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SENATE

P. S. RES. NO. 420

RECEIVED BY: 

Introduced by **SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA**

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT
AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE GROWING
AND REPORTEDLY WORSENING HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN
MINDANAO, WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER A STATE OF MARTIAL LAW
FOR MORE THAN A MONTH TO DATE, INCLUDING AND
PARTICULARLY THE PLIGHT AND RISING NUMBER OF INTERNALLY
DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs) RESULTING FROM THE ONGOING
ARMED CONFLICT IN PARTS THEREOF

WHEREAS, Article 2, Section 5 of the Constitution states that “[t]he maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty and property, and the promotion of the general welfare are essential for the enjoyment by all the people of the blessings of democracy”;

WHEREAS, Article 2, Section 11 of the same avers that “[t]he State values the dignity of every human person and guarantees full respect for human rights”;

WHEREAS, according to the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, internally displaced persons (IDPs) are “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border”;¹

WHEREAS, on 23 May 2017, a terrorist group identified as Maute group, conducted simultaneous attacks in key areas in Marawi City in Lanao del Sur;²

¹ UNHCR. (Sept 2004). OCHA – Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/protection/idps/43ce1cff2/guiding-principles-internal-displacement.html>. Accessed on 28 June 2017.

² Rappler. (26 May 2017). TIMELINE: Marawi clashes prompt martial law in all of Mindanao. Retrieved from <http://www.rappler.com/nation/170744-timeline-marawi-city-martial-law>. Accessed on 28 June 2017.

WHEREAS, the situation rapidly worsened with the occurrence of a city-wide power shut down, fire break outs, and reported occupation of terrorist groups at Amai Pakpak Medical Center and the Marawi City Jail;³

WHEREAS, in order to contain the situation, the President declared Martial Law over the whole of Mindanao as of ten o'clock in the evening of the same day, through Proclamation No. 216 entitled, "Declaring a State of Martial Law and Suspending the Privilege of the Writ of *Habeas Corpus* in the Whole of Mindanao.";

WHEREAS, since the issuance of the said Proclamation, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) has accounted for a total of 69,434 families, or 339,822 displaced individuals, who have been uprooted from their homes due to the persisting conflict against the Maute group and other terrorist factions;⁴

WHEREAS, apart from living under less than humane conditions within areas of armed conflict – with food shortage, dire economic status, health hazards, and being exposed to military and terrorist crossfires – these Filipino citizens and families are also reported to be facing threats from our own military, who have allegedly been refusing the passage of relief goods, conducting indiscriminate airstrikes, disrespecting the Islamic faith and harassing women by telling inappropriate rape jokes;⁵

WHEREAS, the Martial Law in Mindanao was supposedly imposed "to put an end to the long-running rebellion in various provinces in the south"⁶ and not provide terrorists and government forces alike with a license to abuse the innocent civilians caught in the crossfire;

WHEREAS, under the doctrine of "*parens patriae*", the government, as the legal protector of Filipinos who are unable to protect themselves, should address the plight of the displaced citizens in Mindanao – particularly, the emerging humanitarian issues emanating from heightened militarization and continuous presence of terrorist elements;

WHEREAS, the protection and general welfare of the Filipinos who have already lost their property and source of livelihood, and who have been separated from their accustomed way of life should remain among the highest priority for all government units or agencies involved;

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ GMA News Online. (22 June 2017). Makabayan bloc seeks probe on Marawi crisis, martial law effect on evacuees. Retrieved from <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/nation/615538/makabayan-bloc-seeks-probe-on-marawi-crisis-martial-law-effect-on-evacuees/story/>. Accessed on 28 June 2017.

⁵ ABS-CBN News. (22 June 2017). Mission finds Marawi women scared of rape by soldiers; military questions report. Retrieved from <http://news.abs-cbn.com/focus/06/22/17/mission-finds-marawi-women-scared-of-rape-by-soldiers-military-questions-report>. Accessed on 28 June 2017.

⁶ Philippine News Agency. (31 May 2017). DND: Martial law in Mindanao necessary. Retrieved from <http://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/992505>. Accessed on 28 June 2017.

WHEREAS, with these reports, it is imperative for the Senate to verify these troubling complaints, and to properly investigate and assess the true living conditions of the IDPs within and outside evacuation camps, in order to come up with corrective measures to address the pressing humanitarian crisis in Mindanao;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an investigation, in aid of legislation, on the growing and reportedly worsening humanitarian crisis in Mindanao, which has been under a state of martial law for more than a month to date, including and particularly the plight and rising number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) resulting from the ongoing armed conflict in parts thereof.

Adopted,


LEILA M. DE LIMA