

**[ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 163, December
08, 2006]**

**STRENGTHENING AND INCREASING THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE
PRESIDENTIAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE, AND EXPANDING
FURTHER THE FUNCTIONS OF SAID COMMITTEE**

WHEREAS, Administrative Order No. 29 dated 27 January 2002 established the Presidential Human Rights Committee;

WHEREAS, the Philippines is one of the first elected members of the United Nations Human Rights Council, and has pledged to strengthen the Presidential Human Rights Committee in the country;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. *Composition.* The Presidential Human Rights Committee shall be composed of the following:

- The Executive Secretary as Chairman
- The Secretary of Justice as Vice Chairperson
- The Secretary of Foreign Affairs as Co-Vice-Chairperson
- The Secretary of Education
- The Secretary of Interior and Local Government
- The Secretary of National Defense
- The Secretary of Health
- The Secretary of Social Welfare and Development
- The Secretary of Budget and Management
- The Press Secretary
- The Director General of the National Economic Development Authority
- The Chief Presidential Legal Counsel
- The Lead Convenor of the National Anti-Poverty Commission

The foregoing members shall designate alternate representatives to render continuing support and extend such help as may be needed to carry out the functions and duties of the Committee.

The Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, the Ombudsman, the Chairperson of the House Committee on Civil, Political and Human Rights, the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights, and the Supreme Court Administrator may join the Committee as observers.

SEC. 2. *Objective of the Committee.* The Committee shall serve as the primary advisory body to the President in effectively addressing all human rights concerns / issues in the country.

SEC. 3. *Functions and Duties of the Committee.* The Committee shall cooperate and coordinate with concerned government and private agencies, entities and groups in the performance of the following functions and duties:

- a. To formulate the National Human Rights Action Plan in accordance with international human rights treaty obligations and to adopt a "rights-based approach" in the formulation of said plan;
- b. To undertake the necessary measures that will ensure its adoption and implementation;
- c. To assist victims of human rights violations and their families, especially victims of enforced or involuntary disappearances, in enforcing their rights under pertinent laws including but not limited in The Victim Compensation Program (R.A. 7309) and the Witness Protection Program (R.A. No. 6931);
- d. To assess and monitor all aspects of the human rights situation in the country and to collate all necessary data on human rights violations and abuses;
- e. To set up and implement a media program to portray an accurate assessment of the human rights situation in the country;
- f. To ensure compliance with and strict adherence by the government to all its obligations under international human rights instruments where the Philippines is a party, including the timely submission of treaty implementation reports, replies and comments on cases filed with the United Nations;
- g. To conduct quarterly dialogues with the President;
- h. To submit annual dialogues with the President;
- i. To perform such other functions and duties as may be directed by the President and/or as may be necessary to meet the objectives of the Committee.

SEC. 4. *Assistance and Cooperation.* All government agencies are hereby directed to actively cooperate and support the Committee. For this purpose, the Committee, through the Chairperson, may call upon any department, bureau, office, agency or instrumentality of the government, including government owned or controlled corporations, for such assistance as it may need in the discharge of its functions. It shall also engage the participation of non-government organizations and other civil society representatives involved in human rights advocacy.

SEC. 5. *Lead Agencies and Working Groups on International Human Rights Treaties.* The following are designated as Lead Agencies in coordinating compliance with international human rights treaties:

1. The Department of Justice - International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
2. The Department of Interior and Local Government - Convention against Torture (CAT)