

RESTRUCTURING THE FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE PHILIPPINES

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 523, February 11, 1979

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WHEREAS, the emerging trend in world diplomacy is the accreditation of men and women who are not only well-trained in the art and amenities of the foreign service but who also possess a development orientation that is essential in today's international relationships;

WHEREAS, the Philippine foreign service cannot afford to ignore this trend considering the critical need to establish strong and effective linkages throughout the world, whether economically, politically, socially or culturally;

WHEREAS, in keeping with such trend, changes have been made in the selection of men for the foreign service such that younger and more dynamic personnel are being recruited to complement the existing core of career diplomats, thus, providing a desirable balance between innovative dynamism and responsible mature judgment; and

WHEREAS, because of the new developments in world diplomacy and the demands of our own efforts to develop our country, there is a need for more drastic measures to revamp our foreign service to encompass a comprehensive assessment of its human resource capabilities to make it more sensitive to the national interest, particularly the need to promote and expand foreign trade, to attract foreign tourists and investments, and to protect and advance the interests of Filipino migrant workers, among others;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order and direct that:

SECTION 1. Restructuring of Foreign Service; Definition of Goals and Objectives of Diplomatic Posts. – The Minister of Foreign Affairs shall immediately undertake a restructuring of the Ministry and the Foreign Service to provide a more effective support to the goals and programs for national development of the President.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs shall further provide each diplomatic mission in the Philippine Foreign Service with a set of clearly defined goals and objectives, particularly, the promotion and expansion of Philippine exports, the attraction of foreign tourists to visit the Philippines, the protection and advancement of the interests of Filipino migrant workers within the jurisdiction of the mission. He shall review said goals and objectives annually and make such adjustments as may be necessary, based on the performance of each diplomatic mission for the past year and the recommendation of the Chief of Mission, within the framework of the national economic and development plans as drawn up by the National Economic and Development Authority and approved by the President. The diplomatic missions shall be furnished copies of the revised goals and objectives for implementation.

A copy of the approved goals and programs shall be submitted to me for my information.

SEC. 2. Recruitment, Selection, Promotion, Assignment and Reassignment of Foreign Service Personnel. – To insure effective and efficient attainment of these goals and objectives, the Minister of Foreign Affairs shall immediately promulgate clearly defined rules and regulations on personnel management in the Foreign Service,

including recruitment, selection, promotion, assignment and reassignment of personnel. He shall see to it that only personnel who meet the standards of education, experience, aptitude and potential, previously determined to be indispensable for the achievement of such goals and objectives, are recruited into the foreign service and properly assigned to the Home Office and the different foreign service establishments. Only those officers whose training and experience are relevant to a particular post shall be assigned to such post. Conscious and concerted efforts must be exerted to integrate into the service those persons who are trained in diplomacy, international law, foreign trade, tourism, investments, cultural exchanges, foreign languages, negotiations, and international relations.

SEC. 3. Lateral Integration of Personnel. – Whenever necessary and to achieve a balanced growth of specialists and generalists in the career foreign service, personnel from other ministries and agencies of the government who are highly trained and professionally experienced or who have had previous experience in the foreign service shall be recruited to appropriate ranks of Foreign Service Officer and Counselor.

SEC. 4. Classification of Diplomatic Establishments. – The Diplomatic establishments shall be classified into Class I Missions (or areas of greater importance), and Class II Missions (or areas of lesser importance) on the basis of the following criteria; (1) economic trade interests; (2) number of Filipino resident nationals; (3) geopolitical and military significance of the post; (4) historical-cultural considerations; and (5) prestige factors, such as the existence of international or regional organizations in the post.

SEC. 5. Classification of Consular Establishments. – Consular establishments shall likewise be classified into Class I Consulates General and Class II Consulates General on the basis of volume of trade and trade potential and the number of Filipino resident nationals in the post.

SEC. 6. Flexibility in Staffing. – Flexibility shall be observed in the staffing of Foreign Missions and Consulates General. The actual number of personnel shall be arrived at considering the extent or volume of work needed in the post in relation to the criteria used as basis for the classification of diplomatic missions and consulates.

SEC. 7. Appointment of Attaches. – Except in extraordinary cases, each foreign service established shall have only military, labor, revenue, tourism, information and commercial attaches. The authority to appoint attaches shall be vested in the head of the agency maintaining the attache service. However, such head shall consult with the Minister of Foreign Affairs as to the actual need for opening particular types of attache services and as to the places where these services shall be made available.

SEC. 8. Number of Attaches. – A ministry or agency shall have only one attache accredited to it by the receiving government. In the event of the actual need for more than one attache to be determined by the ministry or agency in consultation with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the succeeding attache shall be accredited as assistant attache.

SEC. 9. Relationship of Chiefs of Missions and Attaches. – The supremacy of the Chief of Mission for the conduct of foreign relations at the post is established. All attaches shall be under the administrative supervision and control of the Chief of Mission where they are assigned. They shall compulsorily submit their reports to their agency through the Chief of Missions and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, except when national security requires otherwise. They shall clear with the Chief of Mission all their public pronouncements at the diplomatic post and all documents and materials they send through the diplomatic pouch. The Chief of Mission shall have the authority to discipline attaches within his Mission including the authority to have them recalled, if necessary.

SEC. 10. Uniform Rules for Attache Services. – A uniform set of rules and regulations shall govern attache services. For this purpose, there is created an Inter-Ministerial Committee to draft such rules and regulations. The Committee shall be composed to Deputy Ministers or equivalent officials of the Ministry of agencies of the government maintaining attaches abroad with the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Committee

Chairman.

SEC. 11. Promotion of Foreign Service Officers; Creation of Promotion Board. – The promotion of Foreign Service Officers, particularly that involving promotion to the positions of Foreign Service Counselor and Chief of Mission, shall be based upon performance, education and training and potential. No Foreign Service Officer shall be promoted unless he meets the criteria required for the position which shall be determined by a Promotion Board which shall be established by the Ministry with the following composition:

- (1) one member designated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs;
- (2) one member designated by the Chairman of the Civil Service Commission;
- (3) one member designated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs from among those nominated by the National Economic and Development Authority;
- (4) one member designated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs from among those nominated by the Foreign Service Association of the Philippines;
- (5) one member designated by the Minister of Foreign Affairs from among those nominated by academic institutions.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs shall designate the Chairman of the Board from among the above members.

SEC. 12. Promotion of Other Personnel. – Promotions from the position of FSSE I to that of FSSO III shall be by competitive examinations and no officer or employee may be promoted to FSSO III unless he shall have qualified in such examination, irrespective of civil service eligibility.

SEC. 13. Assignment of Personnel to Foreign Service Posts. – Proposals for assignment in foreign service posts shall take into consideration the particular area of concern that the Philippine government seeks to promote in said country so that only personnel qualified and training in this concern shall be assigned thereto. Such proposals shall be the subject of joint consultation between the Home Office and the Chief of Mission. No officer or employee shall refuse an assignment nor seek revocation or change of assignment.

SEC. 14. Rotation of Foreign Service Personnel. – There shall be a periodic and systematic rotation of FSO's and FSSO's to insure dynamic and sustained implementation of national economic development goals and programs. Accordingly, no FSO or FSSO shall be assigned to a diplomatic or consular post for less than 2 years nor more than 6 years, and no position in the foreign service shall be left vacant for more than 60 days. Furthermore, to insure the efficient assignment of qualified personnel, the Minister of Foreign Affairs shall periodically submit the names and personal histories of newly recruited FSO, FSSO, FSSE, to the appropriate government agencies for clearance. Officers and employees previously cleared by such agencies shall be immediately available for foreign assignment without need for a new clearance unless the agency concerned indicates the specific grounds for non-implementation of the assignment order within 30 days after it has been furnished copies thereof.

SEC. 15. Funding Support. – In order to implement the rotation program effectively, the Ministry of the Budget is hereby directed to consider proposals for increase in the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to fund the regular rotation of personnel.

SEC. 16. Inspection or Audit. – There is hereby installed a system of inspection to enable the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs to assess at first hand the performance of the different missions and consulates and at the same time establish closer ties with the foreign service establishments. The inspection shall be carried out or conducted by the Minister of Foreign Affairs or when the President considers it necessary, he may designate the Minister of the Budget, Chairman of the Presidential Reorganization Commission, Chairman of the Civil Service

Commission or any other person to conduct the inspection or audit.

SEC. 17. Implementing Rules and Regulations. – The Minister of Foreign Affairs shall promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Order.

SEC. 18. Repealing Clause. – All orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Executive Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 19. Effectivity. – This Order shall take effect immediately.

DONE in the City of Manila, this 11th day of February, in the year of Our Lord, nineteen hundred and seventy-nine.

(SGD.) FERDINAND E. MARCOS

President of the Philippines

By the President:

(SGD.) JACOBO C. CLAVE

Presidential Executive Assistant

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