

**THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF THE PHILIPPINES**
Third Regular Session

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SENATE
P.S. Res. 577

RECEIVED BY: _____

Introduced by Senator Magsaysay, Jr.

RESOLUTION

**URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS
AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE/S TO INQUIRE, IN AID OF
LEGISLATION, ON THE VILE MURDER OF A HIGHLY RESPECTED
FILIPINO PATRIOT, BISHOP ALBERTO RAMENTO Y BALDOVINO, A
MICROCASM OF POLITICAL PERSECUTION IN THE COUNTRY**

WHEREAS, this resolution honors the fundamental principle that “[t]he separation of Church and State shall be inviolable”¹, and supremely recognizes “the beneficent influence of religion in the enrichment of the nation’s life”², as it instills into the minds the purest principles of morality”³;

WHEREAS, Rev. Alberto Ramento, Bishop of the Diocese of Tarlac and the Diocese of Ilocos Norte, Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI), was brutally stabbed inside his convent at around four o’clock in the morning of October 3, 2006;

WHEREAS, two hours after the vile murder of Bishop Ramento, the Philippine National Police hastily concluded that it was a case of robbery with homicide;

WHEREAS, independent investigations conducted by concerned individuals and relevant human rights organizations and even members of the fact-finding team that looked into the violent assassination of Bishop Ramento lamented the haphazard and incredible conclusions reached by the police inquiry citing that it is totally incomprehensible and conflicting with the medical and scientific reports and tests administered;

WHEREAS, appropriately the stature of Bishop Ramento and the IFI as vocal critics of the government must be taken into consideration:

- The IFI has been a strong advocate of human rights and the protection of the oppressed;
- More known as the Aglipayan Church, the IFI is the national church that was born out of the Philippine Revolution against Spain. It separated from the papacy at that time but has since come to a *modus vivendi* with the Catholic Church, whose sacraments, liturgy and basic credo it shares. Because of its nationalist origins, the Aglipayan Church has also a tradition of political activism.

¹ Article II, Section 6, the 1987 Philippine Constitution

² Isagani Cruz, Political Law, p. 68

³ Justice Jose Laurel in Aglipay v. Ruiz, 64 Phil 201, as cited by Justice Cruz

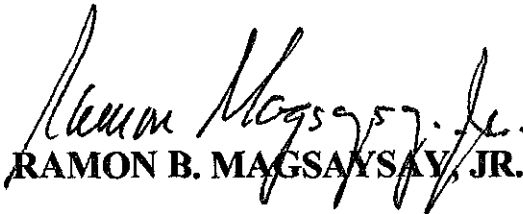
- The IFI is perhaps the most political of all of the Christian churches, given its political activism and organizing, often taking strong positions against the establishment. As a known nationalist church, it has a more definite vision of utopia as manifested in an ideology of nationalism and a strategy of protest and activism.
- Bishop Ramento was designated as a member of the monitoring committee tasked to implement the agreements during the peace negotiations and to provide in detail sanctuaries for those victimized by the situation of war;
- During the period of intensified armed offensives of the New Peoples' Army against the military and paramilitary groups in 1997, Bishop Ramento, along with Bishop Tipples and respected international organizations facilitated the release of a number of prisoners of war;
- In May, 1993, Bishop Ramento was elected as Obispo Maximo and his designation was seen as triumph of a pro-active church people in the building of a just society;
- Bishop Ramento was instrumental in facilitating the release of many prisoners of war held by the revolutionary movement;
- The IFI has been a staunch critic of the Arroyo administration questioning its legitimacy, openly assailing the present government's position on the war against the communist insurgency.

WHEREAS, the killing of Bishop Ramento delivers a great shock to state-church relations;

WHEREAS, as an investigation is earnestly sought through this resolution, the highest esteem and recognition should be bestowed to one of the Philippines greatest patriots, Bishop Alberto Ramento y Baldovino: Now therefore be it.

Resolved by the Senate, as it hereby resolves, to urge the Senate Committees on Justice and Human Rights and other appropriate committees to inquire, in aid of legislation, on the vile murder of a highly respected Filipino Patriot, Bishop Alberto Ramento y Baldovino, a microcasm of political persecution in the country.

Adopted,


RAMON B. MAGSAYSAY, JR.