

## [ EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 23, April 27, 2017 ]

### **EXTENDING THE EFFECTIVITY OF THE MOST-FAVOURED-NATION RATES OF DUTY ON CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS UNDER REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10863, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CUSTOMS MODERNIZATION AND TARIFF ACT AND THE OTHER PHILIPPINE COMMITMENTS UNDER THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION DECISION ON WAIVER RELATING TO SPECIAL TREATMENT FOR RICE OF THE PHILIPPINES**

**WHEREAS**, the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Agriculture ("Agreement") embodies the multilateral trading rules governing agriculture;

**WHEREAS**, Republic Act (RA) No. 8178 or the "Agricultural Tarrification Act" adopts the use of tariffs in lieu of non-tariff import restrictions to protect local producers of agricultural products, except in the case of rice;

**WHEREAS**, the Philippine government secured "Special Treatment" for rice under Article 4.2 and Section B of Annex 5 of the Agreement which temporarily permitted the country to impose quantitative restrictions in the importation of rice;

**WHEREAS**, the Special Treatment expired on 30 June 2012 as scheduled in the Rectification and Modification of Schedule LXXV-Republic of the Philippines contained in the WTO documents G/MA/TAR/RS/99/Rev. 1 dated 27 September 2006 and WT/Let/562 on 08 February 2007 but has been reinstated up to 30 June 2017 by virtue of the WTO Decision on Waiver Relating to Special Treatment for Rice of the Philippines ("Waiver") contained in WTO document WT/L/42 dated 24 July 2014;

**WHEREAS**, paragraphs 2-8 of the Waiver also embody the terms and conditions including the concessions on rice contained in its "Annex A" and the other concessions to reduce the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) rates of duty on certain agricultural products, and Executive Order (EO) 190 (s. 2015) was issued to implement the said tariff concessions;

**WHEREAS**, on 1 July 2017, the Waiver Relating to Special Treatment for Rice shall cease to exist;

**WHEREAS**, Section 1608 of RA No. 10863 authorizes the President of the Philippines, upon the recommendation of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), to increase, reduce or remove existing protective rates of import duty; and

**WHEREAS**, the NEDA Board, during its meeting on 20 February 2017, approved the extension of the reduced rates of duty on the agricultural products in EO No. 190 for another three (3) years.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE**, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution and existing laws, do hereby