

[PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 497, June 28, 1974]

GRANTING AMNESTY TO ALL FILIPINO MUSLIMS WHO HAVE COMMITTED ACTS PENALIZED UNDER EXISTING PENAL LAWS IN FURTHERANCE OF THEIR RESISTANCE TO THE DULY CONSTITUTED AUTHORITIES OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES.

WHEREAS, it is known that many of our Muslim brothers have joined the rebellion or secessionist movement engaged in subversion or became members of rebel groups, or other similar elements because of a misunderstanding of the objectives of the New Society and for grievances whether valid or otherwise or of misguided idealism or of threats, intimidation coercion and physical harassment;

WHEREAS, surveys and assessments made by authorities confirm this to be true;

WHEREAS, the Government believes that to grant full and complete amnesty to these Muslim brothers, who have taken up arms against the Republic of the Philippines or its duly constituted authorities, but who now lay down their arms and assume the peaceful role of citizenship to participate in nation-building take the oath of loyalty to the Republic of the Philippines and oppose the intervention of any foreign power in the internal problems of the Philippines, will greatly contribute to the restoration of peace and order in Mindanao and Sulu and will also enhance the development of the region and ultimately contribute to the promotion of the general welfare and well-being of the entire nation;

WHEREAS, to achieve such a desirable result without bloodshed and unnecessary waste of time and effort, it is necessary, just and wise, for the government to forgive and forego the prosecution of said misguided Muslim Filipinos for all crimes committed by them against the duly constituted authorities in pursuance of such rebellion or secession.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by Section 14, Article IX of the Constitution, do hereby declare and proclaim full and complete amnesty in favor of all Filipino Muslims who have committed any such acts of rebellion, secession, subversion or treason, penalized under existing laws in the provinces of North Cotabato, South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, and Palawan and the Cities of Cotabato, General Santos Iligan, Marawi, Zamboanga, Pagadian, Basilan, Dipolog and Dapitan, in furtherance of their resistance against the duly constituted authorities of the Republic of the Philippines before the issuance of this Decree and who shall lay their arms and submit themselves to the Special Amnesty Commission within 60 days from the promulgation of this Decree.

It is further decreed that in order to determine who among those against whom charges have been filed before the courts of the Philippines or against whom charges may be filed in the future, come within the terms of this amnesty, the Special Amnesty Commission, composed of five (5) members is hereby created pursuant to my pronouncement during the Independence Day and whose members I shall appoint, shall examine the facts and circumstances surrounding each case, and if necessary, conduct summary hearings of witnesses for the complainant and