

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 223



Introduced by **KABATAAN PARTY-LIST Representative Sarah Jane I. Elago,**
ACT TEACHERS PARTY-LIST Representative France L. Castro,
BAYAN MUNA PARTY-LIST Representatives Carlos Isagani T. Zarate,
Ferdinand Gaite and Eufemia C. Cullamat,
and GABRIELA WOMEN'S PARTY Representative Arlene D. Brosas

RESOLUTION
URGING THE DUTERTE ADMINISTRATION TO ENDORSE
THE SAFE SCHOOLS DECLARATION

WHEREAS, Section 4, Article III - Bill of Rights of the Philippine Constitution states that "[N]o law shall be passed abridging the freedom of speech, of expression, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and petition the government for a redress of grievances";

WHEREAS, we then intensify the campaign for schools as zones of peace wherein fundamental freedoms of organization, peaceful assembly and expression are upheld;

WHEREAS, as vanguards of legislation, it is our duty to be fair and never allow educational institutions, being highly regarded as children's second homes, to become a space for bigotry, prejudice, discrimination, and attacks on human rights;

WHEREAS, we call for the urgent endorsement of the Safe Schools Declaration. ~~CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS ON THE PROTECTION OF EDUCATION~~, which is an inter-governmental political commitment that provides countries the opportunity to express support for protecting education from attack during times of armed conflict; the importance of the continuation of education during war; and the implementation of concrete measures to deter the military use of schools.;

WHEREAS, at least 87 countries have already endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration and committed to take actions to end the targeting of schools and universities since: "Access to education may be undermined; the functioning of educational facilities may be blocked, or education personnel and students may stay away, fearing for their safety.

Attacks on schools and universities have been used to promote intolerance and exclusion – to further gender discrimination, for example by preventing the education of girls, to perpetuate conflict between certain communities, to restrict cultural diversity, and to deny academic freedom or the right of association. Where educational facilities are used for military purposes it can increase the risk of the recruitment and use of children by armed actors or may leave children and youth vulnerable to sexual abuse or exploitation. In particular, it may increase the likelihood that education institutions are attacked. By contrast, education can help to protect children and youth from death, injury and exploitation; it can alleviate the psychological impact of armed conflict by offering routine and stability and can provide links to other vital services. Education that is ‘conflict sensitive’ avoids contributing to conflict and pursues a contribution to peace. Education is fundamental to development and to the full enjoyment of human rights and freedoms.”¹

WHEREAS, by joining the Safe Schools Declaration, countries commit to undertake several common sense steps to make it less likely that students, teachers, schools, and universities will be attacked, and to mitigate the impact of attacks that occur.

WHEREAS, the Philippines has yet to commit to the declaration though it must be noted that, in April 2019, Secretary Briones emphasized that the Department of Education strongly supports the Safe Schools Declaration through DepEd issuances and campaign materials: “As for the Safe Schools Declaration, we fully support it. We have issued a number of publications and circulars in our Department. We have campaigned for it, especially in Mindanao. We require all our schools to carry the posters with messages, ‘This is a zone of peace, this is a safe school’...The Declaration is already at the Office of the Executive Secretary for further comments and clearance.”²

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Members of the House of Representatives urge the Duterte administration to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration.


Adopted,

¹ Excerpt from Safe Schools Declaration. Date retrieved: August 9, 2019 from http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/safe_schools_declaration-final.pdf


² Department of Education (2019). Date retrieved: August 10, 2019 from <https://pia.gov.ph/press-releases/releases/1021065>



Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO
Kabataan Party-list



Rep. CARLOS ISAGANI T. ZARATE
Bayan Muna Party-list



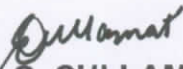
Rep. FRANCE L. CASTRO
ACT Teachers Party-list



Rep. FERDINAND GAITE
Bayan Muna Party-list



Rep. ARLENE D. BROSAS
Gabriela Women's Party



Rep. EUFEMIA C. CULLAMAT
Bayan Muna Party-list