

OCA CIRCULAR NO. 151-2010, October 26, 2010

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TO:

ALL JUDGES OF THE REGIONAL TRIAL COURTS, METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURTS, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS IN CITIES, MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURTS AND MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURTS

SUBJECT:

SPEEDY DISPOSITION OF CASES FOR VIOLATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 19208 (THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS ACT OF 2003) OR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS CASES

R.A. 9208 was enacted in fulfillment of our international obligation to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially of women and Children.

Section 16, Article III of the 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates that "All persons shall have the right to a speedy disposition of their cases [before all judicial, quasi-judicial, or administrative bodies."

Accordingly, Judges are directed to expedite the disposition of cases involving violation of R.A. No. 9208.

Where practicable and unless special circumstance require; otherwise, cases involving violation of R.A. No. 9208 shall be heard contiguously: with hearing dates spaced not more than two weeks apart. Unnecessary delay should be avoided, strictly taking into consideration the Speedy Trial Act and SC Circular NO. 38-98 dated 11 August 1998.

In this regard, you are all directed to submit to the Statistical Reports Division, Court Management Office, Office of the Court Administrator: (a) a list of cases involving trafficking in persons and their status and (b) copies of orders/decisions related thereto. More importantly, pending human trafficking cases; should be given priority and decided with dispatch, while newly-raffled cases should be heard and decided within 180 days from arraignment of the accused.

To monitor compliance therewith and the progress of human trafficking cases you are all required to submit a report on the matter on or before 30 November 2010.

For strict compliance.

26 October 2010.

(SGD.)JOSE MIDAS P. MARQUEZ
Court Administrator

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