

CREATING THE MINISTRY OF MUSLIM AFFAIRS

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 697, May 28, 1981

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WHEREAS, it is mandated by the Constitution that the State shall consider the customs, traditions, beliefs and interests of national cultural communities in the formulation and implementation of state policies;

WHEREAS, it is recognized that a significant aspect of Philippine culture is Islamic in character and influence and that Philippine history cannot be appreciated in its fullest dimensions without an examination of its past and present relations with the Islamic world, including its traditions, customs, and institutions;

WHEREAS, the complete and full integration of Muslim Filipinos into the body politic will further strengthen and enrich our aspirations for national unity and identity without sacrificing their individual beliefs, culture, traditions and institutions;

WHEREAS, the centuries-old crises in Muslim areas which marked various stages of Philippine history have brought about international and national concern as well as the painful awareness of the inadequacies of the past; and have underscored the crucial need to take measures that would result in the more active participation of Muslim Filipino in the mainstream of national life and nation building; and

WHEREAS, under Presidential Decree No. 1416, the President is empowered to undertake such organizational and related improvements as may be appropriate in the light of changing circumstances and new developments.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution and the authority vested in me by Presidential Decree No. 1416, do hereby order and ordain:

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state to ensure the integration of Muslim Filipinos into the mainstream of Filipino society with due regard to their beliefs, customs, traditions, and institutions; and to further enhance their contribution to national goals and aspirations as active participants in nation building equal in stature, dignity and opportunity with all other citizens.

SEC. 2. Creation. – There is hereby created a Ministry of Muslim Affairs, hereinafter referred to as the Ministry, to implement the policy of the state concerning Muslim Filipinos. It shall be headed by a Minister who shall be assisted by a Deputy Minister.

SEC. 3. Powers and Functions. – The Ministry shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. Assist and, when so authorized, represent the President on matters concerning Muslim Affairs;
- b. Provide advice and assistance to the President in formulation, coordination, and implementation of policies affecting Muslim Affairs;
- c. Serve as the link between the President and agencies and entities, both internal and external, that are involved in the administration or pursuit of operations, activities and projects involving Muslim Affairs;
- d. Coordinate for the President all development programs on Muslim matters being implemented by various

government agencies and entities;

e. Recommend to the President development programs and projects on Muslim matters, including their implementation schemes;

f. Implement whenever authorized by the President development projects for the advancement of Muslim communities;

g. Monitor for the President all development programs being implemented, whether public or private, concerning Muslim affairs as well as recommend such actions as may be necessary for their efficient and effective implementation;

h. As the primary government entity through which Muslim communities can seek government as well as private assistance and serve as the instrumentality through which assistance from both the government and the private sector may be extended to the Muslim Communities. For this purpose, the Ministry is hereby authorized to give grants-in-aid out of its appropriations or other funds from whatever source to cooperating government or private entities for such programs or projects geared to the development of Muslim communities;

i. Enter, subject to existing policies and guidelines, into such contracts, agreements or arrangements, with government or private agencies as may be necessary to attain the objectives of the Ministry;

j. Accept grants, donations, gifts, funds and/or property for the benefit of Muslim communities in whatever form and from whatever source, and administer the same in accordance with the terms thereof, or in the absence of any condition, to administer the same in such manner consistent with the interests of Muslim communities;

k. Provide such assistance and services including legal assistance of whatever nature, medical aid, relief and any and all other forms of help as may be necessary for the socio-economic uplift of Muslim communities;

l. Design, implement and maintain settlements and development projects as may be authorized by the President for Muslim Filipinos consistent with the declared policy of the State;

m. Undertake studies, establish and maintain research centers and museums on Muslim culture and institutions as may be necessary for policy formulation and program implementation as well as for the purpose of preserving and promoting their rich historical legacy;

n. Undertake, such action projects as may be necessary to achieve the objectives of this Executive Order;

o. Initiate, subject to the approval of the President, eminent domain proceedings in pursuance of the aims and purposes of this Executive Order;

p. Contract loans or financial obligations, subject to the approval of the President, to implement the provisions of this Executive Order from any Government financial institutions for which purpose they are hereby authorized to grant such loans;

q. Acquire, lease or own such property or assets in whatever form, as may be necessary; and to sell or otherwise dispose of the same;

r. Conduct inspection or surveys and issue such certifications as may be necessary, prior to the grant of any license, lease or permits for whatever purpose or nature including the exploitation of natural resources affecting Muslim interests or their communities or areas occupied by them; and in case of conflicts, recommend to the President such action as may be appropriate or necessary under the circumstances;

s. Certify whenever necessary, membership in Manila communities for purpose of establishing qualifications for

appointments in government and for other benefits as provided by law;

t. Serve as the custodian or administrator of such lands or areas, and other properties or forms of assets as the President may reserve for the benefit of Muslim Filipinos; and

u. Perform such other related functions as may be directed by the President or assigned by law.

SEC. 4. Organization of the Ministry. – The organization of the Ministry shall consist of the Office of the Minister and its various staff units, the Bureau of Muslim Cultural Affairs, the Bureau of Muslim Economic Affairs, and such field offices as may be determined by the Ministry.

a. Staff Units. – The Staff units directly under the Office of the Minister shall include the Planning Service, Financial and Management Service and Administrative Service. The Planning Service shall be responsible for providing the Ministry with economical, efficient, and effective services relating to planning, programming, and project development. The Financial and Management Service shall be responsible for providing the Ministry with staff advice and assistance on budgetary, financial, and management improvement matters. The Administrative Service shall be responsible for providing the Ministry with staff advice and assistance on budgetary, financial, and management improvement matters. The Administrative Service shall be responsible for providing the Ministry with economical, efficient and effective services relating to personnel, legal matters, information, records, supplies, equipment, collection, disbursements, security and custodial work.

b. The Bureau of Muslim Cultural Affairs. – The Bureau shall be primarily responsible for the development, promotion and enhancement of Muslim culture and institutions. For this purpose, it shall undertake research and studies for purposes of policy formulation and program implementation, as well as establish as may be necessary, and maintain research centers and museums on Muslim culture and institutions. The Bureau shall be headed by a Bureau Director.

c. The Bureau of Muslim Economic Affairs. – The Bureau shall be primarily responsible for providing staff assistance to the Minister on all matters relative to the promotion of the economic development of the Muslim communities; and when authorized by the Minister, to directly implement development projects and/or provide and coordinate relief assistance of whatever nature to Muslim communities. The Bureau shall be headed by a Bureau Director.

d. Field Offices. – the Ministry shall establish such number of field offices as may be necessary for the economical, efficient and effective implementation of its plans, programs, and projects. The field offices may have such sub-offices as may be necessary.

e. Attached Agency. – The Philippine Pilgrimage Authority created pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 1302 is hereby attached to the Ministry for purposes of policy and program, coordination. The governing board of the Authority is hereby reconstituted to include the Minister of Muslim Affairs or his representative as member thereof, without prejudice to the President's designating the Minister as chairman.

SEC. 5. Relationships with other Government Agencies. – The Ministry shall submit for the approval of the President, a system for the coordination of its activities with the Southern Philippines Development Administration, the Lupong Tagapagpaganap ng Pook for Regions IX and XII and with other Ministries or agencies of the government concerning Muslim Affairs.

There is established an advisory council, attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which shall be responsible for providing advice and recommendation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the formulation of policies and programs concerning relations with Islamic countries. The council shall be composed of the Minister of Muslim

Affairs, as chairman, and two senior officials, at least one of which shall be a Deputy Minister, of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as members.

SEC. 6. Abolition of the Office of the Commissioner for Islamic Affairs. – The Office of the Commissioner for Islamic Affairs created pursuant to Executive Order No. 549 is hereby abolished and its functions, records, property, appropriations, assets and liabilities, and such personnel as may be necessary are transferred to the Ministry.

SEC. 7. Abolition of the Agency for the Development and Welfare of Muslim in the Philippines. – The Agency for the Development and Welfare of Muslims in the Philippines created pursuant to Executive Order No. 474, is hereby abolished and its functions, records, property, appropriations, assets and liabilities, and such personnel as may be necessary are transferred to the Ministry.

SEC. 8. The Minister shall recommend to the President for approval such supportive administrative arrangements as would enable it to best carry out its functions, exercise its powers and achieve its objectives. It may have such consultants and other experts as may be needed, who may be drawn from the private sector by appointment or on contractual basis or from government agencies or instrumentalities on detail or through other arrangements, whose compensation, allowances or honoraria shall be in accordance with such schedules as may be approved by the President.

SEC. 9. Appropriations. – The Ministry shall receive an annual lump-sum appropriation in such amounts as may be sufficient to finance its operations and its programs, projects and activities.

SEC. 10. Repeal of Inconsistent Laws. – All laws, orders, proclamations, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Executive Order, are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 11. Separability Clause. – Any portion or provision of this Executive Order that may be declared unconstitutional shall not have the effect of nullifying the other provisions thereof: Provided, That such remaining portions can still stand and be given effect in their entirety to accomplish the objectives of this Executive Order.

SEC. 12. Effectivity. – This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

DONE in the City of Manila, this 28th day of May in the year of Our Lord, Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-One.

(SGD.) FERDINAND E. MARCOS
President of the Philippines

By the President:

(SGD.) JUAN C. TUVERA
Presidential Executive Assistant

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