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SENATE

P.S. Resolution No. 611

RECORDED 

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INTRODUCED BY SEN. JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA

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RESOLUTION

INITIATED BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR, EMPLOYMENT AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COMMENDING PHILIPPINE LABOR ATTACHÉ TO LIBYA NASSER MUSTAFA AND THE PHILIPPINE EMBASSY FOR THE DARING AND TIMELY RESCUE AND REPATRIATION OF HOUSEHOLD WORKERS DIANA JILL RIVERA AND MARY ANN DUCOS FROM THE GADHAFI COMPOUND IN LIBYA

**WHEREAS**, the Philippine Constitution of 1987 states that "The State affirms labor as a primary social economic force. It shall protect the rights of workers and protect their welfare."

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines recently worked for and achieved the approval by the International Labor Organization's General Assembly the first ever ILO Convention on the Rights of Domestic Workers;

**WHEREAS**, in his inaugural address, President Benigno Simeon Aquino III ordered the DFA, the POEA, OWWA, and other relevant agencies to be even more responsive to the needs and welfare of our overseas Filipino workers;

**WHEREAS**, our national commitment to assist distressed Filipino workers overseas was and continues to be severely tested given the current Arab Spring, which led to the mass repatriation of Filipinos in Yemen, Egypt, Libya, and Syria;

**WHEREAS**, on February 2011, among those who sought the help of the Philippine government were household workers Raquel Dadang, Zenaida Labugen, Diana Jill Rivera and Mary Ann Ducos, all of whom were employed by an immediate relative of Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi, who at that time was firmly entrenched in power;

**WHEREAS**, the employers of these four women adamantly refused to release their "*kasambahays*" despite several requests of the Philippine Embassy as coursed through the Libyan Ministry of Foreign Affairs;

**WHEREAS**, on September 17, 2011, the Gadhafi-owned farmhouse in Tripoli where Diana Jill Rivera and Mary Ann Ducos were staying with their employers was ransacked by a battalion of Libyan rebels resulting to the loss of personal belongings and escalation of fear in and danger to the Filipino workers;

**WHEREAS**, it took ten days of search and surveillance operations before the labor official was able to locate the farmhouse where the two women were being kept;

**WHEREAS**, Labor Attaché Nasser Mustafa was the only embassy official who had been in constant touch with the two OFWs via mobile phone and thus was able to hatch a plan for a daring rescue with the cooperation and trust of the two household service workers;

**WHEREAS**, with only the embassy driver and a Libyan friend as his companions, Labor Attaché Nasser Mustafa and his team risked their lives to rescue the two Filipino women from the heavily armed Ghadafi farmhouse at 6 o'clock in the morning while everyone else in the household was asleep, on September 19, 2011;

**WHEREAS**, after securing the safety of OFWs Diana Jill Rivera and Mary Ann Ducos, the labor attaché instructed the embassy driver to immediately proceed to the Tunis border where they were able to cross to safer ground by presenting travel documents prepared for by Labor Attaché Mustafa bearing the signatures of Philippine Ambassador Al Vicente;

**WHEREAS**, on the way to the border, the rescue team bearing the two OFWs were stopped seven times at different checkpoints;

**WHEREAS**, after finding a safehouse for the two women in Tunisia, Labor Attaché Mustafa went back to Tripoli to look for the two remaining "kasambahays" who then assured him that they were safe and would prefer to stay with their Libyan employers for the meantime;

**WHEREAS**, the courage and devotion to duty shown by Labor Attaché Nasser Mustafa and other members of his rescue team, as well as the cooperation extended by OFWs Diana Jill Rivera and Mary Ann Ducos, deserve the collective appreciation of and commendation by the Philippine Senate.

**RESOLVED BY THE SENATE, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, to commend Philippine Labor Attaché to Tripoli, Libya Nasser Mustafa as well as the Philippine Embassy headed by Ambassador Al Vicente for the daring and successful rescue of OFWs Diana Jill Rivera and Mary Ann Ducos from the Gadhafi compound as well as for the rescue and repatriation of thousands of other distressed Filipino workers from Libya;

**IT IS ALSO RESOLVED**, that copies of this Senate Resolution be officially transmitted by the Senate Secretariat to the Department of Labor and Employment and Department of Foreign Affairs for information and as part of these agencies' public records.

*Adopted,*

  
**JINGGOY EJERCITO ESTRADA**  
Senator