



Republic of the Philippines

SAN VICENTE TEZ MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**RESOLUTION NO. 11.05.20-III.B.4
Series of 2020**

A RESOLUTION RESPECTFULLY ENDORSING TO GOVERNOR JOSE CHAVES ALVAREZ OF THE PROVINCE OF PALAWAN THE LETTER FROM THE UNITED TOURISM ENTERPRISE ASSOCIATION (UNI-TEA), THE OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZED PRIVATE SECTOR ASSOCIATION OF THE SAN VICENTE FLAGSHIP TOURISM ENTERPRISE ZONE, TO LIFT THE MORATORIUM IMPOSED ON ALL ACTIVITIES RELATED TO LAND TITLING IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAN VICENTE, PALAWAN, THE COUNTRY'S FIRST FLAGSHIP TOURISM ENTERPRISE ZONE AND PILOT ECO-TOWN

WHEREAS, the Municipality of San Vicente, Palawan (herein referred to as the "Municipality") was officially designated by the National Government as the country's First Flagship Tourism Enterprise Zone (FTEZ), pursuant to Republic Act No. 9593 or the *Tourism Act of 2009*, and through the Tourism Infrastructure and Enterprise Zone Authority (TIEZA) Board Resolution No. 29-09-15A, and San Vicente *Sangguniang Bayan* Resolution No. 2013-025;

WHEREAS, the Municipality rigorously formulated, worked for the approval and has been implementing a model 30-year *Integrated and Conceptual Tourism Master Plans* (Collectively, Tourism Master Plans) since 2015, and a unique comprehensive *green building* and sustainability local legislation called "*Deed of Restrictions*" since 2017, stringently regulating all the developments, use and occupancy of lots in the Municipality. The Tourism Master Plans, awarded internationally "for excellence in planning"¹, envisions this town, to become a model sustainable and inclusive premier tourism destination in the country and the world by laying its fundamentals;

WHEREAS, the Municipality of San Vicente was selected as the country's pilot Eco-town by the Climate Change Commission in its implementation of the "*Demonstration of the Eco-town Framework Project*" in 2011-2014, and as model in its "*Eco-town Scale-up Project*" known as the "*Climate Resilient Green Growth at the Provincial Level*", implemented in the entire Provinces of Palawan and Oriental Mindoro from 2016 to 2018. Under the Project, the Municipality's vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change were scientifically accounted for, and thereafter, a science-based Local Climate Change Action Plan was formulated, integrated into the local government's plans and programs, and successfully implemented in the Municipality;

WHEREAS, both planning frameworks have been integrated and harmonized into the Municipality's Comprehensive Land and Water Use Plan (CLWUP), Environmentally-Critical Areas Network (ECAN) Map, Land Classification Map, Hazards Map, Tax Maps, and all other derivative plans and maps. All these maps were digitized and are available in the Geographic Information System (GIS), making planning, land use implementation and zoning, infrastructure and projects development and implementation easier and more convenient land disputes resolution in the Municipality;

WHEREAS, with the National Government's focus and investments in the Municipality, and the local government's strong partnership and proactive role on the ground, the Municipality has grown robustly over the years: the tourism industry, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, has been growing dramatically at 32% year-on-year increase since 2009, funneling in 2019 alone some PhP 315 million to PhP 1 billion in tourism receipts to the community, creating a thousand jobs, attracting the country's biggest investors, and promising a bullish economy for the Municipality and its neighboring towns;

¹ Awarded by UK's Royal Town Planning Institute in 2016.



Republic of the Philippines

SAN VICENTE TEZ MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

WHEREAS, investors, local entrepreneurs and landowners, however, have to deal with a major problem namely, the Municipality's outdated land classification and the continued imposition of moratorium on all activities related to land titling in the province;

WHEREAS, since 2015, the processing of land titling in the Province of Palawan has been suspended by then DENR Secretary Ramon J.P. Paje due to "numerous cases of land titles awarded to moneyed or influential individuals allegedly in connivance with the agency's personnel";

WHEREAS, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has already lifted² the said moratorium in the ten (10) Municipalities but not in San Vicente, Palawan;

WHEREAS, the prolonged suspension of all activities related to land titling in this part of the province has been taking a toll on the economy of the Municipality, frustrating existing investors who were lead to believe that the suspension will not take more than five years and discouraging the entry of new investors;

WHEREAS, the suspension has also led to complicating the processing of building and business permits, a prerequisite of which is proof of tenancy;

WHEREAS, local business groups such as the United Tourism Association of San Vicente (UTASV) and Port Barton Resort Operators and Tourism Association, Inc. (PBROTAI) have been incessantly calling for this problem to be finally resolved, especially in this time of pandemic and the industries suffering a major blow. Resolving this problem will help support the tourism industry and other allied industries in the Municipality of San Vicente, Palawan, allowing them to slowly recover from the worst economic downturn they have faced in recent history;

WHEREAS, then DENR-MIMAROPA Regional Director Oscar C. Dominguez reported through the media that as early as 2016 they already have a final draft of the presentation³, presumably "a map of Palawan that contains the total areas for agricultural, timberland and protected areas, as well as those that already have titles" that the DENR sought from the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) in order to resolve whatever internal problems the agency had encountered that caused the suspension of titling;

WHEREAS, with the comprehensive Master Plan and planning framework of the Municipality; its extensive GIS-based databases of maps, land use, land classification and lot properties; and the National Government's strong presence and keen interest in the Municipality, San Vicente is more than ready and capable to avert whatever land ownership-related issues other growing tourism destinations are experiencing that prompted DENR to impose the same action⁴;

WHEREAS, the SVT Secretariat during its meeting on 08 July 2020 discussed this problem and agreed to recommend to the SVT Management Committee to request DENR to finally lift the 2015 suspension order, and help the local economy slowly recover amid the pandemic;

² [1] *Ibid*. Officially ordered by DENR through USec. Jim O. Sampulna through a Memorandum dated March 2, 2020, signed for and by the authority of the Secretary; see also DENR Memorandum Circular No. 2019-10 dated December 11, 2019.

³ "Land titling remains suspended in Palawan" by Catherine A. Santos (Philippine News Agency), published at <http://www.romblonnews.net>, June 23, 2016. Last accessed June 19, 2020.



Republic of the Philippines

SAN VICENTE TEZ MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

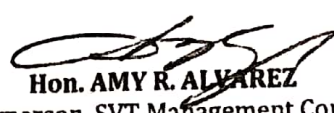
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the SVT ManCom supports this initiative by the private sector and to respectfully endorse to Governor Jose Chaves Alvarez of the Province of Palawan the letter from the United Tourism Enterprise Association (UNi-TEA), the officially recognized Private Sector Association of the San Vicente Flagship TEZ, to lift the moratorium imposed on all activities related to land titling in the Municipality of San Vicente, Palawan, the country's first FTEZ and pilot Eco-town;

RESOLVED FURTHER, to respectfully request the *Sangguniang Bayan* of San Vicente, the *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* of Palawan, Provincial Governor Jose Chaves Alvarez, Palawan 1st District Representative Franz E. Alvarez, and the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office (PENRO) for the issuance of the necessary Resolutions and Executive Orders to strongly support this action;

RESOLVED FINALLY, to furnish copies of this Resolution to the Honorable DENR Secretary Roy A. Cimatu through the, DENR-MIMAROPA Regional Executive Director Ma. Lourdes G. Ferrer, Gov. Jose Chaves Alvarez, *Sangguniang Panlalawigan* of the Province of Palawan, Palawan 1st District Representative Franz E. Alvarez, PENRO Eriberto B. Saños, CENRO Emer D. Garraez, the *Sangguniang Bayan* of the Municipality of San Vicente and all other agencies and officials concerned.

ADOPTED, by the SVT ManCom this 5th day of November 2020 at San Vicente, Palawan, Philippines.


POCHOLO JOSELITO D. PARAGAS
Chairperson, SVT Management Committee/
TIEZA Chief Operating Officer


Hon. AMY R. ALVAREZ
Vice Chairperson, SVT Management Committee/
Municipal Mayor

Atty. EDWIN R. ENRILE
Member, SVT Management Committee/
Undersecretary, Department of Tourism


Atty. KAREN MAE G. SARINAS-BAYDO
Member, SVT Management Committee/
ACOO for TEZ Management Sector


Mr. ANTONIO I. HABANA IV
Member, SVT Management Committee/
President, United Tourism Association of San Vicente