



## NEWS RELEASE

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# POEA not sending civilian fighters to Iraq, Afghanistan

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) does not process documents of Filipinos hired as “civilian fighting force” for deployment to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Administrator Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz said the July 2004 ban on deployment of Filipino workers to Iraq has not been lifted and the reported deployment of security forces to Iraq and Afghanistan did not pass the documentation system of the government.

Previous reports said two American companies, Blackwater USA and Triple Canopy, have been very active in the recruitment and deployment of former soldiers and policemen to work as “mercenaries” to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Baldoz said prior to the ban, the government allowed the recruitment of Filipino workers for Iraq in the latter part of 2003 but only for deployment to campsites which were found safe from attacks from Iraqi rebels and terrorists. Most of the deployed workers were assigned to do construction, maintenance, housekeeping, and catering jobs inside American camps.

The Philippine government allowed the deployment of Filipinos to Afghanistan but was limited to professionals working in projects controlled by the United Nations (UN). POEA processed the contracts of these workers only after endorsement and clearance from the Department of Foreign Affairs.

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