

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8643

AN ACT GRANTING THE GLOBE EMAIL PHILIPPINES, INC.,  
A FRANCHISE TO CONSTRUCT, INSTALL, ESTABLISH,  
MAINTAIN AND OPERATE RADIO COMMUNICATIONS  
STATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC SHIP-  
TO-SHORE AND AIR TO GROUND COMMUNICATIONS  
IN THE PHILIPPINES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the  
Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. *Nature and Scope of Franchise.* – Subject to the provisions of the Constitution and applicable laws, rules and regulations, there is hereby granted to Globe Email Philippines, Inc., hereunder referred to as the grantee, its successors or assigns, a franchise to construct, install, establish, maintain and operate radio communications stations in the Philippines for the reception and transmission of messages in international and domestic public, fixed point-to-point and public based, aeronautical and land mobile stations including coastal marine services with the corresponding relay stations for the reception and transmission of wireless messages on radio telegraphy and/or radiotelephony, radio teletype, radiophoto, facsimile and such other types of emissions or both with vessels at sea and aircrafts in the air within and without the Philippines.

SEC. 2. *Manner of Operation of Stations or Facilities.* – The stations or facilities of the grantee shall be constructed and operated in manner as will, at most, result only in the minimum interference on the wavelengths or frequencies of existing stations or other stations which may be established by law, without in any way diminishing its own right to use its selected wavelengths or frequencies and the quality of transmission or reception thereon as should maximize rendition of the grantee's services and/or the availability thereof.

SEC. 3. *Prior Approval of the National Telecommunications Commission.* – The grantee shall secure from the National Telecommunications Commission, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, a certificate of public convenience or the appropriate permits and licenses for the location, construction, installation and operation of its telecommunications systems. In issuing the certificate, the Commission shall have the power to impose such conditions relative to the construction, operation, maintenance, or service level of the telecommunications system. The Commission shall have the authority to regulate the construction and operation of its telecommunications system. The grantee shall not use any frequency in the radio spectrum without having been authorized by the Commission. The Commission, however, shall not unreasonably withhold or delay the grant of any such authority. Such certificate shall state the areas covered and the date the grantee shall commence the service.

SEC. 4. *Responsibility to the Public.* – The grantee shall conform to the ethics of honest enterprise and shall not use its stations for obscene or indecent transmission or for dissemination of deliberately false information or willful misrepresentation, or assist in subversive or treasonable acts.

SEC. 5. *Right of Government.* – A special right is hereby reserved to the President of the Philippines, in times of war, rebellion, public peril, calamity, emergency, disaster or disturbance or peace and order, to temporarily take over and operate the stations, transmitters or facilities of the grantee, to temporarily suspend the operation of any station, transmitter or facility in the interest of public safety, security and public welfare, or to authorize the temporary use and operation thereof by any agency of the government, upon due compensation to the grantee, for the use of said stations or facilities during the period when they shall be so operated.

The radio spectrum is a finite resource that is part of the national patrimony and the use thereof is a privilege conferred upon the grantee by the State and may be withdrawn anytime, after due process.

SEC. 6. *Rates for Services.* – The charges and rates for telecommunications services of the grantee except the rates and charges on those that may hereafter be declared or considered as nonregulated services, whether flat rates or measured rates or variation thereof, shall be subject to the approval of the Commission or its legal successor. The rates to be charged by the grantee shall be unbundled, separable, and distinct among the services offered and shall be determined in such a manner that regulated services does not subsidize the unregulated ones.

SEC. 7. *Term of Franchise.* – This franchise shall be for a term of twenty-five (25) years from the date of effectivity of this Act, unless sooner revoked or cancelled. This franchise shall be deemed *ipso facto* revoked in the event the grantee fails to comply with any of the following conditions:

(a) Commence operations within one (1) year from the approval of its permit by the National Telecommunications Commission;

(b) Operate continuously for two (2) years; and

(c) Commence operations within three (3) years from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 8. *Acceptance and Compliance.* – Acceptance of this franchise shall be given in writing within sixty (60) days after the effectivity of this Act. Upon giving such acceptance, the grantee shall exercise the privileges granted under this Act. Nonacceptance shall render the franchise void.

SEC. 9. *Bond.* – The grantee shall file a bond issued in favor of the National Telecommunications Commission, which shall determine the amount, to guarantee the compliance with and fulfillment of the conditions under which this franchise is granted. If after three (3) years from the date of the approval of its permit by the Commission, the grantee shall have fulfilled the same, the bond shall be cancelled by the Commission. Otherwise, the bond shall be forfeited in favor of the government and the franchise *ipso facto* revoked.

SEC. 10. *Right of Interconnection.* – The grantee is hereby authorized to connect or demand connection of its telecommunications systems to any other telecommunications systems installed, maintained and operated by any other duly authorized person or entity in the Philippines for the purpose of providing extended and improved telecommunications services to the public, under such terms and conditions mutually agreed upon by the parties concerned and the same shall be subject to the review or modification of the Commission.

SEC. 11. *Tax Provisions.* – The grantee, its successors or assigns shall be liable to pay the same taxes on their real estate, buildings and personal property, exclusive of this franchise, as other persons or corporations are now or hereafter may be required by law to pay. In addition thereto, the grantee, its successors or assigns, shall pay a franchise tax of three percent (3%) *per annum* or at such percentage as may be prescribed by law on all gross receipts of the business transacted under this franchise by the grantee, its successors or assigns: *Provided,* That the grantee, its successor or assigns, shall continue to be liable for income taxes payable under Title II of the National Internal Revenue Code pursuant to Section 2 of Executive Order No. 72, unless the latter enactment is amended or repealed, in which case the amendment or repeal shall be applicable thereto.

The grantee shall file the return with, and pay the taxes due thereon to the Commissioner of Internal Revenue or his duly authorized representatives in accordance with the National Internal Revenue Code and the return shall be subject to audit by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

SEC. 12. *Warranty in Favor of National and Local Governments.* – The grantee shall hold the national, provincial and municipal governments of the Philippines harmless from all claims, accounts, demands or actions arising out of accidents or injuries, whether to property or to persons, caused by the construction or operation of the stations of the grantee.

SEC. 13. *Sale, Lease, Transfer, Usufruct, etc.* – The grantee shall not lease, transfer, grant the usufruct of, sell nor assign this franchise or the rights and privileges acquired thereunder to

any person, firm, company, corporation or other commercial or legal entity, nor merge with any other corporation or entity, nor shall the controlling interest of the grantee be transferred, whether as a whole or in parts and whether simultaneously or contemporaneously, to any such person, firm, company, corporation or entity without the prior approval of the Congress of the Philippines. Any person or entity to which this franchise is sold, transferred or assigned, shall be subject to all the same conditions, terms, restrictions and limitations of this Act.

SEC. 14. *Dispersal of Ownership.* – In accordance with the constitutional provision to encourage public participation in public utilities, the grantee shall offer at least thirty *per centum* (30%) of its outstanding capital stock or higher percentage that may hereafter be provided by law in any securities exchange in the Philippines within five (5) years from the commencement of its operations. Noncompliance therewith shall render the franchise *ipso facto* revoked.

SEC. 15. *Equality Clause.* – If any subsequent franchise for telecommunications service of the same nature is awarded or granted by the Congress of the Philippines with terms, privileges and conditions more favorable and beneficial than those contained in this Act, then the same privileges or advantages shall, *ipso facto*, accrue to the herein grantee and be deemed part of this Act.

SEC. 16. *Separability Clause.* – If any of the sections or provisions of this Act is held invalid, all the other provisions not affected thereby shall remain valid.

SEC. 17. *Repealability and Nonexclusivity Clause.* – This franchise shall be subject to amendment, alteration, or repeal by the Congress of the Philippines when the public interest so requires and shall not be interpreted as an exclusive grant of the privileges herein provided for.

SEC. 18. *Reportorial Requirement.* – The grantee shall submit an annual report to the Congress of the Philippines on its compliance with the terms and conditions of the franchise and on its operations within sixty (60) days from the end of every year.

SEC. 19. *Effectivity.* – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days from the date of its publication in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

Lapsed into law on May 30, 1998 without the President's signature, pursuant to Sec. 27(1), Article VI of the Constitution.