

[EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 445, October 01, 1997]

PROVIDING FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SZOPAD SOCIAL FUND AND THE MECHANISM FOR THE ADMINISTRATION THEREOF

WHEREAS, the Government of the Republic of the Philippines has forged a Peace Agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) on September 2, 1996;

WHEREAS, the President has created the Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD) and the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD) through Executive Order No. 371 on October 2, 1996;

WHEREAS, the Government has invited both domestic and foreign donor institutions to support the goals of the peace and development process in the SZOPAD and some have already expressed their support;

WHEREAS, the victims of internal armed conflicts as well as the people of poor communities in the SZOPAD are in urgent need of assistance to enable them to access basic social services and opportunities for economic development;

WHEREAS, there is a need to create an institutional mechanism that will support and enhance international, national and local government initiatives and promote public and private sector partnership and synergy for the development of the SZOPAD;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, FIDEL V. RAMOS, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law and the Constitution, do hereby order the following:

SECTION 1. Implementation of the SZOPAD Social Fund. There is hereby established a mechanism for the implementation of the SZOPAD Social Fund, hereinafter referred to as the Fund, to undertake the implementation of small-scale social and economic infrastructure projects and services to sustain the gains of the peace process and accelerate the development of the SZOPAD.

SECTION 2. Purpose and Objectives of the Fund. The SZOPAD Social Fund shall:

- a) Coordinate development assistance to be mobilized to implement social and economic infrastructure projects in the SZOPAD;
- b) Provide a quick and responsive mechanism to facilitate financing of small-scale social and economic infrastructure projects; and
- c) Help meet basic needs of victims of armed conflicts and economically disadvantaged communities in the SZOPAD.

SECTION 3. The Board of Directors. The Board of Directors, hereinafter referred to as the Board, is hereby constituted with the following functions:

- a) Establish the financing policies and guidelines to accomplish the purpose and objectives in the implementation of the Fund;