

[PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 1694, May 01, 1980]

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE WELFARE FUND FOR OVERSEAS WORKERS

WHEREAS, the overseas employment development of the Government undertaken through the Ministry of Labor has generated an explosion of the presence abroad of Filipino workers, now estimated to be around 1.7 million in 107 countries of the world;

WHEREAS, there is every indication that the overseas demand for Filipino workers would continue to increase in the coming years;

WHEREAS, because of the volatile situation in many countries hosting this labor force, the Government is continually under stress in efforts to provide overseas Filipino workers adequate protection;

WHEREAS, in response to the distressed conditions of many of these workers, the Government, under Letter of Instructions No. 537 issued on May 1, 1977, authorized the creation in the Ministry of Labor of a Welfare and Training Fund for Overseas Workers to be funded with contributions from overseas employers of Filipino workers;

WHEREAS, it is deemed that the objectives and purposes of the Fund as set forth in LOI No. 537 can best be served by now formalizing operations into a comprehensive Welfare Fund.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby Order and Decree:

SECTION 1. *Welfare Fund for Overseas Workers.* There is hereby created a "Welfare Fund for Overseas Workers," hereinafter referred to as the Welfund which shall be used for the purpose of providing social and welfare services to Filipino overseas workers, including insurance coverage, legal assistance, placement assistance, and remittance services.

SEC. 2. *Fund Source.* All contributions to the Welfare and Training Fund collected pursuant to Letter of Instructions No. 537 issued on May 1, 1977 shall be transferred to the Welfund. Fees and other charges may be imposed by the Overseas Employment Development Board, the Bureau of Employment Services, and the National Seamen Board, subject to the approval of the Minister of Finance. Such fees, charges and other collections shall accrue to the Welfare and Training Fund.

SEC. 3. *Administration.* The Welfund shall be administered by a Board of Trustees consisting of the Minister of Labor as Chairman, the Deputy Minister of Labor as Vice Chairman, and the Executive Director of the Overseas Employment Development Board, the Executive Director of the National Seamen Board, the Director of the Bureau of Employment Services, the Administrator of the Welfund, and one representative each from the management and labor sectors who shall be appointed by the President, as members.