

CREATING THE PHILIPPINES ISLAMIC CENTER IN JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA

PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1782, January 15, 1981

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WHEREAS, it is the policy and objective of the Philippine Government to maintain friendly and mutually beneficial relations with all countries;

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to strengthen our political and economic ties with the Islamic countries of the Middle East in view of the importance of these ties to our internal stability and economic development;

WHEREAS, a strong and coordinated diplomatic presence in the region is imperative to the achievement of the objective;

WHEREAS, Presidential Decree No. 487, promulgated on 19th June 1974, provides for the creation of the Philippine Centers abroad for the purpose of, among other things, promoting and propagating Philippine culture, encouraging foreign market for Philippine products, providing efficient and comprehensive public service in the country and abroad, and in general enhancing the image of the Philippines;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby decree and order as follows:

SECTION 1. There shall be created a Philippine Islamic Center in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, hereinafter called "The Center" which shall;

- house within its premises all the regional offices and agencies of the Philippine government in the Middle East as well as those accredited to the Saudi Arabian Government only;
- contain an exhibition area on the Philippines in general and southern Philippines in particular, including exhibits of Moslem art, culture and other informational materials on the land and people of southern Philippines;
- contain a prayer room for Filipino Moslems and such other facilities and equipment as may be necessary for rendering assistance to Filipino residents and visitors to Saudi Arabia, both Moslems and non-Moslem alike; and
- house a Philippine Trade Center which shall be treated in detail in Sections 7 and 8 of this Decree.

SECTION 2. There shall be incorporated a Philippine Islamic Center Board, hereafter called "The Board", which shall in behalf of the Republic of the Philippines, acquire by lease or purchase a building or buildings, as well as equipment, which may be necessary in the performance of its functions and achievement of the goals of the Center.

SECTION 3. The Board shall have the following composition and functions:

- Composition –
- Chairman – The Chief of Mission to Saudi Arabia;

- Vice-Chairman – The Deputy of Mission or next ranking officer of the Philippine Embassy in Jeddah;
 - Three other members of the Board, who shall serve for a term of one year, elected by heads of offices/agencies of the Philippine Government located in Saudi Arabia annually and from among themselves; however, final approval of their appointment to the Board rests with the Chairman of the Board whose decision on this matter shall only be appealable to the Office of the President; and
 - The Philippine Islamic Center Manager who shall also act as the Secretary of the Board.
- Functions –
- The Board shall be responsible to the President of the Philippines for the operation, maintenance, and management of the Center in accordance with the provisions of this Decree and shall for this purpose meet at least once a year to prepare and submit to the President through the Minister of Foreign Affairs, an annual report of the activities of the Center not later than the 31st of December of each year.
 - The Board shall formulate and implement programs it deem appropriate to carry out the functions of the Center as provided for in Section I under the policy guidance of the Minister of Foreign Affairs;
 - The Board shall approve lease contracts for the rentals stipulated in Section 5;
 - The Board shall have the power to appoint consultants, as it may deem necessary, who shall be entitled to allowances and travel expenses at rates determined by the Board;
 - The Board shall appoint a Philippine Islamic Center Manager who shall be responsible to the Board for the effective and prompt implementation of its policies and decisions and whose emoluments shall be determined by the Board taking into consideration local rates and the income of the Center;
 - The Board shall have such other functions consistent with the objectives of this Decree

SECTION 4. There is hereby appropriated, out of any fund in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated, the sum of Eight million pesos for the initial operation of the Center and annually thereafter, the sum of four million pesos for the maintenance and operation of the Center. Additional appropriations shall be authorized as the need arises.

SECTION 5. All Philippine Government agencies or offices and private firms using the Center, except the Philippine Embassy for the first three years of the operations of the Center, shall pay rent to the Center, the rate of which shall be based primarily on the prevailing monthly or annual rate per square foot in other buildings with comparable facilities within a two block radius of the Center.

SECTION 6. The Center shall have a trade, tourism, and investment Center, called the Philippine Trade Center, which shall serve as the focal point for trade, tourism and investment promotion in the Middle East. The Trading Center shall be under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Trade and shall be operated under guidelines issued by the Minister of Trade. The Trade Center shall have a trade information library; a restaurant; an auditorium; offices for rental to Filipino businessman; a storage room; and such other areas as may be necessary or proper to be decided by the Ministry of Trade.

SECTION 7. The Ministry of Trade, with the assistance of other government agencies concerned, shall be the coordinating and clearing house of support activities for the Trade Center. For this purpose, there is hereby appropriated annually out of any fund in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated the sum of two million pesos for the maintenance and operation of the Trading Center.

SECTION 8. The Philippine Islamic Center in Jeddah shall be exempted from the applicability of any provision or

provisions of existing laws or regulations which are inconsistent with this Decree.

Done in the City of Manila, this 15th day of January, 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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