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SENATE

P.S. Res 675

RECEIVED BY: ji

Introduced by Senator Poe

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON YOUTH, WOMEN AND FAMILY RELATIONS AND ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE REPORTED INSTANCES OF RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN BY ARMED GROUPS, WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF CRAFTING EFFECTIVE POLICIES FOR ITS PREVENTION AND REVIEWING EXISTING MEASURES ON THE REINTEGRATION OF FORMER CHILD SOLDIERS IN MAINSTREAM SOCIETY

WHEREAS, the 1987 Philippine Constitution has the following hallmark provision protecting Filipino youth and children:

"The State recognizes the vital role of the youth in nation-building and shall promote and protect their physical, moral, spiritual, intellectual and social well-being. It shall inculcate in the youth patriotism and nationalism, and encourage their involvement in public and civic affairs." (Article II, Section 13)

WHEREAS, a report by the United Nations entitled "Grave Violations Committed Against Children in 22 Situations of Concern" identified 11 incidents of recruitment and use of children, involving 23 boys and three girls aged 12 to 17 years old, by armed groups in the Philippines in 2012.

WHEREAS, the recruitment of children by armed groups is an elusive phenomenon. The scale and means by which armed groups recruit children is unclear and must be investigated;

WHEREAS, the following information on child soldiers are relevant:

- Child soldiers are often exposed to grave physical injury from armed combat and travel on dangerous terrain.
- Child soldiers are also exposed to grave psychological harm such as intense feelings of guilt from witnessing the deaths of friends and colleagues, shame from physical deformities due to combat and fear of retribution from their former comrades.
- The participation of children in armed conflict severely delays their educational and social development. Former child soldiers often develop learning problems and experience difficulty reintegrating into society.


WHEREAS, it has been reported that child soldiers have been recruited by the Abu Sayyaf Group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the National Democratic Front and the Armed Forces of the Philippines¹;

WHEREAS, the institutional mechanisms for the treatment and reintegration of former child soldiers must be urgently reviewed.

WHEREAS, the mechanisms to detect, report, prevent and penalize the recruitment and use of children for armed combat must be reviewed and strengthened.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Philippine Senate, to direct the Senate Committees and on Youth, Women and Family Relations and on National defense and security to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the reported instances of recruitment and use of children by armed groups, with the objectives of crafting effective policies for its prevention and reviewing existing measures on the reintegration of former child soldiers in mainstream society.

Adopted,


GRACE POE

¹ Patricia Denise Chiu (2013). "Both AFP and rebel groups used minors in armed operations in 2012, UN says" *GMA News* (June 17) . Retrieved from <http://www.gmanetwork.com/news/story/313199/news/nation/both-afp-and-rebel-groups-used-minors-in-armed-operations-in-2012-un-says>