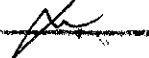


FOURTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE )  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES )  
First Regular Session )

7 JUL 31 P4:57

SENATE

RECEIVED BY: 

P.S. Res. No. 51

---

INTRODUCED BY THE HONORABLE MAR ROXAS

---

A RESOLUTION

URGING THE RELEVANT AGENCIES OF THE GOVERNMENT TO LOOK INTO ALLEGATIONS THAT AT LEAST 51 FILIPINOS WERE SMUGGLED TO WORK IN IRAQ, UNDER THE GUISE OF EMPLOYMENT IN DUBAI, AS STATED IN TESTIMONIES BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS.

*WHEREAS*, in July of 2004, the Philippines enforced a ban on the travel of Filipino nationals to Iraq, which had not been lifted up to this day;

*WHEREAS*, the said travel ban was issued after the abduction of Angelo dela Cruz, a 50 year-old truck driver working for a Saudi company, was abducted by Iraqi militants while en-route from Kuwait to Iraq, and was only released after the Philippines pulled-out its peacekeeping troops from Iraq;

*WHEREAS*, officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs have recently admitted that it is having difficulty in the enforcement of the travel ban, after a revelation that there are roughly 10,000 Filipino laborers in Iraq;

*WHEREAS*, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform of the United States Congress has initiated a probe on alleged waste, fraud and abuse at the New US Embassy in Iraq, the single-largest construction project worth \$600 million.

*WHEREAS*, on 26 July 2007, Rory J. Mayberry, a medical technician contracted to First Kuwaiti, a construction firm, to provide emergency medical services for construction workers at the US Embassy in Iraq, testified before the US Congress Committee alleging that Filipino workers have been smuggled into Iraq;

*WHEREAS*, he testified that he was asked by managers of First Kuwaiti to escort fifty-one (51) Filipino nationals, and to not tell the said nationals that they were being taken to Baghdad from Kuwait City, despite their tickets indicating that they were bound for Dubai;

*WHEREAS*, he had found out that the Filipino nationals thought they had signed up to work in hotels in Dubai, and had no idea that they were being taken to do construction work on the US Embassy in Iraq;

*WHEREAS*, he alleged that these Filipino nationals are being smuggled into the Green Zone to work at the construction site, where these Filipinos were not being provided with safety equipment, resulting in numerous injuries;

*WHEREAS*, if these allegations are true, these Filipino nationals are victims of forced labor, which is barred under international treaties on labor and human rights;

*WHEREAS*, the incident also indicates that the ban on travel to Iraq is not being implemented properly by the relevant agencies concerned;

*WHEREAS*, it is incumbent upon the Government, particularly the national agencies concerned—the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Labor and Employment and their respective subdivisions—to verify such reports and immediately act for the sake of the rights and welfare of these 51 Filipino nationals, among others who may be working in Iraq, whether forced labor or not, and despite an existing travel ban.

*NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED*, that the Senate urge the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Labor and Employment and their respective subdivisions to immediately seek the proper diplomatic channels to verify such report of Filipinos being forced to work in Iraq, and to act expeditiously in order to safeguard the rights and welfare of such Filipinos;

*RESOLVED, FURTHER*, that the relevant committees of Senate, including but not limited to the Senate Committees on Foreign Affairs and on Labor and Employment, inquire into the implementation of the ban on travel to Iraq.

Adopted,

  
MAR ROXAS  
Senator