

[PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 356, December 27, 1973]

CREATING THE PROVINCE OF BASILAN

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the State to create every possible opportunity and enlarge every means to quicken the pace of progress, in every part of the country, with particular stress on those areas whose economic development had for one reason or another lagged behind the rest of the nation;

WHEREAS, the island of Basilan has suffered from virtual geographic isolation and, like the islands of the Tawi-Tawi group, has long needed closer attention for the purpose of speedier growth;

WHEREAS, the policy of speedy development for this part of the country can best be carried out by the creation of a local government which could, through faster administrative response to problems and better appreciation of its peculiar needs, provide more adequate service to the people of the area; and

WHEREAS, such administrative machinery will redound to the economic, social and political progress of the people of Basilan;

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, do hereby order and decree:

SECTION 1. Except the territory consisting of the town proper or *poblacion* of the former Municipality of Isabela, which shall be known as the City of Basilan, the territory embracing the whole island of Basilan and adjacent islands, in which are comprised the remaining barrios and sitios of the former Municipality of Isabela and the Municipal Districts of Lamitan and Maluso, which are hereby created into regular municipalities, is constituted into a new province to be known as the Province of Basilan.

SEC. 2. The capital of the Province of Basilan shall be the Municipality of Isabela.

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

SEC. 4. The present elective officials of the Province of Zamboanga del Sur shall perform their duties as such officials in the newly created Province of Basilan until the officials of the latter shall have been duly 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. Other appointive officials 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.

SEC. 5. The Province herein created shall remain part of the present representative district of Zamboanga del Sur until a law shall have been passed reapportioning the