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SENATE
P. S. R. No. **726**

RECEIVED BY: *[Signature]*

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID
OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORT THAT THE EUROPEAN UNION PLANS TO
IMPOSE AN IMPORT BAN ON PHILIPPINES OVER ILLEGAL FISHING

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Article 2, Section 16 provides, "The State shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature";

WHEREAS, the *Manila Bulletin* on 11 June 2014, reported that the European Union (EU) warned the Philippines, one of the world's largest fishing nations, together with Papua New Guinea, that both countries will face an import ban if they do not curb illegal fishing;

WHEREAS, the European Commission reportedly announced that it has decided to issue a "yellow card" against the Philippines after the country failed to fulfill its duties as flag, coastal, port or market state in line with international law, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) or United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement;

WHEREAS, Damanaki allegedly said that the EU wants the Philippines as a partner to combat illegal fishing, and thus, wants the country to improve its legal and control systems as required by international rules;

WHEREAS, Damanaki reportedly added that at the same time, the EU wants to signal to the world that the EU will not tolerate illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing – a criminal activity that should be eradicated by all means, because it undermines the livelihood of fishing communities and depletes fish stocks;

WHEREAS, the report claimed that the commission will review its position in six months time to see if the Philippines have made enough progress on action plans drawn up by the EU;

WHEREAS, in March of this year, it was reported that the EU already banned fish imports from Belize and Cambodia for acting insufficiently against illegal fishing;

WHEREAS, the report claimed that the commission similarly warned other developing economies in 2012 and 2013 but most of these countries "cooperated constructively";

WHEREAS, the EU further warned that if the Philippines, which is listed as the 12th biggest global fishing nation, fails to comply with action plans drawn by EU, then the EU will proceed with its planned trade measure;

WHEREAS, the report added that if the Philippines fails to ensure the sustainable use of the sea and its resources, then the Commission may take certain trade measures including a ban on the country from selling fisheries products to the 28-nation EU;

WHEREAS, it was reported that illegal fishing is estimated to account for 15 percent of the world's catch annually, and that the EU imports about 65 percent of its seafood;

WHEREAS, the report claimed that the EU imported fish worth 165 million euros (around P9.8 billion) from the Philippines in 2013;

WHEREAS, the State should not only create stricter measures to stop illegal fishing, but should also provide incentives to those who develop, use, and maintain environment-friendly fishing methods;

WHEREAS, the State should also intensify its campaign against illegal fishing by employing more creative methods in disseminating information and by increasing the scope of its targeted communities and individuals;

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PHILIPPINE SENATE, to direct the proper senate committee, to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on the report that the European Union plans to impose an import ban on Philippines over illegal fishing.

Adopted.

Miriam Defensor Santiago
MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/lcb