

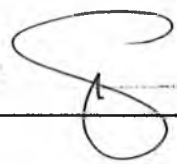
**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)**

SENATE
Office of the Secretary

24 APR 11 P1:26

SENATE

P.S.R. No. 989



INTRODUCED BY SENATOR RISA HONTIVEROS

RESOLUTION

CALLING FOR THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO RECENT WIDESPREAD REPORTS REGARDING THE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT OF MINING AND QUARRYING ACTIVITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES

WHEREAS, on February 6, 2024, a massive landslide attributed to the combined effects of the northeast monsoon, and a low-pressure area affecting Mindanao, hit Zone 1, Barangay Masara in Maco, Davao de Oro, causing at least 35 deaths, with 32 people injured, and 77 still missing;

WHEREAS, many of the people affected were from the Mansaka People ("Mansaka"), an Indigenous Cultural Community ("ICC") residing in the Barangays of Mainit, Masara, Teresa, and Tagbaros, in Maco, Davao de Oro;

WHEREAS, the Mansaka claim that the activities of the Apex Mining Company Incorporated ("Apex") in Maco, Davao de Oro, contributed to the landslide, increased the risk of similar disasters occurring in the future, and disrupted the Mansaka's traditional way of life;

WHEREAS, they also allege that there has been a lack of transparency and community oversight over the way mining royalty shares received from Apex have been distributed and utilized;

WHEREAS, in Brgy. Taguilos, in the Municipality of Cajidiocan, Romblon, residents claim that unrestrained large-scale quarrying has caused heavy siltation in local rivers, affected the quality of the tap water in the area, and increased the risk of flooding;

WHEREAS, Cajidiocan is located in Sibuyan Island, dubbed the Galapagos of Asia for its biodiversity, dense forests, and numerous endemic species found only in the area;

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2024, after complaints from residents, the Philippine Coast Guard ("PCG") detained seventeen (17) vessels involved in sand dredging activities off the coast of San Felipe, Zambales, many of which were found to be crewed by workers from the People's Republic of China;

WHEREAS, residents complained that the dredging was adversely affecting the local marine ecosystem, the livelihood of local fisherfolk, and causing landslides in the municipalities of San Felipe and Botolan;

WHEREAS, PCG Spokesperson Rear Adm. Armando Balilo confirmed that all the detained vessels were bareboat charters registered in the country but owned by China Harbor Engineering Co. Ltd. ("CHEC"), the entity conducting dredging operations in the area, which was blacklisted by Bangladesh in 2018 for offering bribes to government officials;

WHEREAS, residents of the Municipality of Datu Blah Sinsuat, in the Province of Maguindanao del Norte, have also reported the presence of alleged Chinese dredging vessels off the coast of the Barangays of Meti, Lapaken, Tuboan, and Pura;

WHEREAS, it is alleged that dredging and quarrying activities in various areas of the Philippines are being used to support Chinese island-building activities in the West Philippine Sea, as well as reclamation projects within environmentally-critical areas of Manila Bay;

WHEREAS, extensive mining operations are also taking place in Homonhon Island, known for its rich biodiversity and cultural heritage, posing a substantial threat to the environment by disrupting the natural habitat of countless species and the ecological balance, and concurrently threatening to undermine the livelihoods of local communities who depend on the island's natural resources for their sustenance and economic activities;

WHEREAS, even though the Philippines is considered one of the most mineral resource-rich nations on earth, the mining industry has not contributed significantly to economic development over the past twenty (20) years, while exposing host communities – including many ICCs – to the adverse effects associated with mining activity, such as damage to critical ecosystems, reduced biodiversity, increased risk of landslides and other natural disasters, and rising food insecurity;

WHEREAS, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources ("DENR"), through its Mines and Geosciences Bureau ("MGB") and Environmental Management Bureau ("EMB"), is responsible for regulating mining and quarrying operations in the Philippines, as well as conserving and safeguarding ecosystems affected by such activities; and

WHEREAS, the Philippine experience has led to renewed calls to manage the nation's mineral wealth, and regulate the mining industry, to primarily benefit the Filipino people, prioritize sustainability, enhance food security, safeguard the rights of host communities – particularly ICCs, and mitigate the adverse effects of resource extraction on the natural world.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED TO CALL FOR THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION IN AID OF LEGISLATION INTO RECENT WIDESPREAD REPORTS REGARDING THE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL

IMPACT OF MINING AND QUARRYING ACTIVITIES IN THE PHILIPPINES.

Adopted.


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator