

[PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 975, August 09, 1976]

CREATING THE OFFICE OF ISLAMIC AFFAIRS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFINING ITS FUNCTIONS AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR.

WHEREAS, under the Constitution of the Philippines, it is the declared policy of the State "to adhere to the policy of peace, equality, justice, freedom, cooperation, and amity with all nations"; "to preserve Filipino culture for the development of national identity"; and, "that customs, traditions, beliefs, and interests of national cultural communities shall be considered in the formulation and implementation of State policies";

WHEREAS, in the pursuit of those policies, the Philippine Government has established diplomatic relations and maintains close ties of friendship and cooperation with member-states of the Islamic Conference and other nations in the world;

WHEREAS, there still is a need to strengthen further political, economic, cultural, social and technical cooperation with Islamic States not only bilaterally but on a broader multilateral scale;

WHEREAS, there is a need to undertake a unified and sustained Government action to maximize cooperation with Islamic States through an Office in the Department of Foreign Affairs;

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

SECTION 1. *Office of Islamic Affairs.*—There shall be created an Office of Islamic Affairs in the Department of Foreign Affairs to be headed by an Assistant Secretary.

SEC. 2. *Functions.*—The Office of Islamic Affairs shall have the following functions:

1. To assist the Secretary of Foreign Affairs in the formulation of policies governing Philippine relations with Islamic States;
2. To assist the Secretary of Foreign Affairs in recommending measures relevant to the conduct of Philippine relations with Islamic states, designed to uplift the political, economic, social and cultural well-being of Muslim communities in the Philippines, particularly in relation to the implementation of national policies in the autonomous commissions in Regions IX and XII;
3. To assist the Secretary of Foreign Affairs in cultural projects with Islamic states designed to preserve the Islamic cultural heritage of the Philippines;
4. To assist the Secretary of Foreign Affairs in the monitoring and in the coordination of the projects and the utilization of funds of the Relief and Welfare Agency and of such other agencies that may be created for the same purpose;
5. To assist the Secretary of Foreign Affairs in negotiating with Islamic states for obtaining scholarships, fellowships, grants and other forms of educational and financial assistance;
6. To recommend to the Secretary of Foreign Affairs the sending of missions to Islamic countries for the promotion of goodwill and to strengthen political,