



Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

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HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 276

Introduced by **Representative LINABELLE RUTH R. VILLARICA**

RESOLUTION
URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO REOPEN
THE PHILIPPINE CONSULATE GENERAL IN BARCELONA, SPAIN

1 **WHEREAS**, one of the three pillars of the Philippine foreign policy is the protection of
2 the rights and promotion of the welfare of Filipinos overseas, for which the Department of
3 Foreign Affairs (DFA) is primarily responsible;

4
5 **WHEREAS**, the DFA 1) ensures the safety and well-being of our nationals overseas by
6 extending consular and documentation services, providing legal assistance to those in
7 distress, and implementing contingency plans in conflict areas; and 2) guarantees their
8 exercise of suffrage through the overseas voting mechanism;

9
10 **WHEREAS**, consular and documentation services, and legal and other assistance are
11 offered by the DFA to an estimated 37,886 Filipinos in Spain solely through the Philippine
12 Embassy in Madrid while the eight Honorary Consulates in Barcelona, Bilbao, Cadiz,
13 Malaga, Palma de Mallorca, Sevilla, Valencia and Vigo, Galicia offer limited services of
14 facilitating visa applications and authentication of documents;

15
16 **WHEREAS**, in 2012, the DFA closed the Philippine Consulate General (PCG) in
17 Barcelona, thereby depriving our nationals in Barcelona, Tarragona, Girona, Lleida, Ibiza,
18 Formentera, Palma de Mallorca, Zaragoza and nearby Andorra of urgent assistance and
19 services;

20
21 **WHEREAS**, the closure of the Barcelona PCG greatly affected Filipino workers who
22 previously relied on it for their documentation and consular requirements;

1 **WHEREAS**, the region of Catalonia alone, comprised of Barcelona, Girona, Lleida and
2 Tarragona, is home to an estimated 9, 495 Filipinos with majority of them working as hotel
3 and restaurant staff, household service workers and caregivers;

4
5 **WHEREAS**, Barcelona and Tarragona have the busiest and most important ports in the
6 Mediterranean Sea where ships, mostly with Filipino crews, constantly dock;

7
8 **WHEREAS**, our seafarers can ill afford to travel all the way to Madrid to complete their
9 documentation requirements considering the limited time they spend on land;

10
11 **WHEREAS**, the Philippine Embassy in Madrid is located 600 kilometers away from this
12 strategic region and will entail several hours of travel and additional expenses on the part of
13 our nationals;

14
15 **WHEREAS**, in its position statement immediately before the closure in 2012, the
16 Filipino community in Barcelona represented by *Kapulungan ng mga Lider Pinoy sa*
17 *Barcelona (KALIPI)* argued that an Honorary Consulate will not suffice considering the bulk
18 of consular assistance needed and the volume of Filipino population in the area and
19 neighboring regions;

20
21 **WHEREAS**, KALIPI further stated that the first overseas voting held in Barcelona in
22 2010 yielded one of the highest voter turnout in Europe, owing not only to the PCG's untiring
23 efforts to encourage political participation but also to the Filipino community's active
24 engagement;

25
26 **WHEREAS**, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, in its evaluation report on our
27 Philippine foreign service posts during the 15th Congress, strongly recommended for the
28 retention of the Barcelona PCG;

29
30 **WHEREAS**, taking into account Catalonia's large Filipino community, its strategic
31 location, and providing timely assistance to our overseas workers, the importance of
32 reopening the Barcelona PCG cannot be overstated;

33
34 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED**, to urge
35 the Department of Foreign Affairs to reopen the Philippine Consulate General in Barcelona,
36 Spain;

37
38 **RESOLVED, FURTHER**, to furnish the Department of Foreign Affairs a copy of this
39 Resolution for its appropriate action.

Adopted.

