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SENATE

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RESOLUTION

URGING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON FOREIGN RELATIONS, PUBLIC ORDER AND ILLEGAL DRUGS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES, TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE SPATE OF ARRESTS OF FILIPINO NATIONALS, PARTICULARLY OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA BEING USED AS 'DRUG MULES' BY INTERNATIONAL DRUG SYNDICATES

Whereas, the Philippines, Thailand and Laos are the countries with the highest prevalence of amphetamines use in East and Southeast Asia, according to the latest annual report (2010) of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC);

Whereas, the UNODC World Drug Report 2010, said significant increases in methamphetamine seizures were noted in the Philippines and Malaysia;

Whereas, the World Customs Organization reported that in 2008, Thailand was the most frequent destination country in the Asia-Pacific region among methamphetamine seizure cases recorded in the Customs Enforcement Network database;

Whereas, in the 2009 World Drug Report, the Philippines ranked fifth in the world in methamphetamine seizures from 1998-2007;

Whereas, in 2008 alone, 111 Filipinos were arrested for drug-related offenses in the Chinese territories, representing a 594-percent increase from the 16 arrested in 2007. Of those arrested in 2007 and 2008, 22 are facing death sentence, 12 have gotten life, while 11 have been made to serve 15-16 years prison terms;

Whereas, in August 2009, 2 OFWs working as teachers in China moonlighting as 'drug mules' were arrested upon arrival in Manila for carrying more than 800 grams of heroin;

Whereas, as of May 2010, there are 197 drug-related cases in China. Six have been meted the death penalty without reprieve and 67 with death penalty with two-year reprieve. There are 35 cases given life imprisonment sentences, 56 with fixed-term imprisonment and 33 pending cases;

Whereas, as reported recently, Nigerian syndicates would pay each "drug mule" \$3,000 or more than P145,000 to smuggle illegal substances from Malaysia and the Philippines to China;

Whereas, drug rings lure OFWs (particularly women) through free travel for a week with hefty allowance and incentive worth P100,000, and they are made to believe

that they are to carry sample textiles, precious stones, sensitive papers, ceramic figurines or other similar items;¹

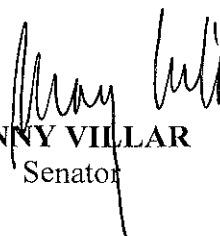
Whereas, the Philippines is fast gaining a negative reputation for the spike of arrests of Filipino nationals, who, wittingly or unwittingly, are used as drug couriers by members of West African drug syndicates and other drug trafficking organizations;

Whereas, drug trafficking of 50 grams or more of illegal drugs in China is punishable by 15 years in prison, life imprisonment or death, while in Muslim countries, drug trafficking is punishable by death, according to Shariah law;

Whereas, there should be immediate and definite actions from the government to crack down the drug syndicates that lure Filipinos to work as drug mules: Now therefore be it

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to urge the Senate Committees on Foreign Relations, Public Order and Illegal Drugs and other appropriate committees, to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the spate of arrests of Filipino nationals, particularly Overseas Filipino Workers in Southeast Asia being used as 'drug mules' by international drug syndicates.

Adopted,


MANNY VILLAR
Senator

¹ Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency chair Dionisio R. Santiago, www.journal.com.ph