

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

8 MAR 10 P 2 10

SENATE  
P. S. R. No. 324

RECEIVED BY: [Signature]

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN  
INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE PLIGHT OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO  
WORKERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 13, Section 3 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, Republic Act 8042, otherwise known as the Migrant Workers Act of 1995, Section 2 (e) further mandates that: "Free access to the courts and quasi-judicial bodies and adequate legal assistance shall not be denied to any persons by reason of poverty. In this regard, it is imperative that an effective mechanism be instituted to ensure that the rights and interest of distressed overseas Filipinos, in general, and Filipino migrant workers, in particular, documented or undocumented, are adequately protected and safeguarded";

WHEREAS, according to the Asia Pacific Migrants Mission, a Hong Kong based-migrant workers' group, 50 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) have been reduced to scavenging garbage in Kuwait after being duped by their employer; they have resorted to eating expired foodstuff and scavenging sellable items from waste bins just to survive;

WHEREAS, these OFWs went through a placement agency named Great Providers Service Exporters Inc.; they were employed by the Gulf Link Transport Co. but they were subcontracted to different employers as cleaners;

WHEREAS, the workers have been in Kuwait for three months, and a number of them have either not been paid or their salaries have been delayed;

WHEREAS, for those who do get paid, their salaries are reduced from 60 Kuwaiti Dinars (about US\$220.50) to only 44 (US\$161.70) a month because of illegal deductions;

WHEREAS, 40 other victims of labor contract violations have filed complaints with the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE);

WHEREAS, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, about 100 OFWs are stranded under a bridge and are awaiting deportation;

WHEREAS, there is a need for the Philippine government to protect the rights of these OFWs who risk their lives just to find work overseas and to contribute to the improvement of the country's economy;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation, on the plight of Overseas Filipino workers in the Middle East.

Adopted,

  
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/dpm