

Republic of the Philippines  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Quezon City, Metro Manila  
  
SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
First Regular Session  
  
House Bill No. **3266**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES	
<b>RECEIVED</b>	
DATE:	<b>24 AUG 2016</b>
TIME:	<b>2:30 PM</b>
BY:	<b>RM</b>
REGISTRATION UNIT BILLS AND INDEX SERVICE	

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Introduced by HON. LINABELLE RUTH R. VILLARICA  
4<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, BULACAN

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article IV, Section 1 of the 1987 Constitution expressly provides under subparagraph (4) that citizens of the Philippines are:

“Those who are naturalized in accordance with law”

This means that Congress can confer Philippine citizenship to distinguished foreigners who rendered notable service to the country and to the Filipino people. I therefore respectfully submit to this body this bill to grant Philippine citizenship to MR. MOHAMAD WASSIM NANAA, a Syrian national, and currently the Honorary Philippine Consul General in Aleppo, Syria.

During his first appointment on 24 April 2008 as Philippine Honorary Consul (PHC) in Aleppo with jurisdiction in Idlib, Latakia, Ar-Raqqah and Tartus, Mr. Nanaa showed exceptional service in promoting Philippine-Syrian bilateral economic and cultural relations, tourism and in protecting the rights and interest of OFWs in his jurisdiction. Hence, he was promoted to Philippine Honorary Consul General (PHCG) on 24 April 2011. This appointive honorary position is without financial compensation.

As PHCG, Mr. Nanaa performs the following functions: 1) promotion of Philippine trade, tourism, art and culture; 2.) protection of the rights of OFWs; and 3.) represents the Philippines to the government of Syria on matters of interest affecting our country upon instruction from the Department of Foreign Affairs/Philippine Embassy.

To promote Philippine trade and tourism, PHCG Nanaa hosted forums and receptions to highlight the Philippines as an investment and tourist destination, notably the widely attended 1<sup>st</sup> Philippine Investment Forum in Aleppo in 2009. He led the 1<sup>st</sup> Syrian Tourism Group to the Philippines on 13 to 21 November 2010, widely published in Syrian

newspapers, magazines and websites. He also hosted receptions to celebrate Independence Days attended by Syrian government officials, consular corps and Filipinos.

PHCG Nanaa remarkably showed his respect, loyalty and love of the Philippines and commitment to serve the Filipinos. He ably represented the Philippines in Syria and promoted the welfare and protected the rights of OFWs within his jurisdiction. With his extensive contacts with Syrian government officials like the Grand Mufti, mayors, chief of police and immigration authorities, PHCG Nanaa successfully resolved assistance to Filipino nationals cases such as: a.) collected unpaid salaries and/or enforcement of employment contract; b.) In coordination with Aleppo Immigration authorities, compelled agency/employer to shoulder all or part of the expenses in the repatriation of OFWs; c.) amicably settled conflict between OFW and employer.

At the onset of the political unrest and instability in Syria in January 2012, PHCG Nanaa was immediately enlisted as member of the Rapid Response Team to assist in the search, rescue and repatriation of OFWs. He even made available his private residence as a sanctuary to hundreds of distressed Filipinos at no cost to the Philippine government. To date, with "civil war" in Syria, he actively works with the Philippine Embassy in assisting OFWs and is a member of the Philippine Government's Mandatory Repatriation Program in Aleppo. The Philippine Embassy in Damascus and the DFA vouched for the commitment and excellent performance of PHCG Nanaa, in assisting our OFWs in Syria.

During DFA Secretary Albert F. Del Rosario's visit to Syria, to look into the plight of the OFWs being repatriated, as reported by GMA News on 23 December 2012, spoke to PHCG Nanaa and thanked him for his "selfless efforts in keeping all OFWs in Aleppo and Idlib safe". In addition, DFA Undersecretary for Administration Rafael Seguis, Former Undersecretary for Migrant Workers' Affairs Esteban Conejos, Philippine Ambassador to Damascus Wilfredo R. Cuyugan and Charge d' Affairs Ricardo M. Endaya, all commended Mr. Nanaa for his outstanding performance as PHCG.

Mr. Nanaa is well educated and financially independent. He graduated with a degree of Bachelor of Laws from Beirut Arab University in Lebanon in 2005. He is a successful businessman in Syria doing import-export business, which he can duplicate in the Philippines.

In view of the outstanding and meritorious services of PHCG Nanaa for the Philippine government and its OFWs, may I reiterate my request to support the enactment of this measure to confer Philippine citizenship to HONORARY CONSUL GENERAL MOHAMAD WASSIM NANAA.



REP. LINABELLE RUTH R. VILLARICA

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4<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT, BULACAN

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AN ACT  
GRANTING PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP TO MOHAMAD WASSIM NANAA

*Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. Mohamad Wassim Nanaa is hereby granted Philippine citizenship with all the rights, privileges, and duties appurtenant thereto and with the same effects and subject to the same conditions as provided under the Constitution.

SEC. 2. Upon taking of the oath of allegiance to the Republic of the Philippines before the Bureau of Immigration and the issuance to him of the Certificate of Naturalization, Mohamad Wassim Nanaa shall enter upon the full enjoyment of Philippine citizenship.

SEC. 3. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) national newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,