

[EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 292, March 01, 2004]

**EXTENDING THE DURATION OF OPERATION OF THE
PRESIDENTIAL MIDDLE EAST PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE (PMEPC)**

WHEREAS, the Presidential Middle East Preparedness Committee (PMEPC) was established pursuant to Executive Order (EO) No. 159 dated December 23, 2002 to prepare, coordinate and implement the government's response to the critical developments in the Middle East;

WHEREAS, said EO 159 provides that the PMEPC shall exist for a period up to twelve (12) months, or until December 23, 2003, unless otherwise directed by the President;

WHEREAS, tensions in the Middle East continue to exist, particularly in the country of Iraq, which continues to pose a serious threat to the economic stability and related ramification on the country's national security and development; WHEREAS, the safety and welfare of some 1.4 million overseas Filipino workers in the Middle East is of primordial concern to the national government;

WHEREAS, the country remains steadfast in its support against global terrorism;

WHEREAS, the Philippines as member of the family of nations, has committed to support the Iraqi people in rebuilding their nations in its quest for lasting democracy; WHEREAS, Philippines has sent a Philippine Humanitarian Contingent to Iraq (PHCI) last August 20, 2003 for an initial period of not less than six (6) months composed of AFP, PNP and DOH personnel;

WHEREAS, PURSUANT TO executive Order 195, the PMEPC was also tasked to oversee the administration and operations of the PHCI while deployed in Iraq;

WHEREAS, there is therefore a need for the PMEPC to continue with its mandate, including its additional tasks pursuant to E.O. 194 and 195.

WHEREAS, UNDER section 31, Chapter 10, Title III, Book III of the Administrative Code of 1987, the President has the continuing authority to reorganize the functions of the Office of the President;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the power vested I me by law, do hereby order the one (1) year extension of the existence of the PMEPC or until December 23, 2004, unless otherwise directed by the President.

SECTION 1. *Functions* – The PMEPC shall continue to exercise its function and responsibilities as provided under EO 159 dated December 23, 2002, EO 194 dated