

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

8 MAY 14 2008

SENATE
P. S. R. No. 398

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED KILLING AND MAIMING OF FILIPINO CHILDREN IN AREAS OF ARMED CONFLICT, AND FOR THE PEACE AND CEASEFIRE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND REBEL GROUPS TO INCLUDE SPECIFIC PROVISIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 13 states that "The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual, and social well-being";

WHEREAS, a United Nations report released last 29 April 2008 stated that 19 Filipino children were killed in conflicts between government troops, the New People's Army, and the Abu Sayyaf between July 2005 and November 2007;

WHEREAS, the UN report also noted that 42 Filipino children were also maimed in combat-related activities in the country;

WHEREAS, the UN report said that government forces were responsible for over half of the cases, a fifth of them to the Abu Sayyaf Group, and the rest to the NPA; there is evidence that government paramilitary forces and rebel groups recruited children during the same period;

WHEREAS, the findings of UNICEF-commissioned study on children and women in conflict-stricken areas in the country revealed that children associate themselves with armed groups because of poverty, lack of access to basic social services, and influence from their immediate social circles;

WHEREAS, it was observed that few of the children killed or maimed were accused by government forces of being associated with rebel groups;

WHEREAS, the UN report appealed the Philippine government to include specific provisions for the protection of children in all peace or ceasefire negotiations;

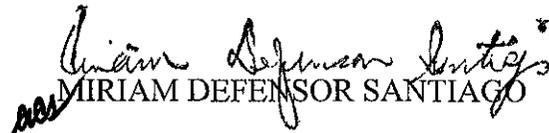
WHEREAS, it is the responsibility of the government to look after the welfare of the Filipino youth and prioritize those who are in the areas of armed conflict because they are in the most vulnerable situation;

WHEREAS, the Filipino people must be assured that government forces in areas of armed conflict are trained to handle combat situations that involve children who are suspected to be associated with rebel groups;

WHEREAS, it is imperative for government and the rebel groups to take careful and thoughtful consideration of children's rights and welfare in areas of armed conflict in peace and ceasefire negotiations;

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 reported killing and maiming of Filipino children in areas of armed conflict, and for the peace negotiations between the government and rebel groups to include specific provisions for the protection of children.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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