

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 1355



Introduced by Representative HORACIO P. SUANSING, JR.

**RESOLUTION RESPECTFULLY URGING PRESIDENT RODRIGO R. DUTERTE TO
NOMINATE MIRIAM DEFENSOR SANTIAGO FOR CONFERMENT OF THE QUEZON
SERVICE CROSS IN RECOGNITION OF HER LIFELONG DEDICATION TO PUBLIC
SERVICE AND OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE BETTERMENT OF THE
NATION**

WHEREAS, Joint Resolution No. 4 S. 1946 created the Quezon Service Cross “for exemplary service to the nation in memory of the late President Manuel L. Quezon”;

WHEREAS, President Manuel A. Roxas, in urging Congress to approve the creation of the Quezon Service Cross, envisioned the award as “the highest national recognition of outstanding civilian service in the gift of the Republic”;

WHEREAS, Joint Resolution No. 4 S. 1946 states that the Quezon Service Cross is granted by the President of the Republic of the Philippines, with the concurrence by the Senate and the House Representatives, for each case of conferment;

WHEREAS, the said Resolution states that the service recognized through the conferment of the Quezon Service Cross must be in “such a manner and such a degree as to add great prestige to the Republic of the Philippines or as to contribute to the lasting benefit of its people”;

WHEREAS, Miriam Defensor Santiago willfully led a life dedicated to public service, working in the judicial, the executive and the legislative branches of government;

WHEREAS, throughout the nearly five decades that she served the public, Miriam Defensor Santiago exemplified academic, professional and moral excellence – values that she herself demanded not just from fellow public servants but also from fellow Filipinos;

WHEREAS, Miriam Defensor Santiago served as Presiding Judge of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court and eradicated the court’s backlog of cases by implementing a no-postponement policy, through which a record number of cases were dispensed;

WHEREAS, serving as Immigration Commissioner, Miriam Defensor Santiago implemented significant reforms that reduced corruption in the Immigration Commission, earning her the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Government Service “for bold and moral leadership in cleaning up a graft-ridden government agency”;

WHEREAS, Miriam Defensor Santiago, as Agrarian Reform Secretary, stopped a “conversion” scandal where landowners lobbied heavily for their agricultural lands to be reclassified as commercial, industrial or residential lands so as to circumvent or blatantly subvert the relevant laws;

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a flourish.

WHEREAS, Miriam Defensor Santiago was elected to three 6-year terms as Senator of the Republic of the Philippines, throughout which she consistently filed among the highest numbers of bills and resolutions, and authored landmark laws such as the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act; the Data Privacy Act; the Cybercrime Prevention Act; the Anti-Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance Act; the Anti-Bullying Act; An Act Restructuring the Excise Tax on Alcohol and Tobacco Products; the Fair Competition Law; the Rare Diseases Act of the Philippines; the Children's Emergency Relief and Protection Act; the Fair Election Act; the Oil Pollution Compensation Act; the Biofuels Act; the Magna Carta of Women; the Anti-torture Act; and the Philippine Act on Crimes Against International Humanitarian Law, Genocide and Other Crimes Against Humanity, among many other laws;

WHEREAS, as Foreign Relations Committee Chair in the Senate, Miriam Defensor Santiago sponsored several treaties for the benefit of the country, including the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC); the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC); the ILO Convention on Migration for Employment; the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement; the Revised Kyoto Convention; the ASEAN Charter; the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response; and the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution;

WHEREAS, Miriam Defensor Santiago's contributions to the Philippines have been recognized and have earned her various prestigious awards such as the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Government Service (1988), the Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service Award for Law (1986), the Philippine Judges Association Hall of Fame (2015), the YMCA Philippines Gold Vision Triangle Award for Government Service (1988), Girl Scouts of the Philippine Golden Jubilee Achievement Award for Public Service (1990) and the University of the Philippines Most Outstanding Alumna in Law (1988), among many others;

WHEREAS, in 2013, State Parties to the Rome Statute elected Miriam Defensor Santiago as Judge of the International Criminal Court, making her the first Filipina and the first Asian from a developing country to hold such a seat;

WHEREAS, in 2016, Miriam Defensor Santiago became a member of the International Advisory Council of the International Development Law Organization;

WHEREAS, Miriam Defensor Santiago is among the country's legal luminaries, recognized particularly as a highly esteemed expert in constitutional and international law who has earned the Philippines honor, respect and confidence from the international community;

WHEREAS, Miriam Defensor Santiago authored numerous law books, some of which have been cited by the Supreme Court in its decisions;

WHEREAS, Miriam Defensor Santiago fought hard against a rampant culture of corruption and impunity, demonstrated ironclad commitment to upholding the rule of law, and sought incessantly to elevate the professional and moral standards of public service – all in such degree and intensity that will have an impact on many generations to come;

WHEREAS, Miriam Defensor Santiago, aside from being a crusader for justice and the rule of law, was also a staunch advocate for making education, health and job opportunities readily accessible to all Filipinos;

WHEREAS, even as a young fictionist in her 20s, Miriam Defensor Santiago wrote short stories that featured intelligent, motivated and empowered women, which in turn, provided good role models for several generations of Filipinas;

WHEREAS, the Quezon Service Cross aptly recognizes the deep impact of Miriam Defensor Santiago's public service to all Filipinos, and properly honors the exemplary legacy she has left for many to inherit and emulate;

WHEREAS, a change.org petition calling for Miriam Defensor Santiago to be posthumously awarded the Quezon Service Cross has already garnered nearly 5,000 signatures as of September 24, 2017;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, as it is hereby resolved, to respectfully urge President Rodrigo R. Duterte to nominate Miriam Defensor Santiago for conferment of the Quezon Service Cross in recognition of her lifelong dedication to public service and outstanding contributions to the betterment of the nation;

RESOLVED, FURTHER, that the Senate and the House of Representatives immediately concur with the conferment of the Quezon Service Cross upon Miriam Defensor Santiago, once the nomination from the President has been received by each legislative chamber respectively;

RESOLVED, FURTHER, that copies of this Resolution be sent to the Office of the President, the Senate and the family of the late Miriam Defensor Santiago.

Adopted,


HORACIO B. SUANSING, JR.
2nd District of Sultan Kudarat