

SENATE

P. S. RES. NO. 250

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Introduced by **Senator Win Gatchalian**

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**RESOLUTION**

**DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE SENATE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE ILLICIT TRADE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS AS WELL AS THE ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT OF GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES IN IN SUCH ILLEGAL ACTIVITY**

1       **WHEREAS**, on January 14, 2026, the Philippine National Police (PNP) – Highway  
2 Patrol Group (HPG) conducted an anti-smuggling operation which led to the arrest of  
3 seven (7) Chinese nationals and the seizure of 1,434 master cases of allegedly illegal  
4 cigarettes valued at PhP129.06 million<sup>1</sup>;

5       **WHEREAS**, the HPG identified the suspects as Chen, Ying, Jia Jia, Liping, Lin,  
6 Zhao and Luy who are now awaiting possible charges fir violation of Republic Act (R.A.)  
7 No. 11900 or the Vaporized Nicotine and Non-Nicotine Products Regulation Act, R.A. No.  
8 7394 or the Consumer Act of the Philippines, R.A. No. 10643 or the Graphic Health  
9 Warnings Law, and R.A. No. 8424 or the Tax Reform Act of 1997<sup>2</sup>;

10       **WHEREAS**, HPG Director, Brig. Gen. Hansel Marantan said that some high-ranking  
11 members of the uniformed personnel might be involved in the illegal trade of cigarettes<sup>3</sup>;

12       **WHEREAS**, HPG Director Marantan also confirmed that the seven (7) suspects  
13 were also involved in the Batangas and Malabon operations against illicit trade of  
14 cigarettes<sup>4</sup>;

15       **WHEREAS**, on December 31, 2026, a total of PhP2.6 Billion worth of allegedly  
16 smuggled tobacco products in Batangas and Malabon were discovered.<sup>5</sup> The HPG –  
17 Regional Highway Patrol Unit – National Capital Region (RHPU-NCR) discovered a PhP1.5

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<sup>1</sup> Reyes, V. (Malaya Business Insight), *P129.06M in smuggled cigarettes seized in Quezon City, Valenzuela* (January 20, 2026), available at: <https://malaya.com.ph/news/national-news/p129-06m-in-smuggled-cigarettes-seized-in-quezon-city-valenzuela/#:~:text=P129.,illegal%20cigarettes%20valued%20at%20P129.> (date last accessed: January 20, 2026).

<sup>2</sup> Inquirer, *7 Chinese nabbed for cigarette smuggling; uniformed personnel implicated* (January 20, 2026), available at: <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/2170495/7-chinese-nabbed-for-cigarette-smuggling-uniformed-men-tagged> (date last accessed: January 20, 2026).

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

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> Sadongdon, M. (Manila Bulletin), *PNP seizes P1.5B more unregistered cigarettes in Malabon* (January 1, 2026), available at: <https://mb.com.ph/2026/01/01/npn-seizes-p15b-more-unregistered-cigarettes-in-malabon> (date last accessed: January 20, 2026).

1 billion worth of allegedly smuggled tobacco products in Malabon City during their routine  
2 New Year's Eve patrol.<sup>6</sup> The PNP-HPG also discovered a P1.1 billion worth of allegedly  
3 smuggled cigarettes in Batangas City during an anti-carnapping operation following a  
4 report of stolen vehicle<sup>7</sup>;

5 **WHEREAS**, acting PNP Chief Police Lt. Gen. Jose Melencio Nartatez Jr., said that  
6 the owner of the containers, cigarettes and the cargo yard involved in the Malabon and  
7 Batangas operations could face charges for violation of R.A. No. 12022 or the Anti-  
8 Agricultural Sabotage Act<sup>8</sup>;

9 **WHEREAS**, illicit trade of tobacco products involves a chain of illegal activities  
10 from unregulated and unlicensed production, smuggling, fraudulent marketing, tax  
11 evasion, money-laundering and eventually to corruption<sup>9</sup>;

12 **WHEREAS**, clearly, the issue of illicit trade of tobacco products does not just  
13 involve the loss of revenue from unpaid taxes. More than that, it undermines the rule of  
14 law and jeopardizes public health while enriching criminal networks<sup>10</sup>;

15 **WHEREAS**, these evils brought about by illicit trade is even more alarming due to  
16 the allegations of the involvement of high-ranking uniformed personnels who are  
17 supposed to maintain national security, uphold law and order, and protect the lives and  
18 properties of the citizenry;

19 **WHEREAS**, in order to cut the chain of complex criminalities and impose  
20 sanctions to the personalities involved in the illicit trade of tobacco products, it is  
21 imperative for the government to determine and address any policy, administrative and  
22 procedural gaps in order to combat the ever growing problem on illicit trade of tobacco  
23 products;

24 **NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE**  
25 **PHILIPPINES**, to direct appropriate Senate Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of  
26 legislation, on the illicit trade of tobacco products as well as the alleged involvement of  
27 government security forces in such illegal activity.

*Adopted,*



**WIN GATCHALIAN**

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<sup>6</sup> *Id.*

<sup>7</sup> *Id.*

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> OECD (2016), *Illicit Trade: Converging Criminal Networks*, OECD Reviews of Risk Management Policies, OECD Publishing, Paris.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*