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OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

SENATE
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SENATE
P. S. R. No. 149

RECEIVED BY 

Introduced by Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago

RESOLUTION
EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE TO CONDEMN THE GRUESOME
MASSACRE OF 72 CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICAN MIGRANTS
ALLEGEDLY PERPETERATED BY DRUG CARTELS

WHEREAS, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights expressly provides in Article 3 that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person;

WHEREAS, the Declaration also emphasized that disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people;

WHEREAS, according to a 27 August 2010 article from the Associated Press, 72 Central and South American migrants were allegedly killed by the Zetas, a drug gang whose domination of parts of the northern state of Tamaulipas;

WHEREAS, the bodies were found blindfolded and slumped against a wall at a remote ranch last Tuesday near San Fernando, a town of about 30,000 on Mexico's east coast;

WHEREAS, the gruesome killing was discovered after the lone survivor, 18-year-old Luis Freddy Lala Pomavilla, staggered to a marine checkpoint on a highway and told authorities about the slaughter;

WHEREAS, the migrants usually pay human smugglers to assist them in crossing the Texas border; drug gangs in Mexico often force human smugglers to abandon their migrants;

WHEREAS, the region is at the edge of a traditional migration route for Central and South Americans who travel up Mexico's Gulf coast toward southern Texas; violence has escalated in the area this year since the Zetas broke with their former employer, the Gulf cartel, thereby sparking a viscous turf war;

WHEREAS, migrants running the gauntlet up Mexico to reach the United States have long faced extortion, violence, and theft but there have been several reports of mass kidnappings of migrants, who are forced to give the telephone numbers of relatives in the United States or back home who are then required to transfer ransom payments to the abductors;

WHEREAS, if confirmed as a cartel kidnapping, this incident would be the most extreme case seen to date and the bloodiest massacre since the government began a crackdown on drug gangs in late 2006; more than 28,000 people have died in drug-related violence since then;

WHEREAS, Mexican President Calderon condemned the massacre as the work of desperate cartels since they are resorting to extortion and kidnappings of migrants for their financing and also for recruitment because they are having a hard time obtaining resources and people;

WHEREAS, according to a recent study conducted by the National Human Rights Commission, an estimated number of 20,000 migrants are kidnapped each year, based on the reports it received between September 2008 and February 2009;

WHEREAS, Amnesty International classified the plight of tens of thousands of mainly Central American migrants crossing Mexico for the U.S. as a major human rights crisis;

WHEREAS, although the Mexican government reportedly made improvements, it continues to give the issue low priority, despite the widespread involvement of corrupt police;

WHEREAS, the Philippine Senate joins the international community in calling for the immediate end to this deplorable and inhuman practice of kidnapping and massacre by reigning drug cartels for its blatant violation and disregard for fundamental human rights;

WHEREFORE, be it hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to condemn the gruesome massacre of 72 Central and South American Migrants allegedly perpetrated by drug cartels.

Adopted,


MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO

/dpm