

[PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 302, September 27, 1973]

CREATING THE PROVINCE OF TAWI-TAWI

WHEREAS, a fundamental aim of the Government is the economic development of the entire country;

WHEREAS, the islands comprising the Tawi-Tawi group are so distant from the seat of the provincial government of Sulu and communication facilities so inadequate that it is extremely difficult to administer the government affairs in the area;

WHEREAS, the effective implementation of the programs of the Government on rehabilitation, reconstruction and development depends primarily on administrative efficiency on the local government level; and

WHEREAS, it is the avowed policy of the Government to uplift the socioeconomic well-being of the inhabitants in the area that is generally known as the Tawi-Tawi group;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FERDINAND E. MARCOS, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers in me vested by the Constitution as Commander-in-Chief of all the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and pursuant to Proclamation No. 1081, dated 21 September 1972, and General Order No. 1, dated 22 September 1972, as amended, do hereby order and decree:

SECTION 1. The following municipalities in the Tawi-Tawi group:

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|-----------------|---------------------|
| (a) South Ubian | (e) Balimbing |
| (b) Tandubas | (f) Bungao |
| (c) Simunul | (g) Cagayan de Sulu |
| (d) Sitangkai | (h) Turtle Island |

are hereby removed from the territorial jurisdiction of the Province of Sulu and constituted into a separate province to be known as the Province of Tawi-Tawi.

SEC. 2. The Provincial Capital of the Province of Tawi-Tawi shall be Bato-Bato, Balimbing.

SEC. 3. Except as hereinafter provided, all provisions of law now or hereafter applicable to regular provinces shall be applicable to the Province of Tawi-Tawi.

SEC. 4. The present elective provincial officials of the Province of Sulu shall continue to perform their duties as such officials in the province herein created until the provincial officials of the said Province shall have been appointed by the President. Such officials thus appointed shall hold office until their successors shall have been elected in the election for provincial and municipal officials following the issuance of this Decree and shall have qualified unless sooner removed at the pleasure of the President. Such appointive officers and employees as may be necessary to organize or to complete the government personnel of the Province herein created shall be appointed as provided by law.