

MALACAÑAN PALACE
Manila

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. _____

PROVIDING FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS [REPEALING EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 325, SERIES OF 1996, AS AMENDED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 384, SERIES OF 1996]

WHEREAS, Article X, Section 14 of the Constitution provides that "the President shall provide for regional development councils or other similar bodies composed of local government officials, regional heads of departments and other government offices, and representatives from non-governmental organizations within the regions for purposes of administrative decentralization to strengthen the autonomy of the units therein and to accelerate the economic and social growth and development of the units in the region";

WHEREAS, the Regional Development Councils (RDCs) were first established in all the administrative regions of the country by virtue of Letter of Implementation No. 22 issued on December 31, 1972 and, thereafter, various Executive Orders (EO) were issued to improve the structure and functions of the councils;

WHEREAS, the RDCs, which set the direction of economic and social development of the region and through which the regional development efforts are coordinated, must be strengthened further to be able to respond to emerging trends and development challenges;

WHEREAS, there is need to rationalize the structure and operations of the RDC to take into account laws and executive issuances issued after EO 325, s. 1996;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR., President of the Philippines, by powers vested in me by law, do hereby order the repeal of Executive Order No. 325, series of 1996, as amended, and order to wit:

Section 1. Governing Principles of the RDC. The RDC is the highest policy making body in the region. As such, it shall direct the course of development through the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of continuing, coordinated and fully integrated socioeconomic policies, plans, programs and projects in the region consistent with the following:

- a. In the formulation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans, programs and projects, there shall be maximum participation by and consultation with concerned national government agencies, local government units (LGUs), private sector groups, non-government and civil society organizations, regional bodies, and other stakeholders in order to ensure that their thrusts and priorities are considered into such policies, plans, programs and projects.
- b. All other regional development bodies shall link their efforts with the RDCs.
- c. Regional development and physical plans, which are formulated within the national physical or land-use and socioeconomic development frameworks, shall integrate key aspects of approved development plans of provinces, highly-urbanized cities, and independent component cities, especially those that have region-wide impacts.
- d. The linkage and synchronization of development planning, investment programming and budgeting shall be of the highest priority in planning and budgeting activities.
- e. The effective horizontal and vertical linkages of all development plans and investment programs from the different national government agencies and LGUs shall be institutionalized to ensure consistent and unidirectional government policies and strategies.

Section 2. Regular Members. The following shall be the regular members of the RDC:

- a. all provincial governors;
- b. all city mayors;
- c. mayors of municipalities designated as provincial capitals;
- d. all provincial chapter presidents of the league of municipalities;
- e. the regional heads of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), Department of Agriculture (DA), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Department of Finance-Bureau of Local Government Finance (DOF-BLGF), Department of Health (DOH), Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Migrant Workers (DMW), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Science and Technology (DOST), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Tourism (DOT), Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Transportation (DOTr), Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and such other agencies that the RDCs deem critical to the development of their respective regions to be determined in accordance with their Manual of Operations; provided that each agency shall be represented by only one regional head; and in cases where there are several bureaus or units under one agency, the representative shall be the regional head of the mother agency;
- f. private sector representatives (PSRs) who shall comprise one-fourth of the regular membership of the council; provided that the PSRs shall come from the various sectors of the society such as agriculture, business, education, health, indigenous communities and labor, among others.

Section 3. Private Sector Representatives.

- a. **Selection.** The selection of private sector representatives to the RDC shall be done in accordance with the guidelines to be issued by the NEDA Secretariat. To consider its unique needs, the RDC may formulate supplementary PSR selection guidelines in its Manual of Operations, as necessary, provided it is consistent with approved PSR selection guidelines.
- b. **Qualifications.** PSRs shall be Filipino citizens, of legal age, not otherwise disqualified by law, with proven track record in socio-economic development, must not hold any government position and must not receive any remuneration from the government while serving as private sector representative to the RDC.
- c. **Honoraria.** PSR members shall be entitled to honoraria in accordance with existing budgeting, accounting and auditing rules and regulations.
- d. **Term of Office.** PSRs shall serve for a fixed term of three years coinciding with the regular term of elective local officials. They are eligible for a maximum of three consecutive terms. The RDC, however, may allow extension of term in exceptional cases.

Section 4. Special Non-voting Members. The RDC, subject to the concurrence of majority of its regular members, may designate special non-voting members (SNVM) from the government and the private sector. The Council shall determine the maximum number of SNVMs and the term of their membership.

Section 5. Powers and Functions of the RDC. The RDC shall have the following powers and functions:

- a. Coordinate and lead the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the regional development plans, regional physical plans/regional spatial development frameworks, regional development investment programs and special development plans, and the formulation of policy recommendations;

- b. Review and integrate into the regional development plan the approved development plans of provinces and highly-urbanized and independent component cities, line agencies, state universities and colleges (SUCs), government-owned and –controlled corporations (GOCCs) and special development authorities in the region;
- c. Review, prioritize, approve, and endorse to the national government for funding and implementation programs, projects, and activities that support the regional development plan, as contained in the regional development investment program;
- d. Review, approve, and endorse to the national government the annual budgets of sub-national government agencies or instrumentalities, such as, but not limited to, agency regional offices, SUCs, GOCCs and special development authorities;
- e. Promote and direct the inflow and allocation of private investments in the region to support regional development objectives, policies and strategies;
- f. Review and endorse national plans, programs and projects proposed for implementation at the sub-national level;
- g. As required by the Investment Coordination Committee (ICC) or by existing laws, rules and regulations, review and endorse projects of national government agencies that have impact on the region and projects of LGUs in the region requiring national government financial exposure which may come in the form of guarantees, national government budget appropriations or subsidies, among others;
- h. Initiate and coordinate the development, funding and implementation of regional and special development projects such as those involving several regions, agencies, or LGUs;
- i. Coordinate and lead the monitoring and evaluation of major projects undertaken by government agencies, LGUs, SUCs, GOCCs, and special development authorities in the region;
- j. Assist LGUs in identifying and coordinating the implementation of interprovincial projects;

- k. Review inter-provincial, inter-city and other subregional masterplans, such as those pertaining to river basins and metropolitan areas, and sectoral plans;
- l. Strengthen competencies and capabilities of its members through trainings and other skills-development activities;
- m. Perform other related functions and activities within the mandate of the council to promote and sustain the socioeconomic development of the regions.

Section 6. Strengthening Regional Investment Programming and Budgeting. The NEDA and the DBM shall issue, either jointly or separately, guidelines that will strengthen regional investment programming and budgeting to provide for greater autonomy to the Council in its regional priority programs, projects, and activities consistent with the RDP and local development plans and with national priorities.

Section 7. Feedback Mechanism on RDC-endorsed Programs, Activities and Projects. Agency Central Offices shall provide feedback to the RDC on the action taken by the agency on the RDC-endorsed programs, activities and projects before the agency final budget is submitted to the Department of Budget and Management.

Section 8. RDC Officials. The RDC shall have a Chairperson and a Co-Chairperson appointed by the President. The NEDA Regional Director shall be the *ex-officio* Vice-Chairperson of the RDC. The NEDA Assistant Regional Director shall be the *ex officio* Secretary of the RDC.

Section 9. Executive Committee. The RDC shall create an Executive Committee to act on matters that require immediate attention by the RDC. The Executive Committee shall comprise one-fourth of the total regular members of the Council, provided, that all sectoral committee chairpersons shall be members; provided further, that PSRs are likewise represented in the committee. The RDC Officials enumerated in Section 8 above shall also serve as the officials of the Executive Committee. All actions and decisions of the Executive Committee shall be presented to the RDC for its information and confirmation in the immediate RDC meeting.

Section 10. Advisory Committee. To further strengthen the coordinative and consultative mechanism in the regions, there is hereby created an Advisory Committee to advise, assist and support the Council in discharging its functions to be composed of the following:

- a. members of the House of Representatives representing the districts in the region;
- b. members of the RDC Executive Committee;

The Advisory Committee shall be chaired by the RDC Chairperson. The Committee shall meet as often as necessary.

Section 11. Sectoral and Other Committees. In the execution of its powers and functions, the RDC shall have social, economic, infrastructure, and development administration sectoral committees, the composition of which shall be determined by the RDC. It shall also create such other committees, as the RDC may deem necessary or as prescribed by laws.

The committees shall assist the RDC in the following functions:

- a. Formulate and recommend, for approval of the RDC, policies, plans, investment programs and projects of the region, including the review and endorsements of the PAPs contained in the investment programs;
- b. Monitor and evaluate major development plans, programs and projects of government agencies, LGUs, SUCs, GOCCs and other government instrumentalities implemented in the region and funded by national government;
- c. Provide technical inputs and advice in aid of planning, policy making, and decision making.

Such committees shall review and endorse matters to the RDC and/or the RDC Executive Committee pertaining to their respective sectors or functions. The NEDA Regional Office shall serve as secretariat, unless otherwise agreed upon by the Council.

Section. 12. Sectoral and Other Committee Officials. The sectoral and other committees, unless provided by law, shall have a chairperson, a co-

chairperson, and vice-chairperson chosen from among the members of the said committees. The officials shall be formally confirmed by the RDC.

Section. 13. Affiliate Committees and Councils. The various regional committees and councils organized to carry out national agency policies, programs and activities shall coordinate and work with the RDC. They shall assist the RDC to coordinate, monitor and evaluate their respective specific concerns. The secretariat functions to these bodies shall be provided by the lead agency that organized the affiliate council/committee.

Section 14. Meetings. The RDC shall meet once every quarter. Special meetings shall be conducted as the need arises. During full council meetings, the RDC members from the government should be represented by the local chief executives and the heads of regional line agencies and other government instrumentalities. The RDC may adopt its own rules on constituting quorum.

Section 15. Appointment of the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson. The President shall appoint the RDC Chairperson and Co-Chairperson from among the local chief executives and PSR members; provided, that if the Chairperson is from the government sector, the Co-Chairperson shall be from the private sector (and vice-versa). This notwithstanding, the RDCs may recommend to the President a list of nominees for the RDC Chairperson and Co-Chairperson positions.

Section 16. Functions of the Chairperson. The Chairperson shall have the following functions and responsibilities:

- a. Preside over the meetings of the RDC, the executive and the advisory committees;
- b. Request any agency, individual member of the RDC or committee to perform other functions as the RDC may deem necessary;
- c. Accept, in behalf of the RDC, donations, contributions, grants, bequests or gifts in cash or in kind from RDC members, foreign governments, international offices, private entities, or any individual for purposes relevant to regional development and submit for approval of the RDC a program for its utilization; provided, that acceptance of such by the RDC Chairperson shall be through a duly approved resolution of the RDC;

- d. Call the attention of implementing agencies and LGUs on implementation problems as identified and deliberated upon by the RDC with the end in view of instituting corrective measures;
- e. Ensure the periodic and regular monitoring of the implementation of inter-provincial and region-wide development programs, projects and activities; and update the RDC on the status of the above-mentioned during RDC meetings;
- f. Oversee the review, revision and approval of all policy recommendations, plans, programs and projects originating from the RDC Secretariat before submission to the RDC;
- g. Direct and supervise all activities of the RDC;
- h. Represent the region in Cabinet meetings and other activities at the national level; and
- i. Perform other functions and duties as may be directed by the President.

Section 17. Functions of the Co-Chairperson. The Co-Chairperson shall discharge other functions that complement those of the Chairperson's, as follows:

- a. Preside over the meetings of the RDC, the executive and the advisory committees in the absence of the Chairperson;
- b. Assume the powers and responsibilities of the Chairperson whenever the latter is unable to perform his/her functions or when the position becomes vacant;
- c. Act on matters requiring immediate decision in the absence of the Chairperson;
- d. Co-direct the conduct of regional and sub-regional consultations; and
- e. Serve as ex-officio Chairperson of any ad-hoc committee which the RDC may create, unless otherwise specified.

Section 18. Functions of the Vice-Chairperson. The NEDA Regional Director, as the Vice-Chairperson of the RDC, shall have the following functions:

- a. Preside over the meetings of the RDC, the Executive and the Advisory Committees in the absence of the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson;
- b. Act on matters requiring immediate decision in the absence of the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson;

- c. Serve as Acting Chairperson when the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson are unable to perform their functions or when both positions become vacant;
- d. Manage the technical, administrative and financial operations of the RDC;
- e. Manage and be accountable for the funds and properties of the RDC; and
- f. Perform other duties which may be assigned by the Chairperson and Co-chairperson.

Section 19. RDC Secretariat. The NEDA Regional Office shall be the Secretariat of the RDC.

Section 20. Term of Office. The RDC Chairperson and Co-Chairperson shall serve in the Council for a fixed term coinciding with the regular three-year term of elective local officials.

Section 21. Vacancy and Succession. In case of vacancy in the position of the Chairperson by reason of resignation, recall, retirement, reassignment, removal from office, ineligibility due to appointment to public office, death, incapacity, permanent disability or filing certificate of candidacy for a national or local election, the Co-Chairperson shall assume the position until a new Chairperson is appointed by the President. Should the position of the Co-Chairperson become vacant for the same reasons, the Vice-Chairperson shall assume the duties of the Co-Chairperson until a new Co-Chairperson is appointed by the President.

In case of resignation, recall, removal from office, ineligibility due to appointment to public office, death, incapacity or filing of certificate of candidacy for a national or local elections of a PSR member, the highest ranking PSR nominee who garnered the next highest vote in the last selection process shall assume the vacant position provided he/she is qualified and available, otherwise the next highest ranking PSR shall assume the position, and so on; provided, that the remaining term is at least one year prior to the next PSR selection.

Upon the expiration of the term of office of the Chairperson and Co-Chairperson, or in the event of a simultaneous permanent vacancy of said

positions, the Vice-Chairperson shall serve as Acting Chairperson until a new Chairperson or Co-Chairperson shall have been appointed.

Section 22. Funding. Funds necessary for RDC operations, project monitoring and evaluation, and implementation of special projects shall be included in the General Appropriations Act.

Additionally, upon coordination with the Department of Budget and Management, a regional fund shall be set up in the General Appropriations Act to fund programs and projects identified by the RDCs that will address the most important and urgent development concerns of each region.

The DBM shall issue the guidelines for the proper implementation of this section to provide for the establishment, maintenance and management of the regional fund to include the modification of the existing budget preparation procedures and processes.

Section 23. Disbursement and Utilization of Funds. The disbursement and utilization of funds provided therein shall be subject to existing budgeting, accounting, and auditing rules and regulations.

Section 24. Implementing Rules and Regulations. The NEDA Secretariat shall prepare the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of this executive order within three months following its effectivity, to be approved by the President.

Section 25. Manual of Operations. The RDCs shall accordingly revise their respective manual of operations in accordance with this executive order and its IRR.

Section 26. Non-applicability. This executive order shall not apply to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and the National Capital Region.

Section 27. Transitory Provision. The selection of PSRs shall be in accordance with the existing guidelines formulated by the NEDA Secretariat and approved by the NEDA Board on August 20, 1996 by virtue of NEDA Board Resolution No. 17, series of 1996, unless and until amended.

The existing PSRs shall continue to serve the Council until the expiry of their term. The selection of the new set of PSRs shall then be guided by the provisions of this Executive Order and its IRR.

Section 28. Repealing Clause. All previous issuances inconsistent with the provisions of this Executive Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 29. Effectivity. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

DONE, in the City of Manila, this _____ day of _____ in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Twenty Three.

By the President:

LUCAS P. BERSAMIN
Executive Secretary