

Republic of the Philippines  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
Batasan Hills, Quezon City

**TWENTIETH CONGRESS**  
First Regular Session



**HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 583**

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Introduced by Honorable Representatives  
**SARAH JANE I. ELAGO (Gabriela Women's Party),**  
**ANTONIO L. TINIO (ACT Teachers Party-list),**  
**and RENEE LOUISE M. CO (Kabataan Party-list)**

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**RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
URGING THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT, THROUGH THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, TO GRANT CLEMENCY TO MARY JANE  
VELOSO**

**WHEREAS**, December 18, 2025 marks the first year since Mary Jane Veloso (Mary Jane), an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW), arrived in the Philippines after being repatriated by the Indonesian government;

**WHEREAS**, Mary Jane's case stemmed from her arrest on April 25, 2010 by the Customs and Excise authorities at the Adisutjipto International Airport in Yogyakarta, Indonesia for allegedly unwittingly possessing 2.6 kilos of heroin;

**WHEREAS**, Mary Jane, a mother of two, had just come back to the Philippines from Dubai after only ten (10) months of working there, having been a victim of attempted rape during her employment;<sup>1</sup>

**WHEREAS**, after 3 months of unsuccessfully looking for work as an overseas domestic helper despite repeatedly going back and forth to Manila,<sup>2</sup> Mary Jane was recruited by her godsister, Maria Kristina Sergio (Tintin), as a domestic helper in Malaysia. In desperation, she agreed and Tintin accompanied her to Malaysia on April 21, 2010;

**WHEREAS**, when they arrived, Tintin informed Mary Jane that the job was no longer available in Malaysia; instead, Tintin asked Mary Jane to go to Indonesia;

**WHEREAS**, as Mary Jane only brought a backpack with 2 shirts and 2 pairs of pants, Tintin invited her to go shopping for clothes and other personal needs. Tintin also gave Mary Jane a

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/pinoyabroad/dispatch/481426/interactive-timeline-dfa-migrante-on-mary-jane-veloso-s-journey-to-death-row/story/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rappler.com/philippines/overseas-filipinos/mary-jane-veloso-story-narrative/>

luggage bag given by Tintin's boyfriend, a plane ticket, \$500, and the contact number of Tintin's friend who Mary Jane will meet in Indonesia;<sup>3</sup>

**WHEREAS**, Mary Jane was able to arrive in Indonesia, but was stopped and arrested by Indonesian authorities as there was a black plastic bag of aluminum foil with drugs inside the lining of her luggage bag;

**WHEREAS**, it was only on May 12, 2010 when Mary Jane told her family that she was in jail. The next day, Mary Jane's family confronted Tintin but was told to keep quiet or they will be in danger. Tintin allegedly claimed that she was a member of an "international drug syndicate";<sup>4</sup>

**WHEREAS**, on August 2010, Mary Jane's family went to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) Manila to report what had happened to Mary Jane;

**WHEREAS**, on October 4, 2010, Mary Jane's trial began in the District Court of Justice of Sieman. She was given a state-sponsored lawyer as counsel, with allegedly no proper translator;

**WHEREAS**, on October 11, 2010, despite maintaining and reiterating her innocence, claiming that it was Tintin who tricked her into going to Indonesia and bringing the bag, Mary Jane was found guilty and sentenced to death. This sentence was indefinitely suspended following then-Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's issuance of a moratorium on executions;

**WHEREAS**, the Philippine Embassy in Jakarta filed appeals for Mary Jane's case, but the guilty verdict was upheld by the Court of Appeals on February 10, 2011, and by the Supreme Court on May 31, 2011. After the conviction and failed appeal for Mary Jane's case, then-President of the Philippines Benigno Aquino III (Aquino) requested for clemency<sup>5</sup> for Mary Jane, but this was rejected<sup>6</sup> by next Indonesian President Joko Widodo (Widodo);<sup>7</sup>

**WHEREAS**, Mary Jane's counsel filed an Application for Judicial Review at the District Court of Justice of Sleman, Yogyakarta, which was later referred to but rejected by the Supreme Court on March 25, 2015;<sup>8</sup>

**WHEREAS**, Migrante, a civil society organization defending the rights and welfare of OFWs, learned of Mary Jane's case<sup>9</sup> and offered their support to Mary Jane's family. Migrante took to organizing initiatives to make the public aware of Mary Jane's plight and seek support for the latter, including releasing an Appeal for Urgent Action amongst their networks in the Philippines and globally, doing a picket at the Indonesian Embassy<sup>10</sup>, submitting an open letter to President

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<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> <https://migranteinternational.org/save-mary-jane-timeline-of-events-let-the-facts-speak-for-themselves/>

<sup>5</sup> Request was made on August 23, 2011. Letter of Clemency was forwarded to the Indonesia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on October 10, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2015/01/21/jokowi-refuses-budge-clemency-issue.html>

<sup>7</sup> On December 31, 2014, Widodo rejected the request for clemency for Mary Jane by issuing Presidential Decision 31/G - 2014, doubling down on the use of capital punishment for drug offenders.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* Footnote 4.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* Footnote 4. On February 2, 2015, Migrante learned that a Filipina in Indonesia was scheduled to be executed via firing squad. They were able to learn about Mary Jane through their Indonesian network.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* Footnote 4. March 31, 2015.

Widodo,<sup>11</sup> arranging a metro-wide candle lighting in various communities,<sup>12</sup> and holding a rally in Mendiola with Mary Jane's family on April 10, 2015, the supposed initial schedule for Mary Jane's alleged execution by firing squad;<sup>13</sup>

**WHEREAS**, on April 16 and 17, 2015, the National Union of Peoples' Lawyers (NUPL), the private counsel of Mary Jane's family in the Philippines, filed letter-complaints to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), and the Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking in Persons (IACAT)/Department of Justice (DOJ) asking them to take "the appropriate steps and investigation be initiated and conducted..."<sup>14</sup> on Tintin "for violation of both local and international laws such as Republic Act 10022 or the Amended Migrant Workers Act and pertinent international laws against drug trafficking as well as for possible violations of the human trafficking laws, laws on illegal recruitment and for other related crimes;"<sup>15</sup>

**WHEREAS**, members of Migrante and NUPL went to Indonesia to help in the campaign to save Mary Jane, while activities for Save Mary Jane Campaign continued in the Philippines.<sup>16</sup> NUPL closely coordinated with Mary Jane's Indonesian lawyers in exhausting all judicial remedies to stop her execution. The Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) also provided support to the NUPL's mission to Indonesia;

**WHEREAS**, on April 24, 2015, Mary Jane was transferred to Nusa Kambangan Island. On the same day, the DFA held a press conference announcing that a second judicial review was filed;

**WHEREAS**, on April 25, 2015, an Order of Execution was served to Mary Jane with a 72-hour notice. Migrante and other civil society organizations held a vigil at the Indonesian Embassy in the Philippines, while the online campaign to save Mary Jane gathered hundreds of thousands of signatures worldwide;<sup>17</sup>

**WHEREAS**, on April 28, 2015, President Aquino had a 5-minute meeting with President Widodo during the ASEAN conference in Malaysia; on the same day, Tintin surrendered to Philippine authorities and "was later charged with human trafficking and estafa."<sup>18</sup> The next day, Mary Jane's execution was suspended pending the conclusion of Philippine legal proceedings related to Mary Jane's case;

**WHEREAS**, these efforts to save Mary Jane allowed the suspension of Mary Jane's execution;

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid. Footnote 4. April 1, 2015.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. Footnote 4. April 6, 2015.

<sup>13</sup>

<https://www.abs-cbn.com/news/nation/2024/12/18/timeline-mary-jane-veloso-s-decade-long-ordeal-from-indonesian-death-row-to-miracle-homecoming-1327>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Footnote 4.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. Footnote 4.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. Footnote 4.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid. Footnote 4.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. Footnote 4.

**WHEREAS**, over the years, Mary Jane’s family, Migrante and other concerned groups have continued to call on the Philippine Government to actively campaign for the Indonesian President to grant Mary Jane clemency;

**WHEREAS**, in 2024, incumbent Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto’s administration, through the Coordinating Ministry for Legal, Human Rights, Immigration, and Correction, manifested that as part of constructive diplomacy, they are considering prisoner transfer for foreign detainees, including Mary Jane;<sup>19</sup>

**WHEREAS**, on November 20, 2024, President Ferdinand Marcos, Jr. (President Marcos, Jr.) announced that the Philippines and Indonesia have agreed to transfer Mary Jane to the Philippines, and this was confirmed by Indonesia.<sup>20</sup> In an official statement, President Marcos, Jr. characterized Mary Jane as a victim of her circumstances;<sup>21</sup>

**WHEREAS**, on December 6, 2024, the Philippine and Indonesian governments agreed to transfer Mary Jane to the Philippines, pursuant to Indonesia’s “Transfer of Prisoners” policy;

**WHEREAS**, part of the terms between this one-of-a-kind agreement include the Philippines “respecting the Indonesian court’s sentencing”<sup>22</sup> and Mary Jane’s “status as prisoner in Indonesia.”<sup>23</sup> In turn, Indonesia did not attach any condition to Mary Jane’s release<sup>24</sup> and has agreed to respect “any decision made by the Philippines”<sup>25</sup> once Mary Jane is back home, including the possibility of clemency;<sup>26</sup>

**WHEREAS**, according to the Philippine government, Indonesia did not attach any condition to the release to the Philippines of Mary Jane.

**WHEREAS**, under the 1987 Philippine Constitution, the President of the Republic of the Philippines can grant clemency after conviction by final judgment;<sup>27</sup>

**WHEREAS**, in a quick interview on November 21, 2024, President Marcos, Jr. has expressed his openness to grant Mary Jane clemency;<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>

<https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/pinoyabroad/dispatch/927214/mary-jane-veloso-transfer-to-ph-prison-being-considered-by-indonesia/story/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/pinoyabroad/dispatch/927709/indonesia-confirms-veloso-transfer-to-the-philippines/story/>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.abs-cbn.com/news/2024/11/20/mary-jane-veloso-coming-home-to-ph-marcos-jr-829>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.rappler.com/philippines/transfer-proposal-agreement-mary-jane-veloso-with-indonesia/>

<sup>23</sup> *Id.*

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2024/11/22/2402112/indonesia-says-clemency-veloso-marcos>

<sup>27</sup> Article VII, Section 19 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution states that:

Section 19. Except in cases of impeachment, or as otherwise provided in this Constitution, the President may grant reprieves, commutations, and pardons, and remit fines and forfeitures, after conviction by final judgment.

He shall also have the power to grant amnesty with the concurrence of a majority of all the Members of the Congress.

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/pinoyabroad/dispatch/927748/marcos-mary-jane-veloso-clemency/story/>

**WHEREAS**, on December 18, 2024, Mary Jane Veloso arrived in the Philippines<sup>29</sup> and was transferred to the custody of the Correctional Institution for Women (CIW), where she is currently being incarcerated;

**WHEREAS**, Mary Jane's family and supporters have called on President Marcos, Jr. to grant her immediate clemency for "humanitarian grounds and as a matter of justice;"<sup>30</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the grant of clemency to Mary Jane by the President of the Republic of the Philippines is not against the agreement between the Philippines and Indonesia, as this executive act does not necessarily extinguish the conviction, but only removes the penalty associated with the conviction, and in case of absolute pardon, restores civil rights;<sup>31</sup>

**WHEREAS**, while Mary Jane has finally returned to her homeland after almost fifteen (15) years of detention in Indonesia, she has yet to taste true freedom or justice for her plight;

**WHEREAS**, Mary Jane's plight and desperation for greener pastures to improve her family's conditions reflect the dangers OFWs face in seeking better opportunities abroad;

**WHEREAS**, the Labor Code of the Philippines (Labor Code) institutionalizes and recognizes work migration "in excess of domestic needs and to protect their rights to fair and equitable employment practices";<sup>32</sup> while poverty and "...lack of employment opportunities and...inadequacy of wages..."<sup>33</sup> have made Filipinos seek employment outside of the Philippines;

**WHEREAS**, there were at least 1 million Filipinos deployed annually from 2006-2019, with this number increasing to 1.9 million in 2019;<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> <https://www.abs-cbn.com/news/nation/2024/12/17/mary-jane-veloso-arrives-in-ph-after-14-year-imprisonment-in-indonesia-0601>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.gmanetwork.com/news/pinoyabroad/dispatch/927631/mary-jane-veloso-marcos-clemency/story/>

<sup>31</sup> *Monsanto v. Factoran*, G.R. No. 78239 (February 9, 1989)

<sup>32</sup> Section 17 of the Labor Code of the Philippines states that:

"Article 17. Overseas Employment Development Board. An Overseas Employment Development Board is hereby created to **undertake**, in cooperation with relevant entities and agencies, a **systematic program for overseas employment of Filipino workers in excess of domestic needs and to protect their rights to fair and equitable employment practices**. It shall have the power and duty:

To promote the overseas employment of Filipino workers through a comprehensive market promotion and development program;

To secure the best possible terms and conditions of employment of Filipino contract workers on a government-to-government basis and to ensure compliance therewith;

To recruit and place workers for overseas employment on a government-to-government arrangement and in such other sectors as policy may dictate; and

To act as secretariat for the Board of Trustees of the Welfare and Training Fund for Overseas Workers." (*Emphasis Supplied*)

<sup>33</sup> *GENPROM Working Paper No. 8, Series on Women and Migration, PHILIPPINES: GOOD PRACTICES FOR THE PROTECTION OF FILIPINO WOMEN MIGRANT WORKERS IN VULNERABLE JOBS*, M. Villalba. Page 1.

<sup>34</sup> *The Philippines' Landmark Labor Export and Development Policy Enters the Next Generation*, J. Opiniano and A. Ang (January 3, 2024). <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/philippines-migration-next-generation-ofws>

**WHEREAS**, the Philippines has a large share of women migrant workers. Since 2015, more than 50% of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are females,<sup>35</sup> or for every 6 women, there are 4 male OFWs.<sup>36</sup> Prior to 2015, Filipina migrant workers comprise at least 45% of OFWs.<sup>37</sup> Based on the annual Survey of Overseas Filipinos,<sup>38</sup> majority of those employed in elementary, labor, or unskilled work are women, and regardless of their status,<sup>39</sup> women migrant workers are likely more vulnerable to be abused, discriminated against, or exploited;<sup>40</sup>

**WHEREAS**, such vulnerability extends to using women migrant workers for drug trafficking: targeted women are usually “poor and uneducated, but hold passports;”<sup>41</sup>

**WHEREAS**, the grant of clemency to Mary Jane has been a long time coming considering that she is a victim of human trafficking, and is not a drug mule;

**WHEREAS**, Mary Jane has already suffered enough by being deprived of liberty for more than fifteen (15) years and by missing out on seeing her children grow up;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the House of Representatives express its sense urging the Philippine Government, through the President of the Republic of the Philippines, to grant clemency to Mary Jane Veloso.


*Adopted,*



**Rep. SARAH JANE I. ELAGO**  
*Gabriela Women's Party*



**Rep. ANTONIO L. TINIO**  
*ACT Teachers Party-list*



**Rep. RENEE LOUISE M. CO**  
*Kabataan Party-list*

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<sup>35</sup> *Philippine migration journey: Processes and programs in the migration life cycle, Background paper to the World Development Report 2023: Migrants, Refugees, and Societies*, A. Ang and E. Tiongson (April 2023). Page 2.

<sup>36</sup> *Gender and Reintegration of Overseas Filipino Workers*, UN Women Report (June 27, 2022). Page 18.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* footnote 4.

<sup>38</sup> This yearly survey is conducted and issued by the Philippine Statistics Office.

<sup>39</sup> Documented or undocumented.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* Footnote 4. Page iii.

<sup>41</sup> *Judged for More Than Her Crime, A Global Overview of Women Facing the Death Penalty*, THE CORNELL CENTER ON THE DEATH PENALTY WORLDWIDE, A Report of the Alice Project (September 2018). Page 12.