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SUPREME COURT
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Republic of the Philippines
SUPREME COURT
Manila

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES,

Petitioner,

- versus -

G.R. No. 256282

ROYALE FISHING CORPORATION, et al.,

Respondents.

X-----X

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES,

Petitioner,

- versus -

G.R. No. 256559

ROYALE FISHING CORPORATION, et al.,

Respondents.

X-----X

OCEANA PHILIPPINES INTERNATIONAL, PABLO R. ROSALES, and RONALDO P. REYES

Petitioners,

- versus -

G.R. No. 257049

ROYALE FISHING CORPORATION, BONANZA FISHING AND MARKET RESOURCES, INC. & RBL FISHING CORPORATION,

Respondents.

X-----X

For: Petition for Review on
Certiorari under Rule 45 of
the Rules of Court

COMMENT / OPPOSITION

Petitioners-Intervenors **Oceana Philippines International, Pablo R. Rosales, and Ronaldo P. Reyes**, by undersigned counsel, respectfully state:

1. On 13 September 2023, Petitioners-Intervenors received through counsel a **Request for Transfer of Settings** filed by Respondents. In said request, the Respondents plead:

“Unfortunately, Atty. Hilario Paul H. Rangunjan Jr., one of the respondents’ lawyers who appeared during the entire proceedings before the Regional Trial Court, had long set his travel abroad from September 25 to October 10, 2023.”

2. Because of one lawyer’s travel abroad, which just happens to include both the Preliminary Conference and the Oral Arguments, the Respondents ask this Honorable Court to put on hold these proceedings and to effectively delay the government’s implementation of the protection of the environment through the Fisheries Code and FAO No. 266.

3. Only the Respondent commercial fishing corporations stand to benefit from such delay.

4. Petitioners-Intervenors are filing this Comment / Opposition to place on the record its objection against this delay on the following grounds:

a. Atty. Rangunjan is only one of several lawyers who represent the respondents. Several others remain available. The respondents themselves admit it:

“Unfortunately, Atty. Hilario Paul H. Rangunjan Jr., one of the respondents’ lawyers who appeared during the entire proceedings before the Regional Trial Court, had long set his travel abroad from September 25 to October 10, 2023.”

b. There is no proof attached. Allegation is not evidence.

c. The compelling interest of the State to ensure faithful execution of its environmental laws should not be held hostage by the travel plans of one person.

5. The Petitioners-Intervenors likewise manifest that they have a pending motion for the issuance of a Status Quo Ante order against the injunctions issued by RTC Malabon Branch 170. The granting of this motion will allow the government to continue implementing FAO No. 266, pursuant to its mandates under the Constitution and under law.

PRAYER

WHEREFORE, premises considered and in interest of substantial justice and fairplay, the Petitioners-Intervenors respectfully pray for this Honorable Court to **DENY** the Respondents' Request for Transfer of Settings.

Other reliefs just and equitable under the circumstances are likewise prayed for.


Respectfully submitted.

Quezon City for the City of Manila, 18 September 2023.

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