

CREATING THE OFFICE OF MUSLIM AFFAIRS AND CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 969, June 30, 1984

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WHEREAS, under the New Republic, national development shall be pursued with renewed dedication and greater determination through a more efficient, effective and economical government;

WHEREAS, the circumstances of the times demand a more vigorous pursuit of the Constitutional mandate that the State shall consider the customs, traditions, beliefs and interests of national cultural communities in the formulation and implementation of state policies;

WHEREAS, in furtherance of the Constitutional mandate, it is desirable to combine those agencies engaged in allied and complementary operations and activities relative to the development of the cultural communities in order to achieve better coordination, increased effectiveness, and unanimity of purpose in terms of ultimate results; and

WHEREAS, under Presidential Decree No. 1416 as amended, 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 as amended, do hereby order and ordain:

SECTION 1. It is the policy of the State to ensure the integration of national cultural communities into the mainstream of Filipino society with due regard for 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.

SECTION 2. There is hereby created an Office of Muslim Affairs and Cultural Communities, hereinafter referred to as the Office, through the merger of the Office of Muslim Affairs established pursuant to Executive Orders Nos. 697 and 711, and the Office of the Presidential Assistant on National Minorities referred to in presidential Decree No. 1414. Such merger shall include applicable functions, appropriations, records, property and equipment, and such personnel as may be necessary. The Office shall be directly under the President of the Philippines.

SECTION 3. The Office shall be primarily responsible for the development and implementation of the appropriate programs and projects in furtherance of the provisions of Section 11, Article XV of the Constitution as well as of Section 1 of this Executive Order.

SECTION 4. The Office shall have the following powers and functions:

(1) Provide advice and assistance to the President in the formulation, coordination, implementation, and monitoring of policies, development programs and projects affecting cultural communities; when so authorized,

represent the President on matters concerning cultural communities; serve as the link between the President and those agencies, both internal and external, involved in such programs and projects; and recommend such actions as may be necessary for their efficient and effective implementation;

(2) Undertake, when so authorized by the President, development programs and projects for the advancement of cultural communities, including designing, implementing and maintaining settlements for Filipinos belonging to cultural communities, bearing in mind the avoidance of unnecessary overlapping or duplication of work with other agencies;

(3) Act as the primary government entity through which cultural communities can seek government assistance; and serve as the instrumentality through which such assistance may be extended to cultural communities. For this purpose, the Office 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 cultural communities, and provide services including legal assistance, medical aid relief, and other forms of help as may be necessary for the socio-economic uplift of cultural communities;

(4) 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 Office, including the contracting of loans, subject to the approval of the President, to implement the provisions of this Executive Order from government financial institutions for which purpose they are hereby authorized to grant such loans;

(5) Accept grants, donations, gifts, funds and/or property for the benefit of cultural 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 cultural communities;

(6) Undertake studies, establish and maintain ethnographic research centers and museums on the culture and institutions of cultural communities as may be necessary for policy formulation and program implementation as well as for the purpose of preserving their historical legacy, including preserving artifacts and other evidences of their lifeways;

(7) Certify, whenever necessary, membership in cultural communities for purposes of establishing qualifications for appointments in government and for other benefits as provided by law;

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

(9) Acquire, lease or own such property or assets in* whatever form, as may be necessary, and to sell or otherwise dispose of the same; and 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 Filipinos belonging to cultural communities;

(10) Conduct inspection or surveys, including those that may be undertaken jointly with other agencies, and issue such certifications as may be necessary, prior to the grant of any license, lease or permit for whatever purpose, including the exploitation of natural resources, affecting the interests of cultural communities or areas occupied by them; and in case of conflicts, recommend to the President such action as may be appropriate under the circumstances; and

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

SECTION 5. The authority and responsibility for the exercise of the powers and the discharge of the functions of the Office shall be vested in the Director General who shall be appointed by the President. He shall be assisted by such Deputy Directors General as may be appointed by the President. The Director General is authorize to

determine and assign the respective functional areas of responsibility of the Deputy Directors General, should there be more than one; provided, that such delineation of responsibility shall cover the substantive functions and operations of the Office; and provided, further, that there shall be no Deputy Director General for Administration and that the assignment of administrative responsibilities to any Deputy Director General shall be in addition to his substantive responsibilities.

SECTION 6. The Office of the Director General, the Administrative Service, the Financial and Management Service, and the Planning Service shall comprise the Office proper. The Deputy Director(s) General shall form part of the Office of the Director General. The Services shall perform the standard functions and duties assigned to them under Part II of Presidential Decree No. 1 as amended, otherwise known as the Integrated Reorganization Plan.

SECTION 7. There is hereby created a Bureau of Muslim Affairs, through the merger of the Bureau of Muslim Cultural Affairs and the Bureau of Muslim Economic Affairs of the former Office of Muslim Affairs.

SECTION 8. There is hereby created a Bureau of National Minorities which, among others, shall assume the functions of the former Office of the Presidential Assistant on National Minorities (PANAMIN). For purposes of this Executive Order, the term "national minorities" shall apply to non-Muslim hill tribe cultural minorities throughout the Philippines, including those referred to under Presidential Decree No. 719, and such other ethno-linguistic groups as may subsequently be approved by the President upon recommendation of the Office. The Office shall submit to the President a list of the various national minorities presently covered, including the major-ethno-linguistic characteristics, approximate population, and geographical location of each group.

SECTION 9. The Office of the Director General shall exercise supervision and control over the Bureau of Muslim Affairs and the Bureau of National Minorities.

SECTION 10. The Philippine Pilgrimage Authority shall be under the administrative supervision of the Office.

SECTION 11. The Director General of the Office shall assume the position of Chairman or member, as appropriate, of all boards and other bodies previously held in an ex-officio capacity by either the Director General of the former Office of Muslim Affairs or the former Presidential Assistant on National Minorities.

SECTION 12. The Office shall have such field offices as may be necessary under the supervision and control of the Office of the Director General, which need not conform to the standard decentralization pattern provided for under Part II of the Integrated Reorganization Plan as amended. The field offices shall be responsible for the implementation of the programs and operations of the Office in the field. The establishment of additional field offices other than those already existing at the time of approval of this Executive Order shall be subject to the approval of the President.

SECTION 13. All existing valid contracts, agreements, and other obligations entered into or incurred by the former Office of Muslim Affairs and the former Presidential Assistant on National Minorities shall continue in force and shall be honored by the new Office, but may be subject to review and subsequent appropriate action.

SECTION 14. The Director General is hereby authorized to issue such orders, rules and regulations as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Executive Order; provided, that approval of the Office of Budget and Management is obtained relative to the staffing pattern of the new Office established by the merger of the two existing Offices including appropriate salary rates, the organizational structure at divisional and lower levels, and the realignment of existing appropriations. The Director General may appoint qualified personnel of the merged Offices to appropriate positions in the approved staffing pattern of the new Office, and those not so appointed are deemed laid off.

The Director General shall effect the implementation of this Executive Order, particularly with respect to personnel actions required to be taken, within six months from the issuance of this Executive Order.

SECTION 15. All Presidential appointees of the merged Offices including the respective bureaus, offices and units which are under their supervision and control are laid off, unless otherwise reappointed by the President; provided, that those who are Career Executive Service Officers shall be reappointed or reassigned by the President upon the recommendation of the Director General to appropriate positions in the reconstituted Office or assigned to the Career Executive Service Board who shall endeavor to find appropriate placement for them in other ministries or agencies; provided, further, that those Career Executive Service Officers who have been assigned to the Career Executive Service Board shall continue to receive their salaries from any available and applicable funds; and provided, finally, that those who are not placed in appropriate positions within six months after their assignment to the Career Executive Service Board shall be similarly laid off.

SECTION 16. All those who are laid off under the provisions of this Executive Order shall be entitled to all benefits and gratuities provided for under existing laws.

SECTION 17. All laws, decrees, orders, proclamations, rules, regulations or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Executive Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 18. 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.

SECTION 19. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Manila, this 30th day of June, in the Year of Our Lord, Nineteen Hundred and Eighty-Four

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

By the President:

(SGD.) JUAN C. TUVERA
Presidential Executive Assistant

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