

[MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 94, March 17, 2016]

CREATING THE NATIONAL TASK FORCE FOR THE WEST PHILIPPINE SEA

WHEREAS, Section 7, Article II of the 1987 Constitution provides that national sovereignty, territorial integrity, national interest, and the right to self-determination are paramount considerations of the Philippines in its relations with the international community;

WHEREAS, Section 3, Article II of the 1987 Constitution mandates the Armed Forces of the Philippines to secure the sovereignty of the State and the integrity of the national territory;

WHEREAS, Section 2, Article XII of the 1987 Constitution provides that the State is bound to protect the nation's marine wealth in its archipelagic waters, territorial sea, and exclusive economic zone, and reserve its use and enjoyment exclusively to Filipino citizens;

WHEREAS, consistent with the Constitution, the Philippines' interests in the West Philippine Sea include the maintenance and protection of Philippine sovereignty, preservation and defense of territorial integrity, and promotion of the welfare and well-being of the Filipino people;

WHEREAS, the issues, policies, and required actions in the West Philippine Sea transcend the maritime security domain as these extend to other areas of concern such as in the diplomatic, politico-legal, information, military and law enforcement, and socio-economic fields; and

WHEREAS, given the country's national interest, national policies and evolving strategic landscape, a more deliberate and coherent approach in addressing the West Philippine Sea issue is needed for the purpose of orchestrating the national effort and achieving unified action in the West Philippine Sea.

NOW, THEREFORE, the concerned agencies are hereby directed as follows:

SECTION 1. Creation of the National Task Force for the West Philippine Sea. The National Task Force for the West Philippine Sea (NTF-WPS) is hereby formally established composed of representatives from the following:

Chairperson: National Security Adviser
Department of Foreign Affairs
Department of National Defense
Department of Justice
Members: Department of the Interior and Local