

# BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 79

## AN ACT CREATING THE COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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*Be it enacted by the Batasang Pambansa in session assembled:*

**Section 1. *Creation and Composition.***- There is hereby created a Commission on Filipinos Overseas, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, under the Office of the President.

The Commission shall be composed of five (5) members to be appointed by the President (Prime Minister) of the Philippines, one of whom shall be the Minister of Foreign Affairs, as ex-officio member: *Provided*, That the President (Prime Minister) may appoint other ministries as ex-officio members: *Provided, further*, That in the absence of any ex-officio member, said member may designate his deputy to act in his stead. The President (Prime Minister) shall designate the chairman and the vice-chairman of the Commission from among its members.

**Sec. 2. *Definition of "Filipinos Overseas".*** - For purposes of this Act, the term "Filipinos Overseas" shall mean Filipinos who are permanent residents abroad, including Filipino emigrants who are either already citizens of foreign countries or are still Filipino citizens awaiting naturalization, recognition, or admission, and their descendants.

**Sec. 3. *Powers and Functions.*** - The Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. Provide advice and assistance to the President (Prime Minister) of the Philippines and the Batasang Pambansa in the formulation of policies and measures affecting Filipinos overseas;
- b. Formulate, in coordination with agencies concerned, an integrated program for the promotion of the welfare of Filipinos overseas for implementation by suitable existing agencies;
- c. Coordinate and monitor the implementation of such an integrated program;
- d. Initiate and directly undertake the implementation of special projects and programs, whenever necessary, to promote the welfare of Filipinos overseas with respect to their interests and activities in the Philippines;
- e. Serve as a forum for preserving and enhancing the social, economic and cultural ties of Filipinos overseas with their motherland;
- f. Provide liaison services to Filipinos overseas with appropriate government and private agencies in the transaction of business and similar ventures in the Philippines;
- g. Promulgate rules and regulations to carry out the objectives of this Act;
- h. Call upon any agency of the Government, including government-owned or controlled corporations, to render whatever assistance is needed in the pursuance of the objectives of this Act; and
- i. Perform such other related functions as may be directed by the President (Prime Minister) or assigned by law.

**Sec. 4. *Organization.*** - The Commission shall be assisted by a Secretariat which shall be organized and staffed in accordance with the provisions of Presidential Decree Numbered Eleven hundred and seventy-seven. The Commission is authorized, whenever necessary

and subject to the approval of the President (Prime Minister), to establish offices in suitable places abroad, or to appoint service attaches in the Philippines Embassy or consulate located thereat, or to designate representatives from among resident Filipinos staying in these places.

**Sec. 5. *Compensation.*** - The ex-officio members of the Commission shall be entitled to per diems for meetings attended, not exceeding two hundred fifty pesos per meeting and not exceeding one thousand pesos a month. The other members of the Commission and the officials and employees of the Commission shall be compensated pursuant to the provisions of Presidential Decree Numbered Nine hundred eighty-five and Presidential Decree Numbered Twelve hundred and eighty-five, as the case may be.

**Sec. 6. *Abolition of Office of Emigrant Affairs.*** - The Office of Emigrant Affairs in the Ministry of Labor and Employment is abolished and its pertinent functions are transferred to the Commission, including applicable funds, records, property and equipment and the necessary personnel that have been allotted and assigned to the Office of Emigrant Affairs from the Ministry of Labor and Employment and/or other entities..

**Sec. 7. *Appropriations.*** - The appropriations authorized under Batas Pambansa Blg. 40 for the Office of Emigrant Affairs shall be used for the operational expenses of the Commission for the current year, to be augmented as may be necessary from the fund for organizational changes provided in Batas Pambansa Blg. 40. Subsequently, its appropriation shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

**Sec. 8. *Repealing Clause.*** - All laws, orders, proclamations, rules, regulations, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly

**Sec. 9. *Effectivity.*** - This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

**Approved: June 16, 1980**