



## LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH SERVICE QUICK NOTES

*Second Regular Session, 19<sup>th</sup> Congress*

### **Public Hearing of the Committee on Public Order and Dangerous Drugs**

**Chairperson: Sen. Ronald “Bato” Dela Rosa**

**29 November 2023, Wednesday, 10 A.M., Sen. Laurel Room, Senate**

**Re: Continuous Radicalization and Recruitment of Students in Educational Institutions to the Local Communist Terrorist Groups**

□ **P. S. Res. No. 863—Sen. Ronald “Bato” Dela Rosa**

#### **Background**

- The public hearing will tackle the continuous radicalization and recruitment of students in educational institutions to the local communist terrorist groups such as the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People’s Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF), collectively referred to as Communist Terrorist Group (CTG).
- Proposed Senate Resolution No. 863 defines violent radicalization as the phenomenon of embracing opinions, views, and ideas, which could lead to acts of terrorism.
- The youth, given their innocence and the want to belong, are often impressionable and vulnerable to false ideologies. Local terrorist groups tend to take advantage of their innocence and vulnerability and recruit them as members through invitations to lectures and discussions on campus issues, which could lead to talks about social problems, indoctrination, and ultimate immersion.
- According to the 2013-2023 data mentioned in the Senate Resolution No. 863, around 125 students, who were members of the CTG, were arrested, surrendered, or neutralized.
- The hearing will take a look at the possible loopholes in Republic Act (RA) No. 11479, or the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020 and other relevant laws, and explore ways through which the continuous radicalization and recruitment of students in educational institutions can be addressed.

#### **Highlights of Proposed Senate Resolution No. 863**

- The Senate resolution cited the provisions in the 1987 Constitution, which highlighted the role of the youth in nation-building as well as the role of educational institutions in inculcating patriotism and nationalism; fostering love of humanity; respect for human rights; appreciation of the role of the national heroes in the historical development of the country; teaching the rights and duties of the citizenship; and strengthening ethical and spiritual values, among others.
- RA 11479 provides that it is the policy of the State to protect life, liberty, and property from terrorism; condemn terrorism as inimical and dangerous to the national security of the country and welfare of the people; and make terrorism as a crime against the Filipino people, against humanity and against the Law of Nations.
- Proposed Senate Resolution No. 863 also invoked Article 4 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC), a multilateral treaty in which the Philippines is a signatory. Also known as the child soldier treaty, its Article 4 forbids non-state armed groups, under any circumstances, from recruiting or using in hostilities anyone under the age of 18. It also mandates the State Parties to take all feasible steps to prevent such recruitments and use, including the adoption of legal measures necessary to prohibit and criminalize such practice.
- The accountability of schools and its administrators and faculty will also be looked into.

#### **Possible points for discussion**

- Status of recruitment and radicalization in Philippine educational institutions; who are the most vulnerable?
- Defining the line between educating and recruiting/indoctrinating the youth to CTG, and defining the border between critical thinking and free exploration;
- Red-tagging, harassment and attack issues against educational institutions and students;
- Factors, issues and challenges in education, families, employment, government, and the lack of opportunities that push the youth into joining CTG;
- Provisions in RA 11479 and other relevant laws that can be amended to address continuous radicalization, and recruitment of students in educational institutions to CTG; and
- The role of institutions (e.g., government and schools) in carrying out the plan of action (counter-radicalization in schools) to prevent/minimize infiltration.
- How to properly de-radicalize or rehabilitate the youth who have chosen the rough path of life? How will this be addressed satisfactorily? Are there workable and effective school modules that address radicalization? What are its substance and content? What is the concrete and most suitable approach needed to make rehabilitation or de-radicalization program successful? How to

make education a more attractive and viable option to help the youth realize their ideals or quests for societal reforms and development?

- De-radicalization of youth is a critical issue in today's world, and several countries have implemented various strategies and programs to address this challenge. Have we surveyed and studied some of these countries' efforts and successes in de-radicalizing their own youth? What lessons have we learned, and how did we tailor-fit them into our own local context?