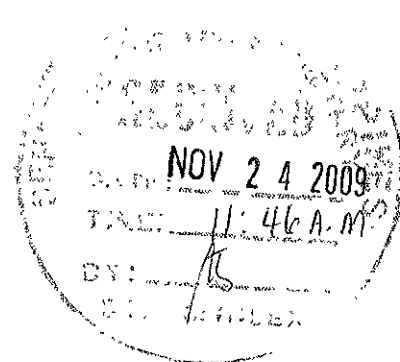


FOURTEENTH CONGRESS )  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
Third Regular Session )



SENATE

P. S. Res. No. 1491

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INTRODUCED BY THE HONORABLE SENATORS  
BENIGNO S. AQUINO III AND MAR ROXAS

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A RESOLUTION

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE CONDEMNING IN THE STRONGEST POSSIBLE TERMS THE BRUTAL AND INHUMAN ELECTION-RELATED MASSACRE AND CARNAGE OF INNOCENT CIVILIANS IN MAGUINDANAO PROVINCE, AND LIKEWISE DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THIS UNPARALLELED AND GRUESOME INCIDENT, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF PROPOSING LEGISLATIVE MEASURES THAT WOULD EFFECTIVELY PROMOTE LASTING PEACE AND PROSPERITY IN MINDANAO.

WHEREAS, in the morning of 23 November 2009, a group of relatives and supporters of Buluan Vice-Mayor Toto Mangudadatu and Mangudadatu Vice Mayor Bae Eden Mangudadatu were on their way to file certificates of candidacy (COC) at the provincial office of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) in Shariff Aguak, Maguindanao;

WHEREAS, according to news reports, the group, which included Vice Mayor Bae Eden Mangudadatu herself and Vice Mayor Toto Mangudadatu's wife, Genalyn Mangudadatu, were reportedly stopped by at least one hundred (100) armed men at the boundary of Ampatuan and Shariff Aguak towns in Maguindanao;

WHEREAS, news reports likewise say that at around 2:30 p.m. of the same day, military and police investigators found the bodies of at least 22 members of the group in a field in Barangay Saniag, Upper Masalay, Ampatuan town, some of which were either decapitated, mutilated, or raped;

WHEREAS, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP) has likewise condemned the vicious attack where at least 13 media people are feared dead, making it the largest group of journalists ever killed in a single incident, and has also been described as the "worst loss of life in one day in the history of journalism,"

WHEREAS, as of 24 November 2009, it has been reported that at least 43 people are already feared dead with more bodies believed to be buried as efforts to recover them continue;

WHEREAS, what makes this vicious and barbaric attack described by a major newspaper as the "first political mass murder of the election season" so appalling and gruesome is the fact that the victims were unarmed civilians composed mostly of journalists and women, who all believed that they will be safe and unharmed, especially the women because of the Koranic prescription to spare women;

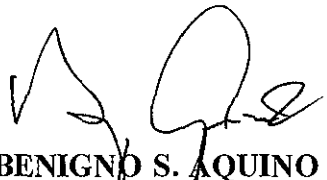
WHEREAS, this brutal and senseless murder and carnage of innocent civilians who were simply on their way to file certificates of candidacy for the coming May 2010 elections cannot be anything but a means to stifle or deny participation in an otherwise democratic electoral process;


WHEREAS, this unparalleled and atrocious election-related violence is not only an indignation and outrage against the democratic ideals and institutions of our country, but also against the very freedom and human dignity of the Filipino people, certainly deserving of our strongest condemnation;

WHEREAS, such an act of cruelty is a crime against the very idea of humanity, transcending geographic boundaries and further soiling the reputation of the country in the international community;

***NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED,*** that the Senate condemns in the strongest possible terms the brutal and inhuman election-related massacre and carnage of innocent civilians in Maguindanao Province, and likewise directs the appropriate Senate committees to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into this unparalleled and gruesome incident, with the end in view of proposing legislative measures that would effectively promote lasting peace and prosperity in Mindanao.

Adopted,

  
**BENIGNO S. AQUINO III**  
Senator

  
**MAR ROXAS**  
Senator