

[EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 787, March 25, 1982]

CREATING THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA REGIONAL LABOR OFFICE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

WHEREAS, there is a critical need to adopt new policies to maximize overseas employment and contracting opportunities for our workers and companies;

WHEREAS, the Middle East and Africa which presently have about 270,000 contract workers offer the best potential for expansion of the overseas employment and contracting program;

WHEREAS, the burgeoning Filipino presence in the Middle East and Africa require immediate and complete service arrangements to enhance the welfare and protect the interests of our workers;

WHEREAS, there is a felt need to consolidate, integrate and coordinate all labor and employment related activities and operations in the region if we are to optimize the benefits to be derived from our continuing presence;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby order as follows:

Section 1. There is hereby created a Regional Labor Office for the Middle East and Africa hereinafter called "Office", which shall be endowed with governmental function and attached to the Ministry of Labor and Employment, for policy and program coordination. The headquarters of the Office shall be in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia with an operation support staff in Manila which shall service the requirements of the Office. The Office shall be the sole agency to coordinate all labor training, employment and workers' welfare functions and operations including labor attaché activities in the Middle East and Africa.

Section 2. The head of the Regional Labor Office for the Middle East and Africa shall have the Rank of Deputy Minister and Ambassador (Chief of Division II).

Section 3. Area of Coverage — The Office shall cover the following countries: Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, UAE, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Iran, North and South Yemen, Nigeria, Libya, Malta and Cyprus and such other areas that may be designated by the President from time to time.

Section 4 Functions and Jurisdiction — The Office shall be charged with the following powers, functions and jurisdiction:

a) Undertake and coordinate all labor, employment and welfare service activities in the areas covered including liaison with the relevant agencies and entities in the

host countries;

b) Promote Filipino manpower and expertise in consonance with a sound market development plan;

c) Protect the interests and promote the welfare of Filipino workers;

d) Maximize foreign exchange generation from Filipino workers and service companies;

e) Undertake cultural, welfare, information and legal assistance to Filipino workers and where appropriate, to Filipino companies;

f) Enter into contracts with the private sector, whether Filipino or foreign, such as contractors, service companies and government agencies or instrumentalities for the promotion of Filipino manpower and services in the area. Any commission, fee or other income arising from such contracts and other marketing or service operations and activities shall be constituted into a revolving fund and shall be made available for the operational expenses of the Office;

g) To approve, endorse and cause the processing of as well as monitor the implementation of all contracts or agreements entered into by and between Filipino companies and their foreign principals/clients/partners or by and between workers and their employers in the areas covered;

h) Provisions of existing laws notwithstanding, to hear, try and decide cases and all matters involving employer-employee relations including money claims arising out of or by virtue of any law or contracts involving Filipino workers for overseas employment in the area including disability or death claims arising from or in connection with the employment or workers. The decisions of the Office shall be final and executory subject only to appeal to the Minister of Labor and Employment whose decisions are final and inappealable;

i) To suspend or revoke authorities to participate and deploy workers of agencies or companies in the areas covered for the violation of any provision of the Labor Code as amended and of this Order and, as may be warranted, impose fines or such other penalties on recruiters, contractors, principals or workers; and

j) To maintain a permanent and integrated Registry of all workers and companies employing Filipinos in the area of coverage including all contracts entered into by these companies and workers.

Section 5. Assistance of and Coordination with Pertinent Offices–

In the exercise of its functions and papers heretofore enumerated, the Office may call upon, enlist the assistance and coordinate with the following agencies and such other offices as may be necessary to effectively undertake its functions and responsibilities:

a) The overseas employment offices of the Ministry of Labor and Employment;

b) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs;