

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress
1st Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 692



Introduced by Representative JOHNNY T. PIMENTEL

**A RESOLUTION
URGING PRESIDENT RODRIGO DUTERTE TO ALLOW FOR THE REVIEW OF
THE VISITING FORCES AGREEMENT WITH THE UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA BEFORE ITS TERMINATION**

1 **WHEREAS**, in 1947, the Philippines and the United States entered into a
2 Military Bases Agreement through the Treaty of General Relations. This was
3 subsequently concurred by the Senate. Such agreement allowed the presence and
4 operation of 23 US bases for 99 years of until 2046. This was later reduced to 44
5 years under the Ramon-Rusk Agreement of 1966 or until 1991;
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7 **WHEREAS**, in 1951, a Mutual Defense Treaty was also entered into between
8 the Philippines and the United States premised on recognition that an armed attack
9 on either party would constitute as an armed attack on either party. The main
10 features of the treaty: i) allowed for mutual assistance in maintaining and developing
11 individual and collective capacities to resist an armed attack; and ii) provided for
12 mutual self-defense in the event of an armed attack against the territory of either
13 party;
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15 **WHEREAS**, in 1991, in view of the impending expiration of the PH – US
16 Military Bases agreement in 1991, negotiations were made for the renewal. On
17 September of 1991, the Senate rejected the *Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and*
18 *Security* set to extend US bases presence in the Philippines. Notwithstanding the end
19 of the Bases Agreement, Mutual Defense Treaty subsisted;
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21 **WHEREAS**, in 1998, the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) between the
22 Philippines and the United States was executed to complement strategic interest of
23 the US and the Philippines in the Asia-Pacific Region. The Senate concurred the first
24 VFA on May 1999. VFA laid down certain provisions on: i) entry and departure of
25 American personnel in the Philippines; ii) regulatory mechanisms for the treatment
26 of American military and civilian personnel visiting the country; iii) criminal and
27 disciplinary jurisdiction of American personnel; iv) importation and exportation of
28 equipment, materials and supplies owned by the American government; and v)
29 movement of American military vehicles, vessels, supplies, and aircraft into and
30 within the country;
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2 **WHEREAS**, in 2014, an agreement between the United States and the
3 Philippines was made for US military forces to have access and to conduct activities
4 within certain "Agreed Locations" in the Philippines. Its effectivity is good for 10 years
5 and shall continue in force unless terminated by either of the US and the Philippines
6 by giving one year's written notice. EDCA hands over all operational control of
7 "Agreed Locations" to the US and allows US forces to preposition and store defense
8 materiel, equipment, and supplies (yet expressly prohibits the introduction of
9 nuclear weapons. In 2019, the US and the Philippines officially completed the first
10 major project under the EDCA which is the Basa Air Base in Pampanga;
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12 **WHEREAS**, in January of 2020, President Duterte pronounced that the
13 revocation of the Visiting Forces Agreement should be commenced following the
14 cancellation by the United States of the visa of Senator Ronald dela Rosa and some
15 other circumstances involving disrespectful acts against Philippine national integrity
16 and sovereignty;
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18 **WHEREAS**, basic principle of international law provides that the President, as
19 the head of state, serve as the primary architect of Philippine foreign relations;
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21 **WHEREAS**, while recognizing and considering fully the wisdom and judgment
22 of the President as the Chief Executive and with no intention to undermine the
23 province of authority held by the executive as a co-equal branch, it is sought that
24 Congress through the Joint Congressional Oversight Committee on the Visiting
25 Forces Agreement should be given the opportunity to conduct a review on the
26 Philippines' withdrawal from the Visiting Forces Agreement and its corresponding
27 implications to both national security and the immediate Asia Pacific region;
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29 **WHEREAS**, a careful study and a deliberation should be taken on this matter
30 of foreign policy before culminating on a decision as regards to this exceptionally
31 important treaty that affects, not only the Philippines, but also the stability of the
32 Asia Pacific region.
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34 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF**
35 **REPRESENTATIVES TO URGE PRESIDENT RODRIGO DUTERTE TO ALLOW FOR**
36 **THE REVIEW OF THE VISITING FORCES AGREEMENT (VFA) WITH THE UNITED**
37 **STATES OF AMERICA BEFORE ITS TERMINATION.**
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40 Adopted.
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44 **REP. JOHNNY T. PIMENTEL**