

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 346 June 14, 1996

AMENDING EXECUTIVE ORDERS NO. 728 AND 938, REDEFINING THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, FUNCTIONAL THRUSTS AND PROVIDING FOR THE OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES OF THE COMMISSION ON FILIPINOS OVERSEAS

WHEREAS, it is a declared policy of the State to promote the well-being and uphold the interests of Filipinos overseas;

WHEREAS, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas was created by virtue of Batas Pambansa Blg. 79 on 16 June 1980 to render effectively this policy of the State;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 728 provided for the organizational structure and guidelines of the Secretariat of the Commission, while Executive Order No. 938 authorized the establishment of its overseas offices;

WHEREAS, the promulgation of economic diplomacy as a major development strategy of the government under Administrative Order No. 91, is also aimed at harnessing the fullest potentials of overseas Filipinos as partners in the development efforts of the country;

WHEREAS, the Commission was directed to provide secretariat support to the Assistance-to-Nationals Task Force pursuant to Administrative Order No. 182;

WHEREAS, the Commission was designated to provide technical and secretariat support to the reconstituted Exchange Visitors Program Committee pursuant to Administrative Order No. 242;

WHEREAS, Section 20 of Republic Act No. 8042 provides for the establishment of a shared government information system on migration to allow data exchange among relevant agencies of government including the Commission on Filipinos Overseas;

WHEREAS, the unprecedented and phenomenal growth in the number of overseas Filipinos, present and future requirements of the country, and efforts currently undertaken by government to address the attendant issues and problems, call for a reconstitution as well as a reformulation of the mandate and organizational structure of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FIDEL V. RAMOS, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. *Composition of the Commission.* The Commission shall be composed of the Secretary of Foreign Affairs as Chairman, the Secretary of Trade and Industry as Vice Chairman, the Secretary of Labor and Employment, the Secretary of Tourism, the Secretary of Education, Culture and Sports, the Secretary of Justice and the Press Secretary, all of whom are ex-officio members, and the Executive Director of the Commission.

The Commission shall formulate general policies on matters affecting overseas Filipinos and provide functional direction for its programs and operations.

SEC. 2. *Offices of the Secretariat.* Executive responsibility shall be vested in the Secretariat which will carry out the programs, projects and services to address the needs and interests of overseas Filipinos as well as support the economic diplomacy efforts of the government.

The Secretariat shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall be assisted by a Deputy Executive Director, both of whom shall be appointed by the President. The Executive Director shall have the rank of a Department Undersecretary, while the Deputy Executive Director shall have the rank of an Assistant Secretary. To achieve effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of services, the offices of the Secretariat are hereby reorganized as follows:

a. *Projects Management Office*

The External Services and Projects Office of the Secretariat shall henceforth be reorganized into the Projects Management Office. The Projects Management Office shall be responsible for the promotion and implementation of programs and projects for Filipinos overseas. It shall propose and develop strategies and mechanisms to optimize program promotion and implementation. This office shall establish the necessary programs to promote and support the economic diplomacy efforts of the government among overseas communities.

b. *Migrant Integration and Education Office.*

The Local Services Office shall henceforth be reorganized into the Migrant Integration and Education Office. The Migrant Integration and Education Office shall be responsible for implementing the registration and pre-departure programs and services as well as the public assistance and information program of the Commission. It shall also provide welfare support services to Filipinos emigrants and other categories of migrating Filipinos.

This office shall establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure the effective coordination of the Assistance to Nationals Program. It shall perform staff coordinating functions, and develop information programs to complement activities in connection with assistance to CFO constituents both here and abroad.

c. *Administrative and Finance Office*

The Administrative and Finance Office shall be responsible for the efficient management of the Commission's human and financial resources and shall be responsible for various administrative, personnel, budgetary, financial, logistical, and accounting services of the Commission.

d. *Management Information System Office*

A Management Information System Office shall be established within the CFO Secretariat to develop, establish and maintain a computerized data banking and information system on Filipinos overseas in support to policy functions of CFO. It shall formulate plans, programs and procedures for effective data base management and networking, as well as in support of the implementation of a Shared Government Information System for Migration, pursuant to Section 20 of Republic Act 8042.

e. Planning, Research and Policy Office

The Management and Planning Office shall be reorganized into the Planning, Research and Policy Office. The Planning, Research and Policy Office shall be responsible for providing the Commission with effective and efficient planning, programming and project development services. This office shall also initiate, coordinate and implement the conduct of all relevant policy research and development work.

SEC. 3. *CFO Overseas and Extension Offices.* The Commission on Filipinos Overseas shall establish representative offices in countries/areas, other than those identified in Executive Order No. 938, deemed necessary in pursuance of the mandate of Batas Pambansa Blg. 79, and in promoting the interests and well being of Filipino migrants. As far as practicable, CFO overseas offices shall be housed at the Philippine Embassy or Consulate having relevant geographical jurisdiction. The CFO representatives abroad shall work under the direct supervision of the relevant Philippine Ambassador or Chief of Mission.

The CFO shall also establish extension offices in the Philippines in areas identified as major exit points of departing Filipino emigrants. These offices shall be housed at the extension offices of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

SEC. 4. *Filipino Education and Heritage.* Pursuant to Section 3(e) of Batas Pambansa Blg. 79, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas shall among others, develop and implement policies and programmes geared to actively preserve and enhance ties with younger generations of overseas Filipinos in order to keep them from being alienated from their native country, and to provide them with the knowledge and values that would contribute to shaping their Filipino identity.

SEC. 5. *Assistance to Nationals.* Pursuant to relevant provisions of Administrative Order No. 182 and Memorandum Order No. 357, the Commission on Filipinos Overseas shall review, formulate and recommend on a continuing basis, policies and programs to address the needs of overseas Filipinos, in support of the Assistance-to-Nationals Program.

SEC. 6. *Manpower Complement of the Secretariat.* In view of the additional tasks provided for in this Order, the manpower complement of the Secretariat of the Commission shall be reviewed and accordingly adjusted. The Secretariat shall therefore work with the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Budget and Management on the reclassification of positions resulting from the reorganization promulgated by this Executive Order.

SEC. 7. *Funding.* Funds necessary to immediately carry out the provisions of this Executive Order shall be sourced by the Department of Budget and Management from available sources, upon request of the CFO Secretariat. Funding requirement in the succeeding fiscal years shall be provided for in the regular budgetary appropriations of the Commission.

SEC. 8. *Repealing Clause.* All Executive orders, issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Executive Order are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SEC. 9. *Effectivity.* This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon its approval.

DONE in the City of Manila, this 14th day of June in the year of Our Lord, Nineteen Hundred and Ninety-Six.

