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SENATE

P.S.R. No. 231

RECEIVED BY: 

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

RESOLUTION

CALLING FOR THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE, LAND-GRABBING, AND ILLEGAL LOGGING AND QUARRYING AFFECTING THE MASUNGI GEORESERVE AND THE REST OF THE UPPER MARIKINA RIVER BASIN PROTECTED LANDSCAPE

WHEREAS, the Masungi Georeserve is a conservation area in the southern Sierra Madre range in Baras, Rizal, which sits inside the 26,124-hectare Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape ("UMRBPL"), one of the 94 protected areas established under Republic Act (R.A.) No. 11038, otherwise known as the Expanded National Integrated Protected Area Systems ("E-NIPAS") Law;

WHEREAS, the Department of Environment & Natural Resources ("DENR"), through Secretary Regina Paz "Gina" L. Lopez, entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Masungi Georeserve Foundation Inc. ("MGFI") covering 2,700 hectares for conservation efforts within the UMRBPL, as well as 300 hectares to be operated as an eco-tourism park for public use;

WHEREAS, on September 19, 2022, it was widely reported in the media that more than 30 armed men apparently employed by "Sinagtala Security Agency Services" were encamped along the Marikina-Infanta Highway, within the vicinity of the Masungi conservation site;

WHEREAS, on September 20, 2022, the Philippine National Police ("PNP") confiscated firearms from the group, but declined to make any arrests;

WHEREAS, the MGFI, its volunteers, and employees have reportedly been threatened and harassed by groups allegedly engaged in illegal quarrying, logging, and land-grabbing in the UMRBPL, culminating in the shooting of 2 park rangers in 2021; and

WHEREAS, incidents of armed violence and other illegal activities within the UMRBPL threaten not only the peace-and-order of Baras, Rizal, but the biodiversity and

integrity of area's natural environment as well, which is home to over 400 species of flora and fauna, as well as the site of 60-million-year-old limestone formations.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED TO CALL FOR THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE, LAND-GRABBING, AND ILLEGAL LOGGING AND QUARRYING AFFECTING THE MASUNGI GEORESERVE AND THE REST OF THE UPPER MARIKINA RIVER BASIN PROTECTED LANDSCAPE.

Adopted.


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator