

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City



EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 6053

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representatives
Eduardo "Bro. Eddie" C. Villanueva and Domingo C. Rivera

**AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 26
EVERY YEAR AS SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY
IN CELEBRATION OF PHILIPPINES-ISRAEL FRIENDSHIP DAY**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The bilateral relationship between the Republic of the Philippines and the State of Israel is deeply rooted in a sentimental history. In the late 1930s, President Manuel L. Quezon authorized the admission of up to one thousand three hundred (1,300) Jewish refugees being persecuted in the Nazi regime, in what was known as the Open Door Policy. The Israelis who were suffering persecution and were brutally and inhumanely treated during the Holocaust were provided homes in the Philippines where they were respected and accepted by the community.

It has to be noted, however, that while President Quezon was the one who approved of the Israelis' entry to the country, it was the Filipino people who welcomed and treated them as their fellow countrymen. They were treated with such compassion and kindness that some even permanently relocated in the country. It was such a

moral victory, not only for the Israelis who were saved, but also for the Filipinos who emerged as real-life heroes.

On November 29, 1947, thirty three (33) countries voted in favor of the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 181, to create the State of Israel. These countries are Australia, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Byelorussian SSR, Canada, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Iceland, Liberia, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Sweden, South Africa, Ukrainian SSR, United States of America, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, and Venezuela. Among this thirty-three, the Philippines was the ONLY Asian country who casted a favorable vote on the creation of the State of Israel.

These, and other significant events, became the foundation of a historical connection between the two countries. On February 26, 1958, the said foundation was further reinforced when the Republic of the Philippines and the State of Israel signed the Treaty of Friendship, formally establishing their bilateral relations, which led to the opening of an Israeli Embassy in Manila and a Filipino Embassy in Tel Aviv in 1962. In 1997, the two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which formalized a bilateral political dialogue between the countries' foreign ministries. Since then, the desire towards further cooperation and expansion of the partnership of the two countries has been stronger.

In fact, when typhoon Haiyan (locally know as Yolanda) struck the Philippines, and left thousands of Filipinos dead, injured, and homeless, the State of Israel mobilized medical professionals, set up field hospitals, donated medicine and provided relief goods to those who were affected. Apart from this generosity, in the same way that the Philippines has opened its doors to the Israelis nearly 90 years ago, Israel has given visa-free access to Filipino tourists.

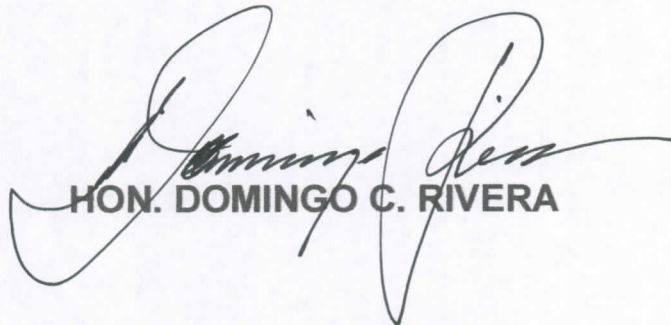
Most significantly, the State of Israel built an Open Doors Monument in Lezion Memorial Park just off Tel Aviv in 2009 to thank President Manuel L. Quezon and the Filipino people for the Open Doors Policy which gave Israeli refugees not only new homes but also the opportunity to begin new lives.

Therefore, acknowledging the mutual desire towards greater cooperation and expansion of partnership founded on a deep, historical, and moral friendship of the Philippines and Israel, we ought to formalize commemorating this extraordinary tie of the two nations.

Hence, given the foregoing, the immediate passage of this bill is earnestly sought.



HON. EDUARDO "BRO. EDDIE" C. VILLANUEVA



HON. DOMINGO C. RIVERA

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

6053
House Bill No. _____

Introduced by CIBAC Party-List Representatives
Eduardo "Bro. Eddie" C. Villanueva and Domingo C. Rivera

**AN ACT DECLARING FEBRUARY 26
EVERY YEAR AS SPECIAL WORKING HOLIDAY
IN CELEBRATION OF PHILIPPINES-ISRAEL FRIENDSHIP DAY**

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

1 **SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy.** – It is hereby declared the policy of the State to:
2 1. Strengthen the relationship between the Philippines and countries with which it
3 has shared history, values, and traditions
4 2. Commemorate notable acts of bravery and compassion by the Filipino people
5 and the Philippine government to remind the Filipinos of today of our values as
6 a nation
7

8 **SECTION 2. Philippines-Israel Friendship Day.** – On February 26, 1958, a Treaty
9 of Friendship was signed by and between the Republic of the Philippines and the State
10 of Israel, establishing their full diplomatic relations. To mark this significant occasion,
11 there is a need to declare the said day a national holiday to commemorate both
12 countries' mutual desire to strengthen their bond of peace and tie of friendship.
13

1 The twenty-sixth (26th) of February every year is hereby declared as Philippines-
2 Israel Friendship Day to commemorate the Treaty of Friendship signed by and
3 between the Philippines and Israel. It is hereby declared as a national special
4 working holiday.
5

6 **SECTION 3. Implementation.** – The National Historical Institute (NHI) shall be
7 responsible for the implementation of this Act. For this purpose, it shall formulate and
8 issue the implementing rules and regulations necessary for the proper
9 implementation of this Act.
10

11 **SECTION 4. Separability Clause.** – If any provision of this Act or any part thereof
12 shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, the other provisions, as far as they are
13 separable, shall remain in force and effect.
14

15 **SECTION 5. Repealing Clause.** – All laws, orders and issuances, rules and
16 regulations and/or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby
17 repealed or modified accordingly.
18

19 **SECTION 6. Effectivity.** – This Act shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its
20 publication in the Official Gazette or in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.
21
22

23 **Approved,**