

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE }  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES }  
First Regular Session }

'04 DEC -8 AB:36

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ *G*

P. Senate Resolution No. 138

---

Introduced by Senators Madrigal, Lim, Estrada (L), and Estrada (J)

---

**A RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMMUNITIES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE RECENT TRAGEDY THAT BEFELL THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE AND CULTURAL COMMUNITIES OF THE MUNICIPALITIES OF DINGALAN, GABALDON AND INFANTA OF THE PROVINCES OF AURORA, NUEVA ECIJA AND QUEZON, RESPECTIVELY**

WHEREAS, Studies have shown that Dingalan, Aurora; Gabaldon, Nueva Ecija; and Infanta, Quezon are areas inhabited by the nomadic Indigenous Cultural Communities (ICCs) called the Agtas, otherwise known as the Dumagats, since time immemorial;

WHEREAS, the Agtas/Dumagats have always preserved and protected their environment, as they lived of hunting, gathering and fishing;

WHEREAS, the Agtas/Dumagats' environment rapidly changed for the worse with the entry of the commercial logging concessionaires and illegal logging operations in the said area in the 1930s;

WHEREAS, after the war, the Agtas/Dumagats' environment worsened with the entry of Dingalan Forest Products Corporation (DFPC) and South Eastern Timber Corporation (SETIC), which exported round timber to Japan and other countries;

WHEREAS, through the operations of the two aforementioned timber corporations, that were succeeded by two other timber concessionaires in the late '80s, approximately thirty thousand (30,000 h.a.) hectares of forestlands were devastated;

WHEREAS, due to the devastation of their natural habitat which may be regarded as their Ancestral Domain, the Agtas/Dumagats, who are peace-loving people, were not only displaced from their homes and deprived of their source of livelihood, but more importantly, they were stripped of their cultural identity as a people;

WHEREAS, to this very day, commercial logging in the aforementioned areas have not ceased, as a corporation known as Green Circle Properties and Resources (GCPR) allegedly took over all logging operations in the Municipality of Dingalan, Aurora under an alleged Special Private Land Timber License (SPLTL) No. 5, issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) on 7 August 2000, despite the continuing environmental devastation and serious damage caused to the Agtas/Dumagats;

WHEREAS, due to the vast deforestation of the aforementioned areas which are generally steep mountain areas with elevations that goes as high as approximately five hundred (500 m) meters above sea-level, long rainy months have caused rampant soil erosion, flashfloods and landslides;

WHEREAS, on 22 November 2004, Typhoon Unding struck which caused severe flashfloods and landslides that claimed thirty-five (35) poor innocent lives, amongst which were Agtas/Dumagats, as fresh-cut logs swept over the villages;

WHEREAS, on 27 November 2004, lightening struck twice as Typhoon Winnie likewise wrecked havoc in the aforementioned areas whereby the current death toll is already at sixteen (16), amongst which were again, Agtas/Dumagats;

WHEREAS, on 3 December 2004, another typhoon struck the aforementioned areas and thereby bring the total number of deaths or disappearances to approximately 1100, amongst which are Agtas/Dumagats;

WHEREAS, the aforementioned deaths of the innocent citizens and IPs has been alleged to have been directly caused by the rampant logging operations in the said areas;

WHEREAS, it is the duty of the State, as provided by the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines, to not only protect the environment, but more importantly, to protect the general welfare of its citizens, especially the Indigenous Peoples (IPs)/ICCs, and likewise preserve their time-honored cultures;

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, directing the Senate Committee on Cultural Communities to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the recent tragedy that befell the Indigenous Cultural Communities of the municipalities of Dingalan, Gabaldon and Infanta in the provinces of Aurora, Nueva Ecija and Quezon, respectively.

Adopted,

  
M.A. MADRIGAL

  
ALFREDO LIM

  
JINGGOY ESTRADA

  
LOI ESTRADA