

**NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
First Regular Session)**



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**SENATE
P.S.R. No. 145**

RECEIVED BY:

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO

RESOLUTION

DIRECTING THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY IN AID OF LEGISLATION ON THE STATUS, PURPOSES, AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIA COLLECTIVE DEFENSE TREATY AND STATE COMMITMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS PURSUANT TO THE TREATY

WHEREAS, the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty of 1954 or the "Manila Pact" created the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), a regional defense organization by representatives of Australia, France, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, United Kingdom, and United States. It was signed in Manila on 8 September 1954;

WHEREAS, Article II of the Manila Pact provides that the Parties, "separately and jointly, by means of continuous and effective self-help and mutual aid will maintain and develop their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack and to prevent and counter subversive activities directed from without against their territorial integrity and political stability";

WHEREAS, desiring to promote the ideals of peace and freedom and to uphold the principles of democracy, individual liberty, and the rule of law, with the end goal of supporting the development of all nations in the treaty area, the SEATO political

1 organs convened from time to time and were governed by the requirement of
2 unanimity;

3 WHEREAS, Pakistan withdrew from SEATO in 1972 after East Pakistan seceded
4 and became Bangladesh.¹ For its part, France gave notice that it will stop paying dues
5 to the SEATO after 30 June 1974,² ultimately suspending financial support in 1975.
6 On the other hand, French Government annually paid about \$1.7-million to SEATO.
7 France consequently stopped participating in SEATO's military activities after limiting
8 participation in civic activities since 1967;

9 WHEREAS, after the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, one of the most
10 prominent reasons for SEATO's existence purportedly disappeared and the
11 organization disbanded. The Organization held its final exercise on 20 February 1976
12 and formally ended on 30 June 1977;

13 WHEREAS, the US continues to recognize the Treaty as still in force, as can be
14 gleaned from the US Department of State's Index of Treaties. The Treaty likewise still
15 appears on the list of treaties still considered in force by New Zealand and the United
16 Kingdom, respectively. Conversely, based on Australia's Federal Register of
17 Legislation, the Treaty is no longer considered in force;

18 WHEREAS, mindful that Article X of the Treaty provides that the Treaty "shall
19 remain in force indefinitely, but any Party may cease to be a Party one year after its
20 notice of denunciation has been given to the Government of the Republic of the
21 Philippines, which shall inform the Governments of the other Parties of the deposit of
22 each notice of denunciation";

23 WHEREAS, consistent with international law, while the SEATO, a by-product of
24 the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty may have been dissolved, the main
25 Treaty can remain existent and valid;

26 WHEREAS, during the recently concluded 18th Congress, Senate Resolution No.
27 786, authored by this Representation, was filed to urge the Senate to revisit the said

¹ <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/seato>

² <https://www.nytimes.com/1973/06/10/archives/france-to-stop-paying-dues-to-seato-in-june-1974.html>

1 treaty. While committee hearings were conducted on the Resolution, the Senate body
2 has yet to adopt a Resolution for this purpose;

3 IN VIEW OF THE FOREGOING, despite the dissolution of the Organization, it is
4 important to consider the Treaty's separate existence as a possible avenue for
5 multilateral defense cooperation amid growing security threats brought about by
6 competing maritime and territorial claims in the West Philippine Sea;

7 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, as it is hereby resolved, to direct the
8 Senate Committee on Foreign Relations to conduct an inquiry in aid of legislation on
9 the status of the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty, with the end view of
10 strengthening the country's foreign relations with State Parties amid various claims
11 within the West Philippine Sea.

Adopted,



FRANCIS "TOL" N. TOLENTINO