

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

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session



**HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 844**

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Introduced by **REPRESENTATIVE LANI MERCADO-REVILLA**

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**RESOLUTION**

**HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF FILIPINO WOMEN LEADERS AND PARTICIPANTS TO THE COUNTRY'S PEACE PROCESSES AND URGING THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER ON PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND UNITY TO INCREASE AND ENCOURAGE WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN FORMAL PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND OTHER PEACE PROCESSES, IN CELEBRATION OF THE 2023 NATIONAL WOMEN'S MONTH**

**WHEREAS**, the following issuances serve as legal bases for the annual National Women's Month Celebration: (i) Proclamation No. 224 s. 1988 declaring the first week of March each year as Women's Week and March 8 as Women's Rights and International Peace Day; (ii) Proclamation No. 227 s. 1988 providing for the observance of the month of March as "Women's Role in History Month"; and (iii) Republic Act No. 6949 s. 1990 declaring March 8 of every year as National Women's Day;

**WHEREAS**, the meaningful participation of women in decision-making in peace processes and the importance of their role in global peace and stability is one of the pillars of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000);

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines is the first country in Asia that adopted a national plan on women, peace and security, and among the objectives of the "National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAPWPS)" is to *empower women and ensure their active and meaningful participation in areas of peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding, conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction*;

**WHEREAS**, Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), on the occasion of the 31<sup>st</sup> ASEAN Summit in the year 2017, issued "Joint

Statement on Promoting Women, Peace and Security in ASEAN”, and among its commitments is to *ensure the full participation of women in peace processes such as conflict prevention and post-reconstruction and rehabilitation processes, as well as build the capacity of women as peace builders either as mediators, negotiators and/ or first responders at the regional, national and local levels;*

**WHEREAS**, various peace and reconciliation efforts to counter the decades-long internal armed conflicts in the country have seen indispensable contributions from Filipino women, as administrators, policymakers, negotiators, mediators, representatives of the signatories to the agreement, technical staff members, civil stakeholders, and key sources of information and knowledge;

**WHEREAS**, former COMELEC Commissioner Haydee B. Yorac led the National Unification Commission as chairperson under the Ramos administration, that produced the “Six Paths to Peace,” which remains the operational framework for the government’s peace policy to this day;

**WHEREAS**, for the first time in 2001, the government’s negotiating panel appointed two women in its five-member team, Dr. Emily M. Marohombsar and Mindanao Commission on Women (MCW) Chair Emerita Irene M. Santiago, who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005 as one of the 1000 outstanding women peacemakers and peacebuilders in the world;

**WHEREAS**, it was only in 2012 that the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) peace panels included two women in the technical staff, and one of these women, Minister Raissa H. Jajurie, served as an alternate panel member when one of the male members was not around;

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines is the first country to have had a woman (Professor Miriam Coronel-Ferrer) lead a negotiating party (the Philippine government) and sign a final peace accord (the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro) with a rebel group (MILF) in 2014;

**WHEREAS**, in addition to the above-stated, 69% of the secretariat of the government panel, including its head, and 60% of the legal head, including its team, were women under the ages of 35 and 30, respectively;

**WHEREAS**, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process that oversaw five peace tables: three involving the Communist Party of the Philippines-National Democratic Front (CPP-NDF) and its splinter groups, and two involving the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the MILF, was led by a woman, Secretary Teresita Quintos-Deles;

**WHEREAS**, the 2017 Marawi crisis served as a wake-up call to not allow another peace process to fail, resulting in Bangsamoro autonomy in 2019, but the story that continues to be largely untold is the role played by Bangsamoro women at each level of the peace process;

**WHEREAS**, there are many other Filipino women who served and continues to serve as active agents of change in conflict resolution, prevention, and reconstruction;

**WHEREAS**, while women are now more visible in issues of peace and security, there are still three significant challenges that continue to prevent women from being included in formal peace processes, as explained by MCW Chair Emerita Irene M. Santiago:

*One, there is a conceptual barrier. Women will only have a chance to be included if the concept of peace talks would focus on ending war and building peace, but not when peace negotiations are only about ending war.*

*Two, there is a technical barrier for women because of their limited experience. They must be given opportunities to expand their capacity, and be trained on substantive issues and negotiation skills.*

*Three, there is a political barrier to acknowledging the importance of women in decision-making.*

**WHEREAS**, studies show that women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution can greatly improve outcomes because of their differentiated experience of conflict and its impact, contributing higher attention to gender-related elements in the deliberations and the text of agreements, and providing alternative perspectives on issues and strategies, which may lead to addressing root causes and eventually reaching an agreement, or returning to the negotiating table to reconsider positioning towards a settlement;

**WHEREAS**, there can be no genuine and sustainable peace without the meaningful inclusion and participation of women;

**WHEREAS**, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU) is mandated to manage, direct, integrate, and supervise the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Process, pursuant to Executive Order (EO) No. 125, s. 1993, later enhanced through EO No. 3, s. 2001, and further amended by EO No. 158, s. 2021;

***NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT***, the House of Representatives, in celebration of the 2023 National Women’s Month, adopt this resolution, honoring the contributions of Filipino women, both as leaders and participants, to the country’s peace processes and urging the OPAPRU to increase and encourage women’s participation in formal peace negotiations and other peace processes.

*Adopted,*

  
**REP. LANI MERCADO-REVILLA**  
2<sup>nd</sup> District of Cavite