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S E N A T E

RECORDED BY: *Jua*

Senate Resolution No. 11

Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON FOREIGN RELATIONS AND ON YOUTH, WOMEN AND FAMILY RELATIONS TO LOOK INTO THE ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF SELECTED EMBASSY OFFICIALS AND STAFF POSTED IN THE MIDDLE EAST ON THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF DISTRESSED OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS CURRENTLY BEING SHELTERED INSIDE EMBASSY PREMISES, WITH THE END VIEW OF STRENGTHENING CURRENT MECHANISMS IN THE REPATRIATION OF BELEAGUERED MIGRANT WORKERS

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 11 of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human right;

WHEREAS, under Section 3 of Republic Act No. 10364 or the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012, sexual exploitation is committed when a person is forced to participate in prostitution by any means of intimidation or threat, abuse of power or of position or of legal process and taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person;

WHEREAS, on 18 June 2013, the Chairman of the House Committee on Overseas Workers Affairs disclosed to the public the alleged active involvement of select Philippine embassy officials and staff in the Middle East – particularly in Kuwait, Syria, and Jordan, in the sexual exploitation of distressed overseas Filipino workers seeking shelter in their respective embassies;

WHEREAS, apart from being subjected to so-called “sex-for-fly” schemes wherein the victimized OFWs allegedly provide sexual favors to embassy officials in order to be prioritized for repatriation, some beleaguered OFWs participate in outright prostitution with the knowledge or participation of embassy officials;

WHEREAS, it has been reported that these allegations have already reached the heads of the concerned diplomatic posts, yet no appropriate measures towards

investigation or prosecution of the same have been taken;

WHEREAS, citing the need for a "transparent, comprehensive and expeditious investigation", the Department of Foreign Affairs has already recalled several envoys from the Middle East in order to provide additional information on the matter while the Department of Labor and Employment has initiated its own team to probe the supposed "sex-for-fly" activities at the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Kuwait;

WHEREAS, this incident, if proven to have enough basis, reveals weaknesses in the existing mechanisms being implemented by our government agencies abroad to facilitate the safe and sound repatriation of distressed Filipino migrant workers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the Senate Committees on Foreign Relations and on Youth, Women and Family Relations to look into the alleged involvement of selected embassy officials and staff posted in the Middle East on the sexual exploitation of distressed overseas Filipino workers currently being sheltered inside embassy premises, with the end view of strengthening current mechanisms in the repatriation of beleaguered migrant workers.

Adopted,


LOREN LEGARDA
Senator