

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)

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SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 252

Introduced by Senator Manny Villar

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ORDER AND ILLEGAL DRUGS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE FINDINGS OF THE NEW YORK-BASED COMMITTEE TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS WHICH IDENTIFIED THE PHILIPPINES AS THE MOST MURDEROUS COUNTRY FOR JOURNALISTS, WITH THE END VIEW OF RECOMMENDING POLICY MEASURES TO PROTECT PRESS FREEDOM AND TO CARRY OUT THE RESOLUTE IMPLEMENTATION OF JUSTICE IN THE COUNTRY

WHEREAS, Article III, Section 4 of the Constitution provides for the freedom of speech, of expression, and of the press;

WHEREAS, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), an international nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to defending press freedom worldwide, conducted a study tracking world-related deaths of members of the media since January 1, 2000. Its study identified the Philippines as the most murderous country for journalists, followed by Iraq, Colombia, Bangladesh, and Russia;

WHEREAS, CPJ said murder is the leading cause of work-related deaths among journalists and most of those killed on the job were not caught in cross-fire in conflict zones but hunted down and murdered;

WHEREAS, the report found that journalists were murdered in response to reporting on corruption, crime, drug trafficking, and the activities of rebel groups;

WHEREAS, 121 of the 190 journalists killed in the past five years were murdered in retaliation for their work;

WHEREAS, in the Philippines, 18 journalists were killed in response to their work since the year 2000. Many of the victims were rural radio commentators or reporters who were ambushed in drive-by assassinations;

WHEREAS, CPJ found that in more than 85-percent of these slayings, the killers have gone unpunished;

WHEREAS, the report said some gunmen were arrested and charged in a handful of cases, but that no charges were brought against those who directed any of the killings;

WHEREAS, CPJ Executive Director Ann Cooper said that "by failing to investigate and punish the killers, the governments of these five countries embolden all those who seek to silence the press through violence;"

WHEREAS, Philippine journalists attribute the violence to a nationwide breakdown in law and order, wide circulation of illegal arms, and the failure to convict a single person in the murders;

WHEREAS, the Philippines' distinction as "the most murderous country for journalists" is embarrassing. The climate of violence and impunity should be put to a stop by strengthening the government's will to solve crimes particularly against journalists;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the Senate Committee on Public Order and Illegal Drugs to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the findings of the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists which identified the Philippines as the most murderous country for journalists, with the end view of recommending policy measures to protect press freedom and to carry out the resolute implementation of justice in the country.

Adopted,



MANUEL B. VILLAR, JR.
Senator