



Risa Hontiveros
Senator

AKBAYAN CITIZENS' ACTION PARTY

16 September 2020

SEC. TEODORO L. LOCSIN JR.

Department Secretary

Department of Foreign Affairs

2330 Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, Philippines

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
I.T. COMMUNICATIONS AND
RECORDS DIVISION

17 SEP 2020

BY:
TIME:
CRD:

FELIX PASCUA

Dear Sec. Locsin,

I am writing on behalf of the families of the 36 missing Filipino mariners aboard Gulf Livestock 1 which capsized after encountering heavy weather off the coast of southwest Japan on September 2, 2020, to respectfully urge the Honorable Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) to call upon the Japanese government to continue and expand Search and Rescue (SAR) efforts to locate our seafarers.

While recognizing the valuable work the DFA has done in keeping the families abreast of developments *vis-à-vis* SAR operations, I also understand the desperation, frustration, and helplessness they must be feeling during this difficult period.

Thus, I firmly believe that, as long as the families have not given up on their loved ones, our government should sustain the fight by persuading the Japanese government to not only continue and expand SAR operations but also, if possible, to allow other countries such as the Philippines, Australia, and New Zealand to join in the search as well.

It must be emphasized that what happened to Gulf Livestock 1 calls for the application of the "Good Samaritan Vessel" doctrine, which encourages seafarers to save lives and property under distress. There is also a legal obligation to render assistance pursuant to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Safety of Life at Sea Convention (SOLAS), and International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue 1979 (SAR).

So far, two Filipino crew members have been rescued alive and another, unfortunately, was pronounced dead-on-arrival at a Japanese hospital. One of the survivors stated that the crew was able to put on life jackets before jumping into the water. This gives families hope that their loved-ones are still alive at sea or on an island. Consequently, I would like to reiterate their request for our government to not give up by exhausting all efforts.

A favorable response from your good office is fervently hoped for. Thank you and best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Risa Hontiveros
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Senator