


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SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 870

RECEIVED BY. 

Introduced by Sen. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE GOVERNMENT'S ALLEGED FAILURE TO PROTECT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AS WELL AS TO PROVIDE DECENT AND PROPER ACCOMMODATION TO OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWS) WHO WERE RECENTLY REPATRIATED FROM LIBYA

WHEREAS, Section 3, Article XIII of the 1987 Constitution provides that the *"State shall afford full protection to labor, local and overseas, organized and unorganized, and promote full employment and equality of employment opportunities to all."*;

WHEREAS, in June 2014, war between the Libyan government forces and armed militias erupted in Libya affecting approximately 13,000 OFWs who are presently living and working in the said country;

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Labor and Employment Secretary Rosalinda Baldoz, there was an estimated 11,000 OFWs who wanted to avail of the government's mandatory repatriation. This number was eventually reduced to 6,000 OFWs based on an initial report from the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Libya;

WHEREAS, the government has already repatriated more than 3,000 OFWs since last month, including the 736 OFWs who were repatriated recently through a government chartered ship and planes. The government hired a ship to repatriate the OFWs from the Libyan port cities of Benghazi and Misrata which ferried them to Malta. From Malta, they were flown to the Philippines via two (2) chartered Philippine Airlines (PAL) flights;

WHEREAS, unfortunately, there were news reports that the government allegedly failed to provide humane and proper accommodation to repatriated OFWs who boarded the government chartered Maltese ship, M/S Bridge. Several OFWs complained that Labor Attache to Libya Melchor Dizon allowed the OFWs to sleep on the cabin floor. This prompted the DOLE to order Mr. Dizon to return to the country and answer the inquiry being conducted by the agency on the said matter;

WHEREAS, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has also started its own investigation to verify the alleged poor and discriminatory conditions suffered by the OFWs. According to DFA Spokesperson and Assistant Secretary Charles Jose, some of the complaints include the alleged discrimination in the treatment of OFWs passengers as against the foreigners on board the ship, failure to give them adequate food and water and overcrowding;

WHEREAS, the DFA shall likewise verify the total payment by the government for the hiring of the ship and for the food and water of the 774 repatriated OFWs which was allegedly amounted to \$1.8 million. If the report is proven correct, the government may have misallocated and therefore failed to judiciously spend the limited government resources;

WHEREAS, there is also a need for the national government, particularly the Department of Labor and Employment and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration to implement an integrated policy measures and a comprehensive package of assistance to help the distressed OFWs and their families affected by the repatriation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the government's alleged failure to protect against maltreatment and discrimination as well as to provide decent and proper accommodation to Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who were recently repatriated from Libya, with the end in view of adopting a more appropriate and effective policies and guidelines on the repatriation program as well as provide for possible monetary and non-monetary assistance to the OFWs and their families affected.

Adopted,



JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA
Senator