

RUSSIA STOPS ISSUANCE OF WORK PERMITS TO MIGRANT WORKERS EMPLOYED BY MULTINATIONALS AND FOREIGN COMPANIES

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The Philippine Embassy in Moscow has reported that the Federal Migration Service (FMS) of the Russian Federation has stopped issuing work permits to foreign workers of representative and branch offices of foreign companies. It essentially bars multi-national and foreign companies that are not registered as "legal entities" from receiving the permits. This policy modifies the 2002 Law on Foreign Workers which requires foreigners to apply for permits which last for one year. It is apparently an attempt to stem the flow of illegal workers from the former Soviet Republics.

This development is expected to affect expatriate employees of foreign businesses with local offices in Russia. The companies whose foreign workers lack work permits face fines of 5,000 to 20,000 rubles per employee, while the employee can also be fined up to 5,000 rubles. Joint venture companies are not subject to the change in policy of the FMS.

Recruitment agencies sending Filipino workers to Russia, Philippine companies with plans to set-up branch offices in Russia, and Filipino workers are advised to take note of this policy in their plans to enter Russia.

For the information and guidance of all concerned.

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