



Introduced by Senator **Ana Theresia "Risa" Hontiveros-Baraquel**

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN, CHILDREN, FAMILY RELATIONS, AND GENDER EQUALITY TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF CANDIDATES DURING THE 2018 MISS EARTH PAGEANT AND THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT ENABLED THE SAME, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF CREATING POLICIES TOWARDS A PHILIPPINES THAT IS A SAFE SPACE FOR ALL

WHEREAS, last November 7 and 8, Miss Earth Candidates Jamie Vandenberg of Canada, Abbey-Anne Gyles-Brown of England, and Emma Mae Sheedy of Guam shared on their respective social media accounts the distressing experiences they have been subjected to at the hands of Mr. Amado S. Cruz, one of Miss Earth Philippines' supposed sponsors;¹

WHEREAS, Miss Vandenberg had reported feeling uncomfortable when the pageant's team managers went to her room and took some of her things without her permission, which included important personal documents such as her passport, during the first day of the competition². The said removal of passport from her personal possession later proved to be an obstacle when she wished to leave and displays a disturbing parallel on how passport confiscation is used as a tactic to limit the mobility of (female) migrant workers and expose them at a heightened risk of abuse and exploitation;³

WHEREAS, Miss Vandenberg's private number was given to the alleged harasser without her consent on the first day of the competition. This action facilitated the beginning of her alleged harassment, which included persistent questions about her hotel and room number and being offered to advance in the pageant in exchange for sexual favors.⁴ The same spiel of sexual favors in exchange for the Miss Earth crown was used repeatedly on more than one occasion to Miss Gyles-Brown, who was also asked for her hotel and room number;⁵

WHEREAS, Miss Earth Guam Emma Mae Sheedy reported that her buttocks were 'grabbed' by Mr. Cruz during the National Costume Competition and was consistently told by her alleged harasser not to tell anyone about the said harassment;⁶

WHEREAS, Miss Vandenberg, Gyles-Brown, and Sheedy described the uncomfortable and troubling event at the Manila Yacht Club, where the alleged harasser became bolder and more persistent in his actions towards the candidates. Mr. Cruz reportedly ensured that the candidates and the team managers and personnel were separated into different rooms and unashamedly insisted some of the candidates to dance for him.⁷ Based on accounts, this event also provided Mr. Cruz with the opportunity to harass Miss Earth candidates into giving him their hotel and room numbers;

WHEREAS, after allegedly being subjected to a decidedly uncomfortable, unsafe, and threatening evening, several candidates led by Miss Vandenberg and Miss Gyles-Brown approached the pageant's team managers intending to report their deplorable experience with Mr. Cruz. However,

¹ <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2018/11/08/Miss-Earth-2018-sexual-harassment-pageant-sponsor.html>

² https://www.rappler.com/entertainment/news/216223-2018-miss-earth-candidates-sexual-harassment?fbclid=IwAR2AkWoXRgXaycN7mQGZiAQihIVAWey2u_0hMT59NVf-CzBTVQghxLB03Nk

³ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_552697.pdf

⁴ <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2018/11/08/Miss-Earth-2018-sexual-harassment-pageant-sponsor.html>

⁵ *ibid*

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ *ibid*

instead of taking these reports seriously and promptly, the pageant's managers reportedly laughed at the candidates, told them to be nice to their alleged harasser, and told Miss Gyles-Brown not to cry as to not ruin her makeup.⁸ They were belatedly allowed to wait in their vehicles after 20 minutes;

WHEREAS, the aforementioned candidates have not failed to mention the incidents of harassment to Ms. Lorraine Schuck, the executive Vice President of Carousel Productions — which owns and runs the Miss Earth Pageant. She assured the candidates that the said sponsor will not be present at future events and that all contacts between him and the candidates will be terminated. None of these promises came into fruition, as Mr. Cruz was still seen at several events, dinners, and the Coronation night itself;⁹

WHEREAS, Mr. Cruz, who identified to be a sponsor¹⁰ of the pageant, was not an actual and official sponsor.¹¹ Ms. Schuck have also referred to him as a sponsor in several news articles. However, she later revealed that Mr. Cruz is not an actual and official sponsor, but rather only a dinner host;¹²

WHEREAS, this seemingly minor misinformation puts into a glaring light the lack of care the Pageant places in the safety and privacy of the candidates. As a result of this alleged negligence and irresponsibility, the candidates were subjected into situations that should never have happened at any point in the competition;

WHEREAS, perhaps more damning than allegations of Carousel Production's negligence and carelessness was Ms. Schuck's statement condemning the candidates for sharing their experiences in their own private social media accounts.¹³ In an interaksyon article, she criticized the candidates, saying: "Alam nilang dapat lapitan nila ang team manager. Bakit hindi nila ginawa? Bakit ngayon lang nila sasabihin 'to?'"¹⁴ She appeared to be more concerned about Carousel Production's reputation, rather than the harassment they enabled to escalate;

WHEREAS, at this juncture of the country's history where its women and girls are battered by rape jokes, sexual violence, and sex-for-freedom cases, it is imperative that sexual harassment of any kind, shape, or form be brought into the open to create a culture of zero tolerance;

WHEREAS, let Miss Vandenberg's, Gyles-Brown's, and Sheedy's statements serve as an encouragement for the silent victims of sexual harassment everywhere. May the encouragement and support that greeted the accounts of Miss Vandenberg, Gyles-Brown, and Sheedy prove to be the rule rather than the exception, which can help cultivate a culture of zero tolerance for sexual harassment wherever they may occur, be it in beauty pageants, school lectures, or day to day life;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved to conduct an investigation in aid of legislation on allegations of sexual harassment of candidates during the 2018 Miss Earth Pageant and the circumstances that enabled the same, with the end in view of creating policies towards a Philippines that is a safe space for all.

Adopted,


ANA THERESIA "RISA" HONTIVEROS-BARAQUEL

⁸ <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2018/11/08/Miss-Earth-2018-sexual-harassment-pageant-sponsor.html>

⁹ <https://news.abs-cbn.com/life/11/08/18/2-more-miss-earth-2018-bets-allege-sexual-harassment-vs-sponsor>

¹⁰ <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/video/stateofthenation/477185/amado-cruz-na-inirereklamo-ng-harassment-ipinagtanggol-ng-kaniyang-tauhan/video/>

¹¹ https://www.rappler.com/entertainment/news/216223-2018-miss-earth-candidates-sexual-harassment?fbclid=IwAR2AkWoXRgXaycN7mQGZiAQihIVAWey2u_0hMT59NVf-CzBTVQghxLB03Nk

¹² <http://www.interaksyon.com/celebrities/2018/11/08/137736/sexual-harassment-allegations-in-miss-earth-beauty-pageant/>

¹³ <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2018/11/08/Miss-Earth-2018-sexual-harassment-pageant-sponsor.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.interaksyon.com/celebrities/2018/11/08/137736/sexual-harassment-allegations-in-miss-earth-beauty-pageant/>