

[EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 488, June 11, 1998]

REPEALING ANNEX "B" OF EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 453 SERIES OF 1997 AND IMPLEMENTING THE ASEAN RATES OF DUTY OF CERTAIN IMPORTED ARTICLES AS PROVIDED FOR UNDER THE TARIFF AND CUSTOMS CODE OF 1998, AS AMENDED

WHEREAS, under Executive Order No. 287, Series of 1993, the Philippines started the implementation of its commitment under the new time frame of the accelerated Common Effective Preferential Tariff Scheme for the ASEAN Free Trade Area (CEPT-AFTA) which contained Annex "A" (Articles Granted Concessions under the CEPT-AFTA) and Annex "B" (Articles for Phasing-in the CEPT-AFTA);

WHEREAS, Annex "B" of E.O. 287 covered products excluded from the Philippine CEPT Inclusion List;

WHEREAS, implementation of the tariff reduction schedule of products under Annex "B" of E.O. 287 for the succeeding years is subject to the issuance of separate implementing Executive Orders;

WHEREAS, under Executive Order No. 453, Series of 1997, the Philippines continued to incorporate an Annex "B";

WHEREAS, the Philippines is undertaking a continuous tariff rationalization program where changes in the basic (MFN) Philippine rate of duty have affected certain products in Annex "B" particularly those whose MFN rates have been raised;

WHEREAS, for products affected by the increase in the basic (MFN) Philippine rates of duty, the continued implementation of Annex "B" would result to a premature granting of the CEPT concessions;

WHEREAS, under the CEPT Agreement, ASEAN Member Countries are not obliged to provide a tariff reduction schedule for products excluded from the CEPT Inclusion List and, until these products are phased into the CEPT, Member Countries have the flexibility to determine the applicable ASEAN rates;

WHEREAS, the Special AEM Meeting in Phuket on 28-29 April 1995 agreed that the margins of preference accorded products under the Preferential Trading Arrangements (PTA) should be integrated into the CEPT eventually leading to a single trading arrangement in ASEAN;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FIDEL V. RAMOS, President of the Philippines, pursuant to the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. Annex "B" of Executive Order No. 453, Series of 1997, is hereby repealed.