

Resolution Calling on the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) and Provincial Officials to set up a Cordillera Commission on Migration, Migrants and Their Families (CCMMF)

Whereas, it is estimated that there are more than 250,000 migrants and immigrants from the Cordillera region working and residing in the different global regions, a significant number of whom are undocumented and victims of unscrupulous recruitment agencies, abuse, contract violation and for some, sexual harassment and abuse;

Whereas, the worsening economic crisis, lack of jobs and decent salary are forcing more Filipinos including those from the Cordillera, to seek employment abroad in order to survive. The imminent collapse of the vegetable industry due to the entry of cheap vegetable and agricultural products from abroad, will force more Cordillerans to migrate;

Whereas, labor-receiving countries are adopting more restrictive measures to “control” entry and are taking measures to criminalize and deport the undocumented. Moreover, the economic crisis in the labor-receiving countries creates conditions for more discrimination, exploitation and rise of anti-migrant/foreign political parties;

Whereas, the annual 7-8 US\$ billion remittances from migrants continue to be the main prop of Philippine economy, thus, earning the designation of being the “Modern Heroes”.

Whereas, protection of migrant rights and welfare is a state responsibility and that of inter-state institutions like the United Nations, International Labor Organization and other UN agencies;

Whereas, migrants and their families are eager to avail of the protection of their local and national government and to contribute in whatever way in the development of their place of birth;

Be it resolved, that the CAR and the provincial governments in the Cordillera respond to the call of migrants and their families for protection and the desire of migrants to participate in genuine development, by creating a Commission on Migrants and Their Families, which will be tasked to:

1. Adopt measures to protect, uphold and advance the rights and welfare of migrants and their families;
2. Provide assistance to migrants who are abused, discriminated and unjustly deported;
3. Develop further the capacity of Cordillera migrants and their families to be “cultural ambassadors” to promote cultural exchanges and solidarity with the people in the labor-receiving countries and
4. Harness the interest and capacity of migrants to participate in local people-oriented development programs.

Be it further resolved, that migrants and their families are adequately represented in the Commission to ensure that their voice, needs, aspirations and role are heard and acted upon. A Consultative Assembly of migrants and their families should be convened to mandate the setting up of the Commission.

Finally be it resolved, that copies of this resolution and information about the 3rd ICBE Consultation, which unanimously approved this resolution be forwarded by the 3rd ICBE Consultation host, BIBAK-Switzerland, to the CAR, Provincial officials and the Philippine ambassador to Switzerland.

Approved by the delegates to the 3rd ICBE during the closing plenary session, May 8, 2005, Aeschi, Switzerland.