

[ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 108, February 10, 2000]

CREATING A PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO ENSURE THE IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES RIGHTS ACT AND DEFINING THE FUNCTIONS THEREOF

WHEREAS, the indigenous peoples belong to the most marginalized sector of our society;

WHEREAS, the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act or IPRA, Republic Act. No. 8371, was enacted into law to provide the urgent attention needed by indigenous peoples for the delivery of basic government services premised on the full recognition of their rights;

WHEREAS, the constitutionality of the IPRA has been questioned in a pending case in the Supreme Court, "Isagani Cruz and Cesar Europa vs. Sec. of DENR, et al. G.R. 135385";

WHEREAS, the pendency of the case has resulted in the delay of basic services delivery to the indigenous peoples, and created an ambiguity regarding the protection and recognition of their ancestral domain rights;

WHEREAS, legal issues have been raised regarding the interpretation of the law and its implementation such that the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) has not been able to function fully in accordance with the IPRA;

WHEREAS, the further delay in the delivery of basic services, especially those concerning the rights of indigenous peoples, will defeat the purpose of the IPRA and the Estrada Administration's poverty eradication program;

WHEREAS, the poverty eradication program of this Administration, in accordance with the Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act, Republic Act No. 8425, has included the indigenous peoples as among the fourteen basic sectors that require focused, comprehensive and integrated assistance;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, hereby order the creation of the Presidential Task Force on Indigenous Peoples (PTFIP) to ensure that the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) is able to fulfill its mandate so that the rights of the indigenous peoples are protected and recognized in accordance with the Constitution and the IPRA.

Section 1. The PTFIP shall be headed by a Chairman, designated by the President, from among the seven representatives of the following ethnographic regions, all of whom shall be appointed by the President: