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P. S. R. No. 1207

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Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, THE ALLEGED REPORTS OF SEXUAL ABUSES COMMITTED
AGAINST OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs)

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 18 provides: "The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and promote their welfare";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, in an article dated 29 June 2009 reported that two Filipina workers are preparing to file rape charges against their Arab recruiter in Dammam, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, even as 20 more workers seek to be rescued from the same recruitment agency over reports that they have also been sexually abused;

WHEREAS, Garry Martinez, chairman of Migrante International, reportedly said that the two Filipina domestic helpers are awaiting the results of their medico-legal tests, which would be used to file formal charges before the prosecutor's office in Dammam against a certain Abu Khalid, owner and manager of Maqpoon Belahodood General Service Company which recruited them to work in Saudi;

WHEREAS, Martinez also allegedly said that the two OFWs, whose names are being withheld, were rescued with the help of Migrante and the Saudi police on June 23, 2009;

WHEREAS, Martinez also claimed that the two OFWs told Migrante of their "harrowing ordeal" in the hands of their Arab recruiter, adding that the two victims also expressed fear about the situation of some 20 Filipina who remain in the premises of the recruitment agency, saying they could have been subjected to sexual abuse, too;

WHEREAS, in a related development, another OFW, Aileen Baldiray, escaped rape and told of how Abu Khalid also tried to rape her;

WHEREAS, Martinez sought the help of the Philippine embassy officials in the rape case of the two workers and in the rescue of the 20 others, saying that the 20 Filipinas have been forced to return to Khalid's agency after they encountered problems with their employers; he claimed that OFWs normally return to the agency that recruited them;

WHEREAS, this report needs the immediate attention of all government agencies concerned so that if the allegations were proven to be true, preventive measures should be put into place to protect the lives, honor, and dignity of our overseas Filipino workers, especially women;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate committee to investigate, in aid of legislation, the alleged reports of sexual abuses committed against our overseas Filipino workers;

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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