



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Environment and Natural Resources
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07 December 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO : The Assistant Secretary
Climate Change and concurrent Director, Biodiversity Management Bureau

The Directors
Biodiversity Management Bureau
Climate Change Service
Environmental Management Bureau
Forest Management Bureau
Mines and Geosciences Bureau
Legal Affairs Service
Policy and Planning Services

The Regional Executive Directors
DENR Region II, IV-A

The Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Officers
Cagayan, Isabela and Rizal

The Directors
EMB - Region II and EMB Region IV-A

FROM : The Assistant Secretary
Field Operations-Mindanao and Legislative Affairs

SUBJECT : **INVITATION FROM COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT,
NATURAL RESOURCES AND CLIMATE CHANGE**


This pertains to the letter dated 04 December 2020, received by this office 07 December 2020 from Senator Cynthia A. Villar, Chairperson, Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change, inviting DENR to a public hearing on Thursday, 10 December 2020 at 10:00 a.m. via Cisco WebEx (Video /Teleconference) to discuss :

- Proposed senate resolution no. 581 – resolution directing the appropriate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the alleged denuded state of forests and watersheds as well as the apparent heavy siltation on rivers and tributaries, which largely contributed to the massive flooding in Luzon during the onslaught of the recent typhoons, with the end in view of strengthening the protection and conservation of the country's forest cover and waterways in order to mitigate, if not altogether avoid, the devastating effects of natural disasters (Introduced by Senator Villar) taking into

consideration the following proposed Senate resolutions which were secondarily referred to the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change:

- P.S. RES. NO. 570 – Resolution Urging the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, into the Massive Flooding Caused by Water Releases from Dams Triggered by the Successive Typhoons and Continuous Rains in the Luzon Island with the End View of Identifying Needed Government Interventions, Environment Rehabilitation, and Possible Infrastructure Works to Prevent Similar Disasters in the Future (Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.);
- P.S. RES. No. 571 – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Investigation, in Aid of Legislation, on the Immediate, Proximate and Ultimate Man-made Causes of the Severe Flooding in the Aftermath of Typhoon Ulysses (International Name: Vamco), Particularly in the Cagayan Valley Region, the Province of Rizal, and the City of Marikina, in Order to Institutionalize Durable, Sustainable and Inter-generational Measures against Flooding and Typhoon related Damage (Introduced by Senator Hontiveros);
- P.S. RES. NO. 573 – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, into the Alleged “Man-made” Disaster Following the Onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses (Introduced by Senator Marcos);
- P.S. RES. NO. 575 – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, on the Unprecedented Flooding in Cagayan Valley and Isabela Due to the Onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses (Introduced by Senator Pangilinan); and
- P.S. RES. NO. 579 – Resolution Directing the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, to Determine the Underlying Causes of the Recent Record-high Flooding in Cagayan and Other Areas in Luzon in the Aftermath of Typhoon ‘Ulysses’ with the End View of Identifying and Improving Any Gaps in the Government’s Disaster Preparedness and Risk Response (Introduced by Senator De Lima).

Kindly inform this office of your attendance before the scheduled date of the meeting and submit presentation, comments and/or position papers or proposed provision with respect to the bill and your recommendation in hard and soft copy at the Legislative Liaison Office at telephone number 8920-1761 and email denrlegislative@yahoo.com for consolidation. Also, you can confirm your participation and position paper prior to the meeting to the Committee Secretariat through their email mcrmendoza@yahoo.com, senateenviandnatres@gmail.com or contact them at mobile numbers 0945 750 5319.


JOAN A. LAGUNDA, D.M., D.P.A.



Republic of the Philippines
SENATE
Pasay City

**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

December 4, 2020

SUBJECT : INVITATION TO A PUBLIC HEARING

ENGR. VIRGILIO L. LICUAN
OIC-Regional Director
EMB - Region II

Dear Engr. Licuan:

The Senate Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change would like to invite you to its virtual public hearing via Cisco Webex on **Thursday, December 10, 2020, 10:00 a.m.** to discuss:

- **PROPOSED SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 581** – RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED DENUDED STATE OF FORESTS AND WATERSHEDS AS WELL AS THE APPARENT HEAVY SILTATION ON RIVERS AND TRIBUTARIES, WHICH LARGELY CONTRIBUTED TO THE MASSIVE FLOODING IN LUZON DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE RECENT TYPHOONS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF THE COUNTRY'S FOREST COVER AND WATERWAYS IN ORDER TO MITIGATE, IF NOT ALTOGETHER AVOID, THE DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS (*Introduced by Senator Villar*)

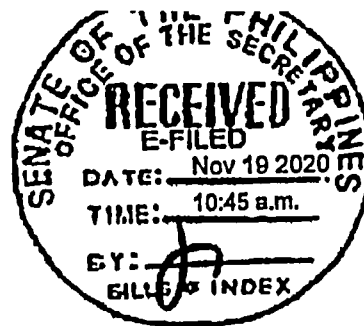
taking into consideration the following proposed Senate resolutions which were secondarily referred to the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change:

- **P.S. RES. NO. 570** – Resolution Urging the Appropriate Senate Committee to Conduct an Inquiry, in Aid of Legislation, Into the Massive Flooding Caused by Water Releases from Dams Triggered by the Successive Typhoons and Continuous Rains in the Luzon Island with the End View of Identifying Needed Government Interventions, Environment Rehabilitation, and Possible Infrastructure Works to Prevent Similar Disasters in the Future (*Introduced by Senator Revilla Jr.*);

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE SUPPORT SERVICE FOR GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL CONCERNS, Room 304-A, 3rd Floor,
Senate of the Philippines, J.W. Diokno Boulevard, Pasay City

Tel. No. 8552-6601 local 3318

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SENATE

Proposed Senate Resolution No. 575

Introduced by Senator FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE UNPRECEDENTED FLOODING IN CAGAYAN VALLEY AND ISABELA DUE TO THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON ULYSSES

WHEREAS, on 11 November 2020, Typhoon Ulysses brought heavy rains to the Cagayan Valley triggering an unprecedented flooding, which killed at least twenty-four (24) people and displaced 300,000 more in the region;

WHEREAS, according to the Department of Agriculture (DA) and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), as of 17 November 2020, Typhoon Ulysses left at least P2.7 billion in damage to agriculture and P5.2 billion in infrastructure, affecting 73,000 farmers and fisherfolk, and over 71,000 hectares of agricultural areas with 109,000 metric tons in production losses. Affected communities include rice, corn, high value crops, fisheries, livestock and poultry, irrigation facilities, machineries and equipment, and agricultural infrastructure in the Cordillera Administrative Region, Ilocos Region, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, and Bicol;

WHEREAS, of the reported damage, the rice sector accounted for around 42.3%. Cagayan Valley is the country's second largest rice-producing region and accounts for 14% of national rice output. It is also the country's top corn producer accounting for 23% of annual production;

WHEREAS, the National Irrigation Administration (NIA) operates Magat Dam - an irrigation and hydroelectric dam at the boundary of Alfonso Lista town in Ifugao province and the municipality of Ramon in Isabela - which has a 45-square-kilometer reservoir that is fed by watersheds in Nueva Vizcaya (60 percent), Ifugao (33 percent) and Isabela (7 percent);

WHEREAS, at the height of the typhoon, the NIA ordered Magat Dam's 7 gates to be opened for 11 hours, releasing 6,706 cubic meters of water per second at maximum discharge, which is equivalent to a total of 106,223 Olympic-sized swimming pools, or two swimming pools per second;

WHEREAS, NIA allegedly opened Magat Dam's gates before the reservoir breached the spilling level of 193 meters above sea level with a view to maintaining a standard safety level and a normal inflow and outflow in order to prevent more severe floods. However, NIA alleged that they have opened Magat Dam's gates as early as a week before Typhoon Ulysses' onslaught because of heavy rains and to prevent the dam from breaking;

WHEREAS, the NDRRMC said that the widespread flooding in Cagayan Valley was not due to the release of water from Magat Dam, but rather the swelling of Cagayan River over the course of several weeks due to continuous rains experienced in Luzon;

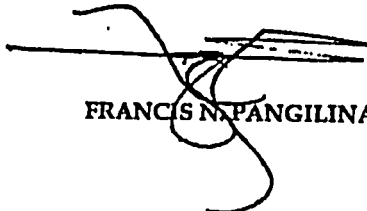
WHEREAS, the severe flooding that inundated large parts of the Cagayan Valley was also attributed to a confluence of factors, which include environmental destruction, degradation of forests in Cordillera and Sierra Madre, illegal logging, illegal quarrying/mining, yellow corn farming in the slopes and mountains, the use of herbicide, the absence of lack of a disaster management platform that shows hydrometeorological hazard maps, which used to be provided by Department of Science and Technology's (DOST) Project-NOAH – a project defunded in 2017 – and the absence of a central authority to implement a programmatic dam discharge in the severely-flooded areas;

WHEREAS, it is imperative to conduct an investigation in aid of legislation to determine the possible causes of the massive flooding and assess whether the existing standards or protocols for the release of water from the Magat dam were observed, and if necessary, amend the same for better preparation and response during calamities and avert casualties and damages to property, including the development and implementation of an integrated water resources planning and management system that will cover flood control (DPWH), irrigation (NIA), water supply (MWSS, LWUA, LGUs, private operators), hydro power (DOE, NPC), and water regulations (NWRB), as well as installation of a river management operational protocol;

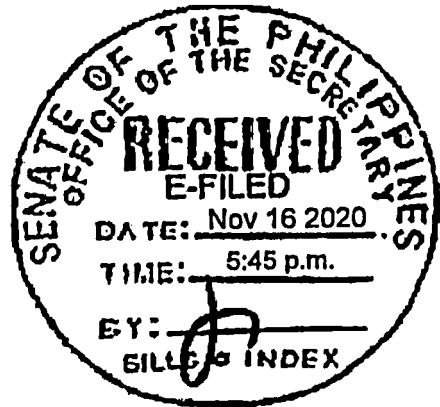
WHEREAS, the investigation should include a review of our policies in relation to water or flood management and the formulation of solutions moving forward to prevent severe flooding in Cagayan Valley and other surrounding provinces, as well as other river basin systems in the country, and to hold erring government officials accountable;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the appropriate Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the unprecedented flooding in Cagayan Valley and Isabela due to the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

Adopted,


FRANCIS N. PANGILINAN

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



SENATE

P.S.R. No. 571

Introduced by Senator Risa Hontiveros

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE IMMEDIATE, PROXIMATE AND ULTIMATE MAN-MADE CAUSES OF THE SEVERE FLOODINGS IN THE AFTERMATH OF TYPHOON ULYSSES (INTERNATIONAL NAME: VAMCO), PARTICULARLY IN THE CAGAYAN VALLEY REGION, THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL, AND THE CITY OF MARIKINA, IN ORDER TO INSTITUTIONALIZE DURABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND INTER-GENERATIONAL MEASURES AGAINST FLOODING AND TYPHOON-RELATED DAMAGE

WHEREAS, in the evening of November 11, 2020, typhoon Ulysses (International name: Vamco) made landfall in the Philippines, unleashing its wrath in the Island of Luzon with sustained winds of 150 kilometers per hour and peak intensity winds equivalent to a category 2 hurricane;

WHEREAS, typhoon Ulysses battered Luzon while it was still reeling from the havoc wrought by typhoon Rolly (International name: Goni) – leaving a running death toll of 67 people, displacing hundreds of thousands of families, and causing billions of pesos in agricultural and infrastructure damage;

WHEREAS, in the early morning of November 12, 2020, news reports showed the severe impact of the typhoon on the province of Rizal, with individuals making entreaties on social media for the rescue of their families, particularly those with senior citizens and very young children;

WHEREAS, according to conservation experts from the Masungi Georeserve, logging and land-grabbing in the Upper Marikina Watershed could have caused the severe flooding in the area, because despite the protection granted to the watershed under Republic Act No. 7586 or the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992, illegal activities have continued unabated;

WHEREAS, similar logging activities in the Sierra Madre mountain range have massively diminished its forest cover, and therefore its capacity to buffer the Capital and its adjacent province, Rizal, from the ravages of strong typhoons;

WHEREAS, two days later, in the evening of November 14, 2020, social media posts started trickling in from the provinces of Isabela and Cagayan in the Cagayan Valley region, revealing shocking images and sounds of residents frantically calling for rescue amidst intense flooding after the Magat dam was opened;

WHEREAS, the intersections of climate disasters and pandemics create unique problems for communities, as already-inadequate evacuation centers now have to contend with the protocols of COVID-19 management;

WHEREAS, considering the vulnerability of the Philippines to climate-related disasters, it is of the highest urgency to investigate once and for all the complex and interrelated man-made causes of floodings in the country, identify the culpability of public officials, improve calamity response and preparedness including inter-local government early warning and coordination systems, and most importantly, address gaps in policy;

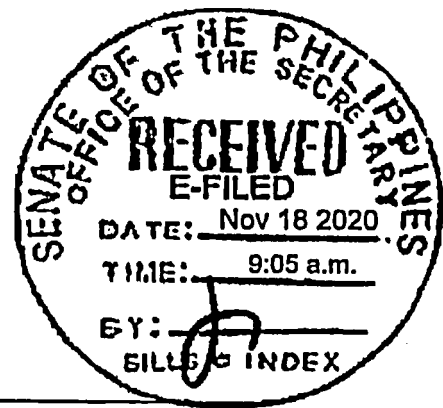
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, THAT THE SENATE DIRECT THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INVESTIGATION, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE IMMEDIATE, PROXIMATE AND ULTIMATE MAN-MADE CAUSES OF THE SEVERE FLOODINGS IN THE AFTERMATH OF TYPHOON ULYSSES, PARTICULARLY IN THE CAGAYAN VALLEY REGION, THE PROVINCE OF RIZAL, AND THE CITY OF MARIKINA, IN ORDER TO INSTITUTIONALIZE DURABLE, SUSTAINABLE AND INTER-GENERATIONAL MEASURES AGAINST FLOODING AND TYPHOON-RELATED DAMAGE.

Adopted,


RISA HONTIVEROS
Senator

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)

SENATE
P.S. Resolution No. 573



Introduced by **SENATOR IMEE R. MARCOS**

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN
INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE ALLEGED "MAN-MADE"
DISASTER FOLLOWING THE ONSLAUGHT OF TYPHOON ULYSSES

WHEREAS, on 16 November 2020, the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), in a meeting recommended to President Rodrigo Duterte placing Luzon under a state of calamity due to the impact and destruction caused by the typhoons "*Quinta*," "*Rolly*," and "*Ulysses*," impacting over 1.7 million people were directly affected;

WHEREAS, as of 15 November 2020, Typhoon Ulysses left 69 people dead, 21 injured, and 12 missing, while the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reported over 265,000 individuals rescued in various provinces. In Cagayan Valley alone, almost 100,000 people, were forced to flee their homes as a result of the massive flooding;

WHEREAS, according to the NDRRMC, initial agricultural damage from the typhoons reached P2.14 billion in the regions of Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon), Bicol and Cordillera, while damage to infrastructure was immediately tallied at P482.85 million in Ilocos, Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) and Bicol;

WHEREAS, numerous allegations from many sectors have been made blaming the National Irrigation Administration-Magat River Integrated Irrigation System (NIA-MARIIS) for failing to provide notice of their releasing of water from the dam. Experts stated that according to the Magat Dam protocol, there should be a drawdown of at least 2-3 days before the expected landfall. The NIA-MARIIS, however, asserted that they warned residents of a pre-release 09 November 2020, or two days before Ulysses made landfall on 11 November;

WHEREAS, in the cities within Metro Manila, Marikina was the hardest hit since Disaster Management officials anticipated water levels at the Marikina River to reach 18 meters based on the forecast of the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and

Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA); However, when NIA released the waters of Angat Dam, it reached 22 meters, higher than the 21.5 meters recorded during Typhoon Ondoy in 2009. Thus, allegations were made stating that PAGASA did not give sufficient or accurate flood warning due to the releases in nearby dams, similar to what occurred in the Cagayan Valley with Magat Dam;

WHEREAS, President Duterte hit corrupt officials of the Department of Public Works (DPWH) after knowing that local officials have appealed to the Department, to no avail, to have the Bicol River dredged to solve the problem of flooding in Camarines Sur. The same accusations have been made by Local Government Units (LGUs) alongside the clogged and silted Cagayan River;

WHEREAS, in a briefing, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Sec. Roy Cimatu said there are already talks for several projects that could help prevent massive flooding in the future such as dredging operations in the Cagayan River;

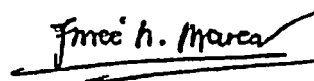
WHEREAS, DENR Secretary Cimatu said that the DENR issued a cease-and-desist order on illegal small-scale mining and illegal logging operations following the massive flooding in Cagayan and Isabela. Sec. Cimatu further stated that 10 of the casualties in the region were reported in illegal mining sites;

WHEREAS, the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) stated that there may be a need to revisit disaster guidelines and compliance of LGUs following the devastation from Typhoon Ulysses while the LGUs deny the receipt of storm, flood, or such evacuation warnings;

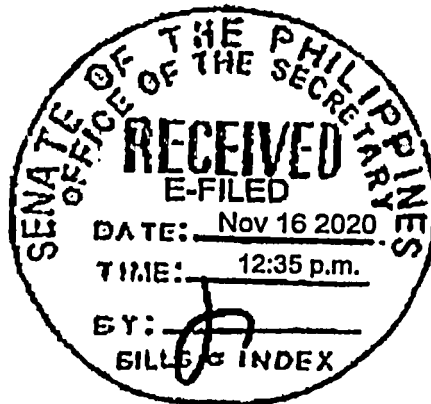
WHEREAS, taking into consideration the abovementioned circumstances, there is a need to investigate and review projects and studies and thereafter, recommend solutions to address the issue, as well as to implement new infrastructure concepts and technologies such as the "Sponge City" in China and India which integrates water management strategies to mitigate the effects of climate change, pollution, and overpopulation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, directing the appropriate Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the alleged "man-made" disaster following the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses.

Adopted


IMEE R. MARCOS

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Second Regular Session



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 570

Introduced by SENATOR RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.

RESOLUTION

URGING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE MASSIVE FLOODING CAUSED BY WATER RELEASES FROM DAMS TRIGGERED BY THE SUCCESSIVE TYPHOONS AND CONTINUOUS RAINS IN THE LUZON ISLAND WITH THE END VIEW OF IDENTIFYING NEEDED GOVERNMENT INTERVENTIONS, ENVIRONMENT REHABILITATION, AND POSSIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS TO PREVENT SIMILAR DISASTERS IN THE FUTURE

1 Whereas, typhoon "Ulysses" (International name Vamco) entered the Philippine
2 area of responsibility on November 8, 2020, made its first landfall in Patnanungan,
3 Quezon Province on November 11, and traversed the Luzon Island until it exited the
4 PAR on November 13;

5 Whereas, in a span of three weeks, five severe weather disturbances entered
6 the Philippine area of responsibility namely typhoon "Quinta" (I.N. Molave), super
7 typhoon "Rolly" (I.N. Goni), tropical storm "Siony" (I.N. Atsani), tropical storm "Tonyo"
8 (I.N. Etau), and typhoon "Ulysses" which affected various parts of the country,
9 particularly the eastern section of the Philippines;

10 Whereas, according to Sitrep No. 5 regarding Preparedness and Effects for
11 Typhoon "Ulysses" dated November 15, 2020 issued by the National Disaster Risk
12 Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), a total of 428,657 families or
13 1,755,224 persons in 4,543 barangays in Regions I, II, III, CALABARZON, MIMAROPA,
14 V, NCR and CAR were affected;

15 Whereas, in the same report, NDRRMC reported a total of 67 dead, 21 injured,
16 and 13 missing persons in Regions II, CALABARZON, V and CAR;

1 Whereas, the NDRRMC report also showed that of the 262 incidents that were
2 monitored, 173 were flooding incidents;

3 Whereas, out of these 173 flood incidents, 62 happened in Region II. One city
4 and 21 municipalities in Cagayan were submerged in floodwaters, three cities and 22
5 municipalities in Isabela were flooded, 57 barangays in Nueva Vizcaya and 25
6 barangays in Quirino were also inundated;

7 Whereas, Flood Forecasting and Warning Section of the Philippine Atmospheric,
8 Geophysical, and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA) advised that spillway
9 gates of four dams, namely Ipo, Ambuklao, Binga, and Magat, were opened to
10 discharge water after breaching spilling levels, and warned the residents of the low-
11 lying areas near these dams on possible flooding¹;

12 Whereas, flood alerts were also issued by PAGASA to warn residents of low-
13 lying areas of possible flooding as La Mesa Dam in Quezon City reached its capacity
14 of 80.15 meters, and as Angat Dam in Bulacan breached its of 210-meter capacity²;

15 Whereas, the discharge of water from these dams exacerbated the heavy and
16 continuous rainfall brought by successive typhoons and caused tremendous suffering
17 to the public and extensive damage to both public and private properties;

18 Whereas, Cagayan Governor Manuel Mamba said that the recent flooding in
19 their province was "unprecedented." In a *Laging Handa* public briefing, Gov. Mamba
20 said, "*Nakapaghandanda kami, no question about that, we anticipated Ito dahil nasanay*
21 *na kami sa ganito, nagkaron kami ng preemptive evacuation, nagkaroon kami ng*
22 *forced evacuation. We anticipated this but we did not anticipate how enormous yung*
23 *tubig na dadating...* But this is worse than what we prepared, the last time that we
24 had this was 1975, *dati hanggang 11 meters lang umaabot, pero* this time it went as
25 high as 13.1 meters. This is unprecedented *dito sa Cagayan. First time na nangyari*
26 *ulit itong ganito kaya na surprise yung iba.*³;

¹ "Residents near Ipo, Ambuklao, Binga, and Magat dams warned of flooding as reservoirs continue to release water. November 13, 2020. <https://mb.com.ph/2020/11/13/residents-near-ipo-ambuklao-binga-and-magat-dams-warned-of-flooding-as-reservoirs-continue-to-release-water/>

² "Flood alerts as major Luzon dams spill over due to Ulysses." November 12, 2020. <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/11/12/20/pagasa-warns-of-flooding-as-ulysses-rains-cause-water-level-rise-in-luzon-dams>

³ "Cagayan prepared but surprised by 'unprecedented' floods." November 15, 2020. <https://www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1121833>

1 Whereas, pleas for help and dreadful photos and stories of families, children
2 and elderly being trapped on their rooftops for hours, even days, without food supply
3 or clean water, hoping to be rescued and in dire need of immediate assistance also
4 flooded the social media platforms;

5 Whereas, Gov. Mamba also attributed the province's "worst flooding in 40
6 years" to denuded forests and watersheds in the area, the abuse of forests in the
7 Cordillera and Sierra Madre mountain ranges, and the heavy siltation of the riverbeds⁴;

8 Whereas, Marikina City was placed under a State of Calamity after parts of the
9 city were submerged in floodwaters after the Marikina River swelled because of heavy
10 rains brought by typhoon "Ulysses" and the release of water from Angat Dam;

11 Whereas, Marikina City Mayor Marcy Teodoro and the local disaster
12 management officials said that large part of the city experienced floods due to the
13 release of water from Angat Dam which caused the Marikina River to swell from an
14 initial forecast of only 18 meters to 22 meters, which is higher than the 21.5 meters
15 recorded during the typhoon Ondoy in 2009⁵;

16 Whereas, Mayor Teodoro said that the management of Angat Dam should have
17 notified them that of the water discharge, since the Marikina River is connected to the
18 Angat Dam;

19 Whereas, some parts of Montalban, Rizal also experienced three- to six-foot
20 deep floodwaters due to over-spilling of Wawa Dam, as some parts of the municipality
21 were submerged in 15-foot deep flood;

22 Whereas, there is an immediate need to identify the root causes of this massive
23 flooding in order to start the necessary and comprehensive government interventions
24 at the soonest possible time and to prevent similar disasters from happening in the
25 future;

26 Whereas, it is the policy of the State to uphold the people's constitutional right
27 to life and property by addressing the vulnerabilities to disasters, strengthening the
28 institutional capacities for disaster risk reduction and management, and building the
29 resilience of communities to disasters;

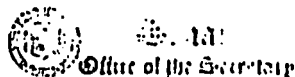
⁴ Ibid.

⁵ "Marikina to sue Angat Dam for floods higher than what Ondoy caused." November 13, 2020.
<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/metro/764033/marikina-to-sue-angat-dam-for-floods-higher-than-what-ondoy-caused/story/>

1 . NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Senate, to
2 urge the appropriate Senate committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into
3 the massive flooding caused by water releases from dams triggered by the successive
4 typhoons and continuous rains over the Luzon Island with the end view of identifying
5 needed government interventions, environment rehabilitation, and possible
6 infrastructure works to prevent similar disasters in the future.

Adopted,


RAMON BONG REVILLA, JR.



SENATE

20 NOV 24 P1:39

P.S. RES. No. 581

RECEIVED

Introduced by **SENATOR CYNTHIA A. VILLAR**

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ALLEGED DENUDED STATE OF FORESTS AND WATERSHEDS AS WELL AS THE APPARENT HEAVY SILTATION ON RIVERS AND TRIBUTARIES, WHICH LARGELY CONTRIBUTED TO THE MASSIVE FLOODING IN LUZON DURING THE ONSLAUGHT OF THE RECENT TYPHOONS, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF STRENGTHENING THE PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION OF THE COUNTRY'S FOREST COVER AND WATERWAYS IN ORDER TO MITIGATE, IF NOT ALTOGETHER AVOID, THE DEVASTATING EFFECTS OF NATURAL DISASTERS

1 WHEREAS, Article II, Section 16 of the Constitution enshrines that "The State
2 shall protect and advance the right of the people to a balanced and healthful
3 ecology in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature";

4 WHEREAS, under Presidential Decree (PD) No. 705, series of 1975 or the
5 "Revised Forestry Code of the Philippines, it has been declared a policy of the State
6 that "The protection, development and rehabilitation of forest lands shall be
7 emphasized so as to ensure their continuity in productive condition." and it further
8 provides, among others, that "critical watersheds, national parks and established
9 experimental forests shall not be subject to commercial logging or grazing
10 operations";

1 WHEREAS, Executive Order (EO) No. 318, series of 2004 on Promoting
2 Sustainable Forest Management in the Philippines provides, among others, that "it
3 shall be the Policy of the Government to pursue the sustainable management of
4 forests and forestlands in watersheds. Watersheds shall be deemed as ecosystem
5 management units and shall be managed in a holistic, scientific, rights-based,
6 technology-based and community-based manner" and that "the priority development,
7 protection and management activity shall be the rehabilitation of open and/or
8 denuded, degraded, fragile forestlands; and slope stabilization and protection to
9 address occurrence of floods, landslides and similar ecological disasters";

10 WHEREAS, EO No. 23, series of 2011 declared it the "obligation of the State to
11 protect the remaining forest cover areas of the country not only to prevent flash floods
12 and hazardous flooding but also to preserve biodiversity, protect threatened habitats
13 and sanctuaries of endangered and rare species, and allow natural regeneration of
14 residual forests and development of plantation forest"; and for this purpose, the same
15 EO declared a moratorium on the cutting and harvesting of timber in the natural and
16 residual forests and created the Anti-Illegal Logging Task Force to enforce the said
17 moratorium, and the development of the National Greening Program (NGP), which is
18 a DA-DENR-DAR Convergence Initiative anchored on the government's goal of poverty
19 reduction, food, security, climate change adaptation and mitigation;

20 WHEREAS, EO No. 23 further provides that "it is imperative to arrest the
21 degradation, pollution and contamination of the river and water systems and to stem
22 the wanton destruction of the forest resources";

23 WHEREAS, as an initiative to promote environmental stability and biodiversity
24 conservation, and enhance climate change mitigation, EO No. 26, series of 2011
25 declared the implementation of a National Greening Program (NGP), which aimed for
26 the planting of some 1.5 billion trees covering about 1.5 million hectares from 2011 to
27 2016 in the following lands of the public domain, to wit: (a) Forestlands; (b) Mangrove
28 and protected areas; (c) Ancestral domains; (d) Civil and military reservations; (e)
29 Urban areas under the greening plan of the LGUs; (f) Inactive and abandoned mine
30 sites; and (g) Other suitable lands;

1 WHEREAS, EO No. 193, series of 2015 extended the Implementation of NGP
2 from 2016 to 2028 and expanded its coverage to include all the remaining
3 unproductive, denuded and degraded forestlands, which contribute to environment-
4 related risks such as soil erosion, landslides, and flooding;

5 WHEREAS, under the Republic Act No. 7942 or the Philippine Mining Act of
6 1995, it has been declared that "It shall be the responsibility of the State to promote
7 their rational exploration, development, utilization and conservation through the
8 combined efforts of government and the private sector in order to enhance national
9 growth in a way that effectively safeguards the environment and protect the rights of
10 affected communities.";

11 WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 7586 or the NIPAS Act of 1992 established a
12 National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS), which shall encompass
13 ecologically rich and unique areas and biologically important public lands that are
14 habitats of rare and threatened species of plants and animals, biogeographic zones
15 and related ecosystems, whether terrestrial, wetland or marine, all of which shall be
16 designated as 'protected areas';

17 WHEREAS, under this NIPAS Act and its amendatory law, RA No. 11038 or the
18 Expanded NIPAS Act of 2018, the Northern Sierra Madre Natural Park in the Province
19 of Isabela and the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape in the Province of
20 Rizal, which play hosts to significant watersheds in Luzon, were among those granted
21 with protected area status;

22 WHEREAS, due to the geographical location of the Philippines along the
23 typhoon belt in the Pacific Ocean where warm ocean temperature occurs and serves
24 as a perfect breeding ground for tropical storms, an average of 20 tropical cyclones
25 enter the Philippine Area of Responsibility (PAR) each year, more than anywhere else.
26 In the world;¹

27 WHEREAS, just in the first half of November 2020, four (4) typhoons, namely
28 Typhoons Rolly, Slony, Tonyo and Ulysses, consecutively entered the Philippine Area

¹ <http://bagong.pagasa.dost.gov.ph/climate/tropical-cyclone-information>

1 of Responsibility (PAR), with Typhoons Rolly and Ulysses severely hitting the country
2 and causing a lot of damages in several areas in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela,
3 Central Luzon, Calabarzon, the Bicol Region, and even the National Capital Region;

4 WHEREAS, the most recent Typhoon Ulysses (Internationally known as
5 Typhoon Vamco), with wind strength of Storm Signal No. 3 and considered as the
6 worst Typhoon to so far hit the Philippines this year, brought the following
7 devastating effects, among others: (a) torrential rainfall and colossal flooding in
8 Luzon, most prominently in Cagayan, Isabela, Rizal, and Marikina City; (b) affected
9 a total of 3,052,049 individuals or 727,738 families, most of whom had to be
10 evacuated; (c) Approximately Php 2.72 Billion total damages in agriculture in Regions
11 CAR, I, II, III, IV-A and V; (d) Approximately P5.26 Billion worth of damage to
12 infrastructures across Regions CAR, I, II, III, IV-A, IV-B, V and NCR; (e) Power
13 outages in cities and municipalities affected by Typhoon Ulysses; and (f) Claimed the
14 lives of a total of 73 people²;

15 WHEREAS, in Marikina, during the onslaught of Typhoon Ulysses, the Marikina
16 River's water level rose to 22 meters during the storm (higher than the 21.5-meter
17 level it reached during Typhoon *Ondoy* in 2009), thus immensely flooding Marikina
18 low-lying residential areas, even up to the second story of many houses, and resulted
19 to the evacuation of at least 3,000 families³;

20 WHEREAS, in Cagayan Province, the continuous rain during Typhoon Ulysses
21 brought landslides as well as unprecedented colossal flooding that submerged
22 numerous houses, which was also aggravated when the nearby Magat Dam was
23 constrained to release excess water from its reservoir in order to prevent the dam
24 from breaking or collapsing⁴;

25 WHEREAS, science has taught us that forests and the watersheds should be
26 kept healthy and protected and that deforestation should be avoided so that abundant
27 forest trees could help forest soil absorb and retain rainwater, thereby naturally

² <https://www.cnnphilippines.com/news/2020/11/17/typhoon-ulysses-death-toll-rise-to-73-ndrrmc.html>

³ <https://www.rappler.com/nation/national-news/marikina-state-of-calamity-typhoon-ulysses-philippines-2020>

⁴ <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1360770/what-caused-cagayan-valleys-worst-flood-in-40-years>

1 regulating the release of rainwater from hills and mountains and serving as natural
2 protection to the adverse impacts of natural disasters, such as heavy rainfalls during
3 typhoons and extreme flooding;

4 WHEREAS, deforestation, which is caused by illegal logging, quarrying,
5 unregulated and open-pit mining, and slash-and-burn agriculture, among others,
6 continues to threaten the forest cover of the country, thereby resulting to a reduced
7 protection from the effects of natural disasters;

8 WHEREAS, while the Filipino people continually suffers from the destructive
9 effects of typhoons, which just keep on escalating through the years as exemplified
10 by *Ulysses*, it is equally devastating that the Sierra Madre Mountain Range, which
11 stretches from Cagayan Province in the north of Luzon and Quezon Province in the
12 South of Luzon and represents 40 percent of the country's forest cover, continues to be
13 threatened by illegal logging, unregulated mining activities, and unhampered
14 quarrying⁵;

15 WHEREAS, the protected area (PA) Upper Marikina River Basin Protected
16 Landscape was not spared from exploitation as well as the Masungi Georeserve, which
17 is found on a portion of the said PA and undergoing strict conservation interventions,
18 is allegedly being subjected to encroachment by entities involved in quarrying
19 operations;

20 WHEREAS, the muddy quality of the water that flooded Cagayan and Marikina
21 alike is an indication that the surrounding forests and watersheds are already so
22 denuded such that they do not anymore retain soil water and prevent erosion;

23 WHEREAS, the apparent silted condition of the rivers and tributaries in the
24 flooded areas did little in containing the rainwater that flowed from the mountains
25 and so may have contributed to the rapid rise of the flood waters as well;

26

⁵ <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1361520/group-says-protection-of-forests-must-be-core-of-disaster-response>

1 WHEREAS, according to the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, "restoration and
2 conservation of the Philippines' existing forest, from rainforests to mangrove forests,
3 should be at the core of the country's disaster risk reduction plans"⁶;

4 WHEREAS, the destruction on lives and properties caused by floods during the
5 recent typhoons underscores the necessity to protect and conserve the country's
6 forests and watersheds as well as to maintain our rivers and its tributaries in good
7 condition and ensure that it is free from heavy siltation, which measures appear to be
8 the most effective ways of preventing destructive flooding;

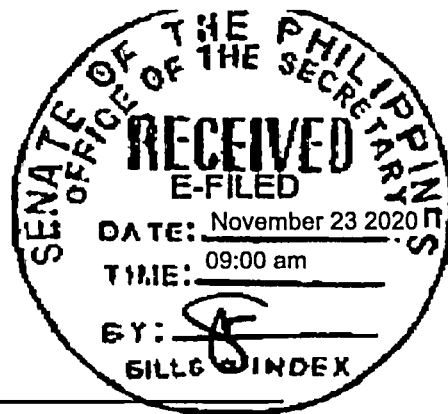
9 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the
10 Senate to direct the appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of
11 legislation, on the alleged denuded state of forests and watersheds as well as the
12 apparent heavy siltation on rivers and tributaries, which largely contributed to the
13 immense flooding in some parts of Luzon during the onslaught of the recent typhoons,
14 particularly Typhoon Ulysses, with the end in view of strengthening the conservation
15 of the country's forest cover and waterways in order to mitigate, if not altogether
16 prevent, the devastating effects of natural disasters.

Adopted,



CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

⁶ *Ibid.*



SENATE

P.S. Res. No. 579

Introduced by SENATOR LEILA M. DE LIMA

RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT
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UNDERLYING CAUSES OF THE RECENT RECORD-HIGH FLOODING IN
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IMPROVING ANY GAPS IN THE GOVERNMENT'S DISASTER
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1 WHEREAS, in the evening of 11 November 2020, Typhoon 'Ulysses' made its
2 first landfall in Quezon Province and made its way across Central Luzon. Packing
3 maximum sustained winds of 150 kilometers per hour in addition to intense and
4 torrential rainfall, Typhoon 'Ulysses' caused flash floods and landslides along its path
5 of destruction;¹

6 WHEREAS, residents of Metro Manila, particularly Marikina City, were caught
7 flat-footed as the torrential downpour caused the Marikina River to swell to a record
8 level of 22-meters, eclipsing the mark set by Tropical Storm 'Ondoy' in 2009, causing
9 waters to rise in areas that were not largely seen as flood-prone;²

10 WHEREAS, although not directly hit by Typhoon 'Ulysses', the province of
11 Cagayan experienced heavy flooding as well due to constant rain brought by the tail
12 end of a cold front. In the morning of 13 November 2020, the reservoir water level of
13 Magat Dam had reportedly reached 192.64 meters above sea level (masl), almost

¹ Arcco, A. (11 November 2020). *Typhoon Ulysses makes landfall twice in Quezon*. Retrieved November 18, 2020, from <https://www.rappler.com/nation/weather/typhoon-ulysses-pagasa-forecast-november-11-2020-11pm>

² Servallos, N. J. & Cabrera, R. (13 November 2020). *Worse Than Ondoy: Typhoon Ulysses Triggers Massive Flooding In MM, Rizal, Other Areas; Residents Caught By Surprise*. Retrieved November 18, 2020, from <https://www.onenews.ph/worse-than-ondoy-typhoon-ulysses-triggers-massive-flooding-in-mm-rizal-other-areas-residents-caught-by-surprise>

1 reaching the dam's spilling level of 193.00 masl. Reports noted that seven of the dam's
2 gates were already opened at 18 meters;³

3 WHEREAS, in an early morning interview on 14 November 2020, Cagayan
4 Governor Manuel Mamba noted that the province is a natural catch basin of rain water
5 from Cagayan Valley and the Cordillera Administrative Region which meant that they
6 experienced flooding on an annual basis. However, he also stressed that the level of
7 flooding from Typhoon 'Ulysses' was altogether "unusual" and that this was the worst
8 flooding to hit the province in 40 years;⁴

9 WHEREAS, Governor Mamba, in a later statement, also pointed out that the
10 degradation of the forests in the Cordillera and Sierra Madre due to decades of illegal
11 logging activities caused the massive flooding which had affected over 170,000
12 individuals in 26 municipalities across the province. He pointed out the need to have
13 a holistic and inter-regional approach to addressing environmental problems;⁵

14 WHEREAS, according to the National Disaster Risk Reduction and
15 Management Council (NDRRMC) spokesperson Mark Cashean Timbal, based on
16 reports by the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) in the region, the successive landfall of
17 seven typhoons in the country contributed to the massive flooding experienced in
18 Cagayan province. He added that the series of typhoons resulted in the rise of water
19 levels of the Magat Dam and Cagayan River, which resulted in the placing of the
20 Cagayan Valley Regional Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council
21 (CVRDRRMC) on red alert. He further clarified that the Magat Dam did not release
22 any water until 9 November and that notices were issued before it was done;⁶

23 WHEREAS, according to think tank Infrawatch PH, dam operators should be
24 held accountable as dams, including Magat, only rushed to open the gates at the height
25 of Typhoon 'Ulysses', thereby causing the unprecedented flooding in Cagayan.

³ Rappler.com. (13 November 2020). *IN PHOTOS: Floods submerge Cagayan houses after heavy rain*. Retrieved November 18, 2020, from <https://www.rappler.com/moveph/photos-cold-front-floods-parts-cagayan-november-2020>

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5 operators were once again revived in the wake of the flooding. He noted that the people
6 are fed up with the dam because they were assuming all the risks but none of the
7 benefits as the irrigation water from the dam all flows through Isabela and not
8 Cagayan;⁸

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10 National Irrigation Administration's (NIA) Department Manager for Magat River
11 Irrigation System (MARIIS) Dam and Reservoir defended the management of Magat
12 dam stating that there was nothing else the government could have done to stop it. He
13 also said that NIA had followed all the protocols in terms of dam discharge and flood
14 warning even days prior to the landfall of Typhoon 'Ulysses';⁹

15 WHEREAS, in a statement, President Duterte seemingly cleared the NIA of any
16 liability and instead placed the blame on climate change for the severe weather
17 disturbances in the country which caused massive flooding.¹⁰ He later ordered
18 Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Roy Cimatu to
19 probe small-scale illegal mining and illegal logging activities in the forests and
20 mountains of Cagayan in a bid to intensify forest protection efforts;¹¹

21 WHEREAS, in terms of preventing the overflow of the Cagayan River, the
22 DENR has proposed dredging its mouth, deepening it to allow for a greater volume of
23 water to flow through. Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Alfonso Cusi also

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⁸ GMA News. (14 November 2020). *Cagayan residents want to sue Magat Dam for yearly floods -governor*. Retrieved November 18, 2020, from <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/news/regions/764103/cagayan-residents-want-to-sue-magat-dam-for-yearly-floods-governor/story/>

⁹ Mirafior, M. B. (15 November 2020). NIA on Magat Dam water release: 'There's nothing else that could be done'. Retrieved November 18, 2020, from <https://mb.com.ph/2020/11/15/nia-on-magat-dam-water-release-theres-nothing-else-that-could-be-done/>

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1 proposed the building of an “upstream dam” ahead of the Magat dam as a potential
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3 WHEREAS, in the wake of this disaster, the harmful effects of climate change
4 and environmental degradation have once again come to the surface. Proper dam
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6 dissemination are also critical components of disaster mitigation. The national
7 government needs a comprehensive and people-centered environmental conservation
8 and disaster risk reduction management plan incorporated into its national
9 development policy in order to better prepare its citizens for future disasters to come;

10 WHEREAS, there is no lone cause for the record-level flooding experienced by
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13 develop innovative solutions that are data-driven and responsive to the needs of the
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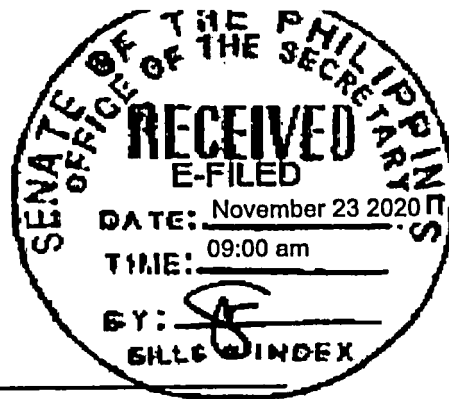
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