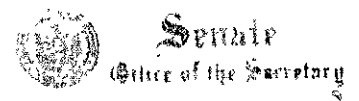


SIXTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC)
OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)



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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 345

RECEIVED BY: *js*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

ON STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS, ELIMINATING HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES IN AND OUT THE COUNTRY, AND CURBING GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION PARTICULARLY RELATED TO THESE ACTIVITIES TAKING INTO SERIOUS CONSIDERATION THE PHILIPPINES RANKING 98TH OUT OF AMONG 162 COUNTRIES ON THE PREVALENCE OF MODERN-DAY SLAVERY BASED ON THE GLOBAL SLAVERY INDEX AS REPORTED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI-SLAVERY ORGANIZATION WALK FREE FOUNDATION

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 5 provides: "The maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property, and promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy";

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 11 provides: "The State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights";

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, various news agencies reported last 17 October 2013 that, according to the international anti-slavery organization Walk Free Foundation's (WFF) Global Slavery Index (GSI), the Philippines ranks 98th among 162 countries on the prevalence of modern-day slavery, but ranks 12th among Asian countries;

WHEREAS, it was reported that the GSI was based on a combined measure of the prevalence of modern slavery by population, measure of child marriage, and measure of human trafficking in and out of the country;

WHEREAS, the WFF's findings reported that there are 140,000 to 160,000 people enslaved in the Philippines, out of a total population of 96 million people;

WHEREAS, according to the WFF, modern slavery is a significant concern for the Philippines, particularly due to the large numbers of Philippine nationals migrating overseas, predominately for work;

WHEREAS, the WFF report claimed that overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), as well as people migrating from rural areas to the large urban areas, are vulnerable to modern slavery and have been subjected to forced labor and involuntary servitude in many industries, including

domestic work and the sex industry, seafaring and maritime work, fisheries, agriculture, health care, engineering, construction and manufacturing;

WHEREAS, the WFF said that the Philippine government's passage of anti-trafficking laws, support for OFWs, ratification of international anti-slavery treaties, and implementation of protection program for victims are notable efforts to combat modern-day slavery of Filipinos, but noted it has to do more against rampant corruption, which is usually connected to trafficking;

WHEREAS, the WFF's findings should alert Congress and concerned government agencies to strengthen efforts in eliminating modern-day slavery through relevant legislation and effective implementation of government programs concerning the protection of OFWs and the domestic labor force;

WHEREAS, as noted in WFF's report, government should augment its anti-corruption drive to go after unscrupulous government officials involved in modern-day slavery, especially those involved with illegal recruitment of OFWs, white slavery, human trafficking, and prostitution rings;

WHEREFORE, be it resolved by the Philippine Senate to conduct and inquiry, in aid of legislation, on strengthening the protection of overseas Filipino workers, eliminating human trafficking activities in and out the country, and curbing government corruption particularly related to these activities taking into serious consideration the Philippines ranking 98th out of among 162 countries on the prevalence of modern-day slavery based on the Global Slavery Index as reported by the international anti-slavery organization Walk Free Foundation.

Adopted,

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/tt