

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

Thirteenth Congress
First Regular Session

House Bill No. 2984



Introduced by **Honorable Rolex T. Suplico**

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Respect for human rights is guaranteed under the Philippine Constitution and other universal statutes. However, reports have it that law enforcers, who have been sworn to protect such rights are often themselves involved in a large proportion of human rights violations. The Human Rights Commission claims that police rank as the top human rights violators, followed by the military.

To remedy this situation, this bill provides that the prospective members of the police and military organizations be required to go through and complete a training course on human rights as part of recruitment and admission procedures. Moreover, continuous training on human rights protection should be made part of fitness and skills training of personnel involved in counter-insurgency operations.

The protection of human rights stands as a cornerstone of every civilized society. Therefore, the state should spare effort to ensure the rights of every sing individual.

In view of the foregoing, early passage of this bill is earnestly requested.


ROLEX T. SUPLICO

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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR MANDATORY COURSE ON HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL
OFFICERS, MEMBERS AND TRAINEES OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE
PHILIPPINES (AFP), THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP), THE
NATIONAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (NBI) AND OTHER LAW
ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

SECTION 1. ***Declaration of Policy*** - It shall be the policy of the State to safeguard the basic human rights of the citizenry as embodied in Article III of the 1987 Constitution.

SEC. 2. ***Mandatory Course*** – No trainee and/or prospective agent or member of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the Philippine National Police (PNP), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and other law enforcement agencies shall be accepted into the service without undergoing a mandatory course on human rights to be administered by the AFP, PNP, NBI and other law enforcement agencies, hereinafter termed as the “concerned agencies”.

SEC. 3. ***Educational Course*** – All regular officers and men of the AFP, PNP, NBI and other law enforcement agencies shall likewise undergo an education course on human rights under the direct supervision of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) giving priority to those units involved in counter-insurgency operations, intelligence work and the maintenance of peace and order.

SEC. 4. **Promotion Requirement** – No officer or member of the AFP, PNP, NBI and other law enforcement agencies shall be qualified for promotion without undergoing the required course on human rights attested by the CHR as embodied in Sections 2 and 3 of this Act.

SEC. 5. **Regular Course** – A regular course on human rights shall also be included in the curricula of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) and the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) and other military and police training institutions.

SEC. 6. **Guiding Principles and Laws** – In writing, printing and publication of textbooks, manuals and other reading materials needed in the formulation and creation of course of subject on human rights, the concerned government agency shall consult and coordinate with the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) and shall at all times emphasize the following principles on human rights, and the laws and rules governing the same, to wit:

- (a) All persons are born with human dignity and inherent rights. No one loses his dignity and rights regardless of his political conviction.
- (b) Torture, unexplained or forced disappearances, extra-legal executions (salvaging), other cruel and degrading treatment or punishment are considered as crimes punishable by Philippine laws under any and all circumstances.
- (c) Anyone may, by himself or on behalf of a person arrested or detained, question the legality of the arrest and detention before the appropriate court.
- (d) All pertinent human rights laws as may be deemed necessary by the CHR.

SEC. 7. **Function of the CHR**

- (a) No textbook, manual or other reading materials shall be used in the aforementioned courses on human rights without the prior approval and/or endorsement of the CHR.
- (b) The CHR shall provide resource persons, materials and other necessary assistance to the different agencies concerned in the implementation of this Act.
- (c) The CHR shall maintain a roster of all those who have successfully completed the required course on human rights.

SEC. 8. ***Funding*** – Such amounts as may be necessary for the implementation of this Act shall be appropriated for the CHR and other concerned government agencies.

SEC. 9. ***Repealing Clause*** – Any law, act, decree, order, proclamation, or regulation or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 10. ***Effectivity*** – This act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,