

## ***Part II of a Series Called “The ReVOTElation of Hope for Sorsogon”***

A Sorsoganon Overseas-Filipino worker (OFW) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) fought for his honor and life inside a taxicab and not within the bigger dimensions of a boxing ring. The Sorsoganon won and killed his would-be rapist. To many OFWs and the people of Sorsogon Province

, Reynaldo Cortez appears to be a bigger hero than world-acclaimed Filipino boxing champion Manny Pacquiao. But the OFW from Sorsogon was sentenced to death by a KSA court and eventually beheaded. He took it all calmly but his death is an indictment of the lack of concern for the OFWs on the part of the Philippine national-and-provincial governments.

Francis Oca, an OFW leader in Riyadh, KSA, wrote in this website on June 16, 2007, about the plight of that Sorsoganon, Reynaldo Cortez, “a welder in one of the car-care shops at Sinaya in Riyadh . . . When a Pakistani driver tried to molest him sometime in 2003, he fought back, and in the process of defending himself stabbed to death his would-be rapist.” Eventually, Mr. Cortez met a cruel fate and was beheaded in 2007. He was one of several OFWs who were meted the capital punishment in the KSA. There are more Filipino OFWs in Death Row in the KSA and other states in the Middle East.

To read Francis Oca’s article about Mr. Cortez, please go to:

[Report from Riyadh: Filipino Men Are Being Raped](#)

Written by Bobby M. Reyes

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The Philippine national government acted like a turtle in protecting the civil rights of Reynaldo Cortez during his trial and appeal by the prosecution. It did not even lobby the Office of the President of Pakistan in persuading the family of the Pakistani cab driver in forgiving Mr. Cortez and accepting instead a financial settlement (the so-called "blood money").

The provincial government of Sorsogon was actually more-impotent than the Gloria Arroyo Administration and did nothing at all to help Mr. Cortez and/or his family from Day One of his trial, appeal and eventually execution. The Sorsogon provincial government and all Sorsoganon officials never bothered to help the Cortez Family make a last visit to the condemned man before the capital punishment was implemented.

This writer has sent position papers to Filipino national leaders and policy-decision makers since 1986, starting with then President Cory Cojuangco-Aquino about the need to protect OFWs, especially Filipino woman workers. Here is one of this writer's articles about the need to protect OFWs:

[The Woman Leaders of the Philippines Must Protect their Fellow Women](#)

This writer is one of the principal architects of the ReVOTElation, which will be implemented in Sorsogon as a pilot province. The ReVOTElation wants to make the province the center of a movement to help the OFWs and the Overseas-Filipino communities in promoting and protecting their civil-and-human rights.

## **How the ReVOTElation Will Protect the OFWs' Civil Rights**

This author proposes that the Sorsogon government send its Provincial Attorney and/or the president of the Sorsogon Integrated Bar chapter – as accompanied by the accused family representative – to any foreign country where a Sorsoganon OFW and/or a member of the Sorsogon-based HMO, credit union and/or consumers' union has been accused of any serious criminal offense. The Sorsogon legal team will exhaust diplomatic and/or legal avenues to secure freedom for the said OFW and/or mitigate any sentence imposed by way of a plea bargain.

The ReVOTElation proposes also the building of an edifice solely devoted to the OFW and Overseas-Filipino affairs. The building is proposed to be named the "Reynaldo Cortez-OFW Center," which will house also the Philippine office of the American-Filipino Public-Affairs Council, as chaired by Apo Ernie Gange of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and other Overseas-Filipino organizations. The proposed center will showcase also the history and the track records of, and studies about, the OFWs and the Overseas Filipinos, if not the Filipino Diaspora.

## A Sorsoganon OFW Appears to Be a Bigger Hero than Manny Pacquiao: How the ReVOTElation Will Prote

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Then the ReVOTElation promises finally to exhaust diplomatic avenues in lobbying the KSA government to bring back the remains of Reynaldo Cortez and other OFWs who have been buried in the kingdom or other foreign countries. At least the idea is to let their family members have easy access to their final resting place.

(To be continued . . .)

***E ditor's Note:*** To read the other articles of this series, please go to:

[How the ReVOTElation Will "Reinvent" Education and Life in Sorsogon](#)

[A Sorsoganon OFW Appears to Be a Bigger Hero than Manny Pacquiao: How the ReVOTElation Will Protect OFWs and their History](#) (Part II)

[A Bigger Danger than an Eruption Lurks in Bulusan Volcano](#)

(Part III)

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