AMENDING SECTIONS 3, 4 AND 5 OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 490, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “ESTABLISHING THE PRINCIPAL OFFICE IN MANILA OF THE MANILA ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL OFFICE AND TRANSFERR...

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WHEREAS, on January 16, 1984, the MECO (formerly ASECTAI), including its offices in Taiwan, was placed under the Office of the President pursuant to Executive Order No. 931;

WHEREAS, on June 26, 1998, supervision over the principal office in Manila of the MECO and its branch offices in Taiwan was transferred from the Office of the President to the Department of Foreign Affairs pursuant to Executive Order No. 490;

WHEREAS, owing to the Government's commitment to a One-China policy, the responsibilities entrusted to MECO of fostering people-to-people relations and facilitating unofficial contacts between the Philippines and Taiwan are too important and too sensitive duties that supervision and control over the principal office in Manila and its branch offices in Taiwan should remain under the Office of the President.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. Sections 3, 4 and 5 of Executive Order No. 490, otherwise known as "Establishing the Principal Office in Manila of the Manila Economic and Cultural Office and Transferring the Supervision over the Operations and Activities to the Department of Foreign Affairs," are hereby amended to read as follows:

> "SECTION 3."
>
> "6. The issuance of visas, passports and authentication of documents as enumerated in sub-sections 1, 2 and 3 shall be consistent with the One-China policy of the Philippine government. To ensure its effective implementation, personnel of the Department of Foreign Affairs who are on official leave can be assigned to the MECO."
>
> "SEC. 4. Operational supervision and control. Supervision and control over the principal office in Manila of the MECO and its branch offices in Taiwan is hereby placed under the Office of the President.” The MECO shall report directly to the Office of the Executive Secretary which shall exercise direct control and supervision over the MECO. To ensure effective control and coordination for and with the Office of the President, the Senior Deputy Executive Secretary shall sit in the MECO Board as Director and shall exercise direct supervision over the MECO for the Office of the President."
>
> "SEC. 5. Headquarters site. To maintain its private character and unofficial status, the principal office in Manila of the MECO shall be located outside the premises of any government offices."

SECTION 2. All laws, orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with this Executive Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 3. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

Adopted: 17 July 1998

(SGD.) JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA
Pangulo ng Republika ng Pilipinas

By the President:

(SGD.) RONALDO B. ZAMORA
Executive Secretary

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