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Introduced by Senator Loren Legarda

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMMUNITIES AND THE COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, INTO THE REPORTED SMALL-SCALE MINING OPERATIONS IN THE IFUGAO RICE TERRACES**

*WHEREAS*, the Ifugao Rice Terraces have been dubbed as the “Eighth Wonder of the World” and inscribed in the World Heritage List in 1995 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);

*WHEREAS*, long before its inscription in the World Heritage List, the rice terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras, specifically the Ifugao Rice Terraces, were given due recognition in 1973 by the Philippine Government as a national landmark for its high world cultural value and as an irreplaceable treasure of the country;

*WHEREAS*, built 2000 years ago, the Ifugao Rice Terraces have been regarded as a “landscape of great beauty that expresses the harmony between humankind and the environment” which resulted from the “fruit of knowledge handed down from one generation to the next and the expression of sacred traditions and a delicate social balance”;

*WHEREAS*, the rice terrace clusters included in the World Heritage List are located in four (4) municipalities, namely, Kiangan, Hungduan, Mayoyao and Banaue;

*WHEREAS*, being “outstanding living cultural landscapes”, the Ifugao Rice Terraces are a product of the Ifugaos whose traditional practices served as a cornerstone for their conservation and preservation;

*WHEREAS*, in 2001, the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO decided to inscribe the Ifugao Rice Terraces on the List of World Heritage in Danger, asserting that, “in the absence of a systematic monitoring programme or a comprehensive management plan, it is, at present, impossible to guarantee the preservation and sustainable development of these rice terraces”;

*WHEREAS*, during the on-site consultative meeting of the Committee on Cultural Communities on the state of the Ifugao Rice Terraces held in Banaue on March 10, 2012, concerns were raised over the potential gold mining activities in the rice clusters;

**WHEREAS**, recent news reports further revealed that illegal small-scale mining activities are already taking place in Barangay Hapao in Hungduan, and Ducligan and Bangaan villages in Banaue, which host the rice terrace clusters included in the World Heritage List;

**WHEREAS**, the Provincial Government of Ifugao reported that illegal mining operations are also present in Barangay Baang, Hungduan and Halag, Aguineldo, an area outside the jurisdiction of heritage sites;

**WHEREAS**, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Provincial Mining Regulatory Board, created by virtue of Republic Act 7076 or the "People's Small-scale Mining Act of 1991" should immediately arrest the encroachment of illegal small-scale mining operations in Ifugao Rice Terraces, which further puts a threat to the already rapidly deteriorating state of the heritage site;

**WHEREAS**, it is incumbent upon Congress to determine remedial measures to ensure that the Ifugao Rice Terraces, the centuries-old heritage of our indigenous peoples, are sustainably-protected;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the Senate Committee on Cultural Communities and Committee on Environment and Natural Resources to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, into the reported small-scale mining operations in the Ifugao Rice Terraces.

Adopted,

  
**LOREN LEGARDA**  
Senator