

MALACAÑANG  
MANILA

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 337

**INSTITUTING MEANINGFUL REFORMS  
MODERNIZING THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

**WHEREAS**, technological advances and rapid socio-economic change require a modern presidency capable of riding the wave of the future by acting more speedily, openly, transparently and responsively to the ever-changing needs of society;

**WHEREAS**, the structure of the Office of the president must be reviewed in order to make it most responsive to public interest, allowing it to efficiently deliver public services, promote transparency in all transactions and actions, insure consistency in all economic and social policies, achieve political stability and accelerate economic growth and progress;

**WHEREAS**, such reform and reorganization must address the immediate needs of the Office of the President in terms of leadership and direction, professional management, improved and more efficient and effective procedures and systems, and total teamwork and coordination of the various offices thereunder, thereby promoting the President's closer supervision and coordination of all Cabinet decisions and providing quick response by the Executive Department to the Filipino people's expectations and needs;

**WHEREAS**, it is deemed advisable that the President be freed from bureaucratic processes and time-consuming measures so that he can concentrate his precious time on the most urgent matters of State, most notably, the maintenance of peace and order and the continuing war against poverty;

**WHEREAS**, to achieve meaningful reforms in the Office of the President, there is a need for the Executive Secretary to fully exercise all his powers and functions delineated under Section 27, Chapter 9, Title III of Executive Order No. 292, otherwise known as the Administrative Code of 1987;

**WHEREAS**, such reforms likewise require the strengthening of the Economic Coordinating Council ("**ECC**") by reconstituting the same and expanding its functions to enable the Council to more effectively address the present economic problems and ensure coordination among all the government agencies involved in economic programs;



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**WHEREAS**, there is a further need for the President to be able to directly and immediately respond to charitable and humanitarian concerns;

**WHEREAS**, under the Administrative Code of 1987, the President has continuing authority to reorganize the administrative structure of the Office of the President in order to attain simplicity, economy and efficiency;

**NOW THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA**, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, hereby direct and order as follows:

Section 1. *Strengthened Economic Coordinating Council.* The ECC, as a vehicle for socio-economic reform under Executive Order No. 193 (Series of 2000), as amended by Executive Order No. 217 (Series of 2000), is hereby further strengthened to more effectively address its mandate. The ECC is hereby reconstituted with the Secretary of Finance as Chairman and the Executive Secretary as Vice Chairman. In addition to its existing powers and functions, the ECC is further empowered to:

(a) Consider and endorse to the President and the Cabinet the National Expenditure Program, its appropriation and sources of financing;

(b) Evaluate and approve the program of disbursement of the General Appropriations Act for the Executive Department, any order or issuance to the contrary notwithstanding, in order to ensure full support to government policies and programs in accordance with its approved priorities; and

(c) Ensure that the processing, approval and implementation of major projects, investments and undertakings of government are expedited and fast-tracked.

To facilitate and ensure the accomplishment of ECC's mandate, the Development Budget Coordinating Council ("**DBCC**") and the Investment Coordinating Council ("**ICC**") are hereby attached to the ECC for coordination and policy direction. The Investment Express Lane Office ("**IELO**") is hereby likewise placed under the direct supervision of the ECC, with the Chairman of the ECC acting as head thereof.

Section 2. *Executive Secretary.* The Executive Secretary is hereby tasked to assist the President in upholding the utmost levels of professionalism, integrity and transparency in the various offices and agencies under the Executive Department. He shall also ensure coordination and consistency of policy in the Executive Department. Towards this end, the



Executive Secretary is hereby enjoined to strictly carry out his functions and exercise all of the powers enumerated in Section 27, Chapter 9, Title III of the Administrative Code of 1987, any previous inconsistent Executive Orders and issuances notwithstanding. All agencies under the Executive Department are hereby directed to extend to the Executive Secretary all assistance and cooperation necessary to enable him to effectively perform such powers and duties as well as other powers and duties as the President may delegate to him in accordance with law.

In line with the foregoing and subject to the control and supervision of the President, the Executive Secretary shall, in the name of and by authority of the President, perform the following functions:

- (a) Improve teamwork in the Executive Department by acting as overall coordinator for the President of the work of the Cabinet;
- (b) Exercise control and supervision over the Executive Office, Common Staff Support System and the Presidential Special Assistants/Advisers System under the Office of the President, including but not limited to the following:
  - (i) Presidential Management Staff;
  - (ii) Office of the Presidential Legal Counsel;
  - (iii) Presidential Legislative Liaison Office;
  - (iv) Office of all Presidential Assistants and Advisers;
  - (v) Protocol Office; and
  - (vi) Appointments Office.
- (c) Exercise control and supervision over all agencies under the chairmanship of the President, those under the supervision and control of the President, those under the administrative supervision of the Office of the President, those attached to it, and those that are not placed by law or order creating them under any specific department ("**Agencies under the Office of the President**");
- (d) Whenever directed by the President, preside at Cabinet meetings and all other meetings where the President is the Chairman or presiding officer;
- (e) Ensure transparency, integrity and legality in government dealings and transactions by evaluating, approving and initialing all documents, contracts and other papers before submission to the President for his final approval;
- (f) Assist and advise the President in issuing executive orders, regulations, proclamations and other issuances, the promulgation of which is expressly vested by law in the President; Provided, that no presidential



issuance shall be valid and enforceable unless it bears the confirmation of the Executive Secretary;

(g) Evaluate, recommend, initial and release all appointments for positions requiring presidential appointment;

(h) Constitute and preside over the caretaker committee tasked to oversee government operations whenever the President is on official foreign travel;

(i) Evaluate and submit recommendations on matters requiring personal Presidential action, including those coming from members of the Cabinet and constitutional offices;

(j) Ensure the speedy processing, approval and implementation of major projects, investments and commitments of government in a transparent manner conducive to economic growth and development;

(k) Submit to the ECC proposals for major policy reforms affecting the national economy for the consideration, recommendation and endorsement of the ECC;

(l) Act or decide for the President on all other matters that do not require personal Presidential attention; and

(m) Perform such other functions as the president may direct and delegate to him from time to time.

All Heads of Departments and Agencies, including Government Owned and Controlled Corporations ("**GOCCs**"), shall submit all papers, documents, contracts and appointments requiring personal Presidential action to the Executive Secretary for his prior evaluation in order to ensure consistency with all government policies and programs and compliance with budgetary, legal and personnel requirements.

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Section 3. *President's Social Fund.* Notwithstanding the foregoing, the President's Social Fund shall be directly under the President, who may disburse the same for charitable and humanitarian concerns.

Section 4. *Reorientation and Reorganization Power.* The Executive Secretary is hereby authorized to reorganize, streamline, merge, deactivate or dispose of assets under the Executive Office, Common Staff Support System, Presidential Assistants/Advisers System, and the Agencies under the Office of the President, in the manner provided by pertinent laws, rules and regulations.



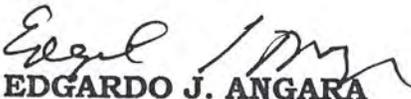
Section 5. *Repealing Clause.* All other executive issuances or portions thereof inconsistent with this Order are repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 6. *Effectivity.* This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

DONE in the City of Manila this 8<sup>th</sup> day of January, in the Year of our Lord Two Thousand and One.

  
**JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA**

By the President:

  
**EDGARDO J. ANGARA**  
Executive Secretary

