIN AND MS. JENNIFER ROSALES FOR WINNING THE FOURTH EDITION OF THE WOMEN'S WORLD CUP OF GOLF AT SUN CITY, SOUTH AFRICA ON JANUARY 20, 2008.

With the permission of the Body, only the title of the resolution was read without prejudice to the insertion of its full text into the Record of the Senate.

**ADOPTION OF PROPOSED  
SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 282**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, Proposed Senate Resolution No. 282 was adopted by the Body. 

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 5:36 p.m.*

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 5:36 p.m., the session was resumed.

**COMMITTEE CHAIRMANSHIP**

Senator Pangilinan stated that Senator Trillanes, elected chair of the Committee on Civil Service and Government Reorganization, has been unable to discharge his duties.

In view thereof, at the instance of Senator Pimentel, upon nomination by Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, Senator Legarda was elected as acting chair of the said committee.

**SUSPENSION OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, the session was suspended.

*It was 5:37 p.m.*

**RESUMPTION OF SESSION**

At 5:38 p.m., the session was resumed.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Senator Pangilinan informed the Body that Senator Trillanes had indicated that he was relinquishing his committee membership in the Committee on Science and Technology.


In view thereof, upon nomination by Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, Senator Legarda was elected as member, in an acting capacity, of the Committee on Science and Technology, in lieu of Senator Trillanes.

**ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION**

Upon motion of Senator Pangilinan, there being no objection, the Senate President Pro Tempore declared the session adjourned until three o'clock in the afternoon of Monday, February 4, 2008.

*It was 5:39 p.m.*

I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

  
EMMA LIRIO-REYES  
Secretary of the Senate

Approved on February 4, 2008