

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

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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 268

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE PROPER SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT
AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED CONTINUED
ILLEGAL DEPLOYMENT OF OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS TO IRAQ,
LEBANON, AFGHANISTAN, AND NIGERIA DESPITE A COMPLETE BAN
IMPOSED BY THE GOVERNMENT

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Art. II, Sec. 18, provides: "The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the right of workers and promote their welfare";

WHEREAS, the Constitution, Art. XIII, Sec. 3, also provides: "The State shall afford full protection to labor, local and overseas, organized and unorganized, and promote full employment and equality of employment opportunities for all. x x x";

WHEREAS, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* issue of 4 January 2008 carried the story "4 Countries Off Limits to OFWs;" the article reported that Labor Secretary Arturo Brion has announced that the government has imposed a complete ban in the deployment of Filipino workers to Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan and Nigeria;

WHEREAS, it was reported that the ban on Iraq has been in effect since 2004, in Lebanon since June 2007, and in Nigeria and Afghanistan starting December 2007;

WHEREAS, Brion reportedly said that the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) has no record of how many Filipinos were in Iraq because the Philippines has no embassy there; according to the May 2007 data of the Department of Foreign Affairs, there are close to 20,000 documented workers and several thousands more who are undocumented in Lebanon; in Afghanistan, there are about 1,000 workers; in Nigeria, there are about 4,500 Filipino workers;

WHEREAS, Brion reportedly said that Filipino workers are prohibited from working in these countries because of unstable political and peace and order conditions; the government purportedly no longer process the application of workers for these countries, but Filipinos who have been working in these countries would not be forcibly evacuated;

WHEREAS, despite the ban and the government's efforts to go after illegal recruiters who facilitate the workers' departure from the Philippines to these four countries, illegal deployment of overseas Filipino workers in these countries continue unabated;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the proper Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the alleged continued illegal deployment of overseas Filipino workers to Iraq, Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Nigeria despite a complete ban imposed by the government.

Approved,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

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