

**EXECUTIVE ORDER
NO. 152-A**

**PROVIDING FOR THE ACTIVATION OF THE CENTRAL
EAST ASIA GROWTH CIRCLE PROGRAM
AS AN ECONOMIC INITIATIVE
AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

WHEREAS, the Government recognizes the global trend where different economies are liberalizing economic relations in trade and investment and the resulting need for the economies' products and services to be globally competitive;

WHEREAS, different economies have adopted the strategy of forming sub-regional economic cooperation blocs to strengthen their respective economies such as the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines (Mindanao)-East Asia Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA);

WHEREAS, the economies across the South China Sea, to the west and to the north of the Philippines, such as China, Hong Kong, Macau, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea, together with the Philippines, comprise the economic heartland of Asia, where Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan are economies rich in capital and advanced technology, where China is a huge market and where the Philippines is rich in minerals, raw materials, natural and human resources;

WHEREAS, these economic complementarities can be harnessed through the formation or activation of an economic cooperation bloc which will convert the sub-region into an economic powerhouse and provide significant economic benefits to the member economies;

WHEREAS, the aim of this concept is to increase trade and investments through an improved business climate, with the ultimate target of creating new jobs and livelihood opportunities for the ordinary Filipino in the sub-region;

WHEREAS, the national government has taken the initial steps in making the country, specifically the four (4) administrative regions North of the National Capital Region, hereinafter referred to as North Philippines, namely: Regions 1, 2, 3 and the Cordillera Administrative Region, ready to meet the challenges of a globally competitive environment through economic integration;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. THE CREATION OF THE CENTRAL EAST ASIA GROWTH CIRCLE PROGRAM. There is hereby created under the Office of the President a program which is initially to be called the Central East Asia Growth Circle and hereinafter called the CEA-GC, and which shall promote and encourage the active and extensive cooperation of the economies in the said sub-region.

SECTION 2. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY. The CEA-GC program shall be implemented by adopting a strategy of phased progression in establishing economic cooperation with focus areas within the Growth Circle, where initial bilateral arrangements may be established, and eventually resulting in a multilateral economic cooperation agreement among the member economies.

SECTION 3. PRESIDENTIAL ACTION OFFICER FOR CEA-GC. The President shall appoint a Presidential Action Officer for the Central East Asia Growth Circle Program (PAO-CEAGC) with the rank of undersecretary, and with the following duties and functions:

- a) Promote foreign investments, trade and tourism activities in North Philippines which would enhance socio-economic development in the area with focus on but not limited to

developing linkages with economies in the Central East Asia Growth Circle;

- b) Coordinate the related activities of concerned departments, Regional Development Councils and specialized government development agencies in North Philippines, and ensure their active but coordinated participation in the program;
- c) Mobilize private sector participation in all activities of the program;
- d) Cause the preparation of economic and feasibility studies, and explore sources of financing of priority programs and projects, whether governmental or private that will support and encourage the active participation of the North Philippines' integrated economy in the program;
- e) Advocate to the constituents of North Philippines, their elected local executives and representatives in Congress and the National Government, national policies which will foster the active participation of North Philippines, in such policy areas as banking, investment and lending by financial institutions, transport and telecommunication, infrastructure, export of agricultural and other products, tourism, environment, reforestation, education, science and technology and human resource development;
- f) Negotiate for sources of funds to include Official Development Assistance on a bilateral or multilateral basis in accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations;
- g) Provide the mechanisms to extending the necessary planning, management and technical assistance to prospective and existing investors in North Philippines;
- h) Receive and administer donations, contributions, grants, bequests or gifts in cash or in kind from participating and non-participating economies, international agencies, private entities,

that will contribute to the development of North Philippines, subject to existing laws, rules and regulations;

- i) As the Presidential Action Officer for CEA-GC, he shall exercise administrative and technical supervision over the program;
- j) Appoint the officers and staff of the CEA-GC Program Secretariat, and ensure that it performs its functions and achieves the Program's objectives;
- k) The PAO-CEAGC shall submit to the President quarterly reports on its accomplishments and activities.

SECTION 4. THE ADVISORY COUNCIL. The PAO-CEAGC shall have an Advisory Council, which shall have the following functions:

- a) To advise the PAO-CEAGC on the different aspects of the program;
- b) To ensure that the goals and policies of the PAO-CEAGC are consistent with the overall national development goals and policies;
- c) To ensure that programs of PAO-CEAGC are consistent with regional and local development plans and programs.

SECTION 5. THE MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL. The Advisory Council shall be composed of the following:

- a) The Executive Secretary as Chairman;
- b) Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry as Vice-Chairman
- c) Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs;
- d) Secretary, Socio-Economic Planning;
- e) Secretary, Department of Tourism;
- f) Secretary, Department of Transportation and Communication;
- g) Secretary, Department of Agriculture;
- h) Secretary, Department of Environment and Natural Resources;

- i) Secretary, Department of Public Works and Highways;
- j) Presidential Assistant for North Luzon;
- k) The Presidential Adviser for Development Administration;
- l) The Chairman of the Regional Development Councils or similar bodies of the aforementioned Regions;
- m) A representative from the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry;
- n) Two private sector representatives from each region of North Philippines chosen by and from among the private sector representatives of the concerned Regional Development Councils;
- o) One Congressional Representative from each region of North Philippines who shall be chosen by and from among the Congressional Representatives in the region;
- p) One Governor from each region of North Philippines who shall be chosen by and from among the Governors in the region;
- q) One City Mayor chosen by and from among the City Mayors of North Philippines;
- r) The Administrator or equivalent official of all government corporations, commissions, development authorities and like organizations based in the four regions such as, but not limited to, the following:

North Luzon Growth Commission, Presidential Commission for the Central Luzon Growth Corridor, Cagayan Special Economic Zone Authority, Banawe Rice Terraces Task Force, Lingayen Gulf Commission, Vigan Heritage Commission, Philippine Economic Zone Authority, Agno River Basin Development Commission, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, Clark Development Corporation, John Hay-Poro Point Development Corporation.

The composition of the Advisory Council may be expanded when necessary.

SECTION 6. TECHNICAL SUPPORT STAFF OF THE PAO-CEAGC. A program Office for the CEAGC shall be constituted to assist the PAO-CEAGC in implementing the

program. It shall be headed by a Program Director to be appointed by the President upon the recommendation of the PAO-CEAGC. Additional technical and administrative staff from the National Economic and Development Authority, Department of Trade and Industry, Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Tourism and other government agencies and institutions may also be detailed or seconded to the Program Office as necessary.

SECTION 7. ROLE OF NATIONAL LINE AGENCIES, LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS, GOVERNMENT OWNED AND CONTROLLED CORPORATIONS, NON - GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS. Concerned national line agencies in the regions, local government units, development authorities and special economic zones and project offices, government owned and controlled corporations, non-government organizations/the private sector, shall, as appropriate, serve as implementing entities of activities related to the CEAGC program. These related activities are inclusive of, but not limited to, the organization of: trade investment/tourism fairs and missions, business conventions and forums, technical working group meetings, senior officials meetings, among others.

SECTION 8. FUNDING The Department of Budget and Management is hereby directed to release from the Presidential Contingent Fund or the Organizational Adjustment Fund, an initial lump sum funding of P18,000,000.00 for the organization, and the administrative and internal operational requirements of the Presidential Action Office-CEAGC, for the period September to December 1999. The additional budget for the year 2000 shall be sourced from the Presidential Contingent Fund or any other fund within the Office of the President. Thereafter, the appropriations for the continued operations of the PAO-CEAGC shall be included in the annual general appropriations bill submitted to congress.

SECTION 9. IMPLEMENTING AUTHORITY. The PAO-CEAGC is hereby authorized to promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement this Executive Order.

SECTION 10. EFFECTIVITY. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately. Provisions of existing Executive Orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with this Executive Order are hereby superseded by this issuance.

DONE in the City of Manila, this 11th day of May, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand.

(Sgd.) JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA

By the President:

(Sgd.) RONALDO B. ZAMORA
Executive Secretary