

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

FOURTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

House Resolution _____ **754**



Introduced by
Gabriela Women's Party Representatives
LIZA LARGOZA-MAZA and LUZVIMINDA ILAGAN;
Anakpawis Representative Rafael V. Mariano; and
Bayan Muna Representatives Satur C. Ocampo and Teodoro A. Casiño

A RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEES ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENSE AND PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND UNITY TO INVESTIGATE THE ALLEGED INTRUSION OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT INTO THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES (GRP) AND THE MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT (MILF) AND USE THE SAME AS A VEHICLE FOR ITS ECONOMIC AGENDA AND PERMANENT MILITARY PRESENCE IN VIOLATION OF THE PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION AND RECOMMEND MEASURES THEREOF

WHEREAS, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and the Philippine government in 2003 officially began its peace negotiations in Kuala Lumpur, agreeing on a mutual cessation of hostilities, the settlement of the issue of ancestral domain as its first agenda and deputizing a Third Party Monitoring Team which included Brunei, Libya and is led by Malaysia;

WHEREAS, the five-year negotiations would have culminated in the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) between the GRP and MILF but was aborted upon the issuance of a Temporary Restraining Order by the Supreme Court, declaring the MOA-AD unconstitutional;

WHEREAS, the signing of the MOA-AD would have been witnessed by members of the GRP-MILF peace panel, representatives from the Third Party Monitoring team, peace advocates and United States Ambassador to the Philippines, Kristie Kenney whose presence in turn betrayed the influence that the United States government may have exerted in the forging of the MOA-AD;

WHEREAS, in February 2008, the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), an institution established and funded by the US Congress released the report of its Philippine Facilitation Project (PFP) entitled "Towards Peace in the Southern Philippines: A summary and assessment of the USIP Philippines Facilitation Project 2003-2007" which details on the extent of the US government's involvement in GRP-MILF peace process;

WHEREAS, the USIP PFP report stipulates as the rationale and background for its creation, the following:

"The Philippine Facilitation Project of the US Institute of Peace was initiated in 2003 with the support of the presidents of the United States and the Philippines and US

Department of State. Its mandate is to help expedite the peace process in Mindanao. The project is guided by a group of senior advisers, many of whom have served as US Ambassadors to the Philippines”

“The PFP was funded from a \$30 million appropriation for “promotion of peace in Mindanao” inserted by Senators Ted Stevens and Daniel Inouye into the First Iraq War Supplemental Appropriations of May 2003”

“As a quasi governmental, track one-and-a-half organization, the USIP offered a new policy instrument for the US government that could serve as a channel of communication outside official policy mechanisms”

WHEREAS, the same report confirmed the presence and deployment as well as the role of US military forces in Mindanao. The report states:

“U.S. policy instruments in Mindanao include diplomacy, conditionality of U.S. economic and military assistance programs, and more punitive measures on the counterterrorism front.”

“In the aftermath of 9/11, the United States grew particularly concerned that Mindanao could become a training ground and sanctuary for international terrorists. This concern led to expanded U.S. military assistance to the Philippine government and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). U.S. military assets were deployed in the southern Philippines to assist efforts to pursue groups designated as international terrorists, including members of the Indonesian Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and the local Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). American targets also included so-called MILF lost commands, who were linked to terrorism. American Special Forces under the Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) established expanded counterterrorism operations, providing the AFP with intelligence, training, and weaponry. The objective was to assist the AFP in its efforts to reform, modernize, and enhance its ability to fight terrorist groups.”

“The embassy was also closely engaged with PACOM (US Pacific Command) in counterterrorism training and defense reform with the AFP and was thus linked to a highly visible American military presence in Mindanao. The Institute, while in close touch with the embassy and the State Department, had a degree of separation from official policy channels, was not identified with U.S. military counterterrorism policies, and had greater flexibility to work with a wide range of actors and institutions.”

WHEREAS, the USIP-PFP report likewise details the US government’s agenda in its involvement in the GRP-MILF peace talks as follows:

“Philippine economic progress and U.S. counterterrorism objectives will remain precarious until the Mindanao conflict is resolved.”

“The costs are low, but the potential payoff will be relatively high for all parties, should an effective settlement be put in place to resolve the conflict in Mindanao. For the United States in particular, the payoffs could include a more secure environment in the Philippines and Southeast Asia, a stronger and more stable political and economic partner in the Philippines”

WHEREAS, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan in a statement claims that the US government’s involvement in the peace process seeks only to curry favor with the MILF insofar as basing opportunities and US investments are concerned, such as the \$100 million off-shore oil exploration in Sulu recently announced by Exxon Mobil, the world’s biggest oil and gas producer;

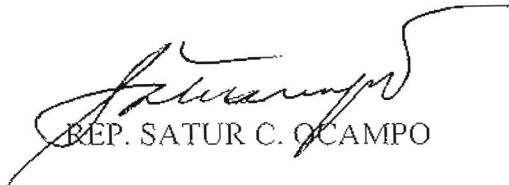
WHEREAS, the involvement of the USIP-PFP as well as the direct involvement of the US government is a breach of the Constitutional provision that guarantees an independent foreign policy in relation with other states, taking into paramount consideration the Philippines’ national sovereignty, territorial integrity, national interest and the right to self-determination;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the House Of Representatives Committees on Foreign Affairs, Defense and Peace, Reconciliation and Unity to investigate the alleged intrusion of the United States government into the peace negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and use the same as a vehicle for its economic agenda and permanent military presence in violation of the Philippine constitution and recommend measures thereof

Adopted,


REP. LIZA LARGOZA-MAZA


REP. LUVIMINDA C. ILAGAN


REP. SATUR C. OCAMPO


REP. TEODORO A. CASIÑO


REP. RAFAEL V. MARIANO