

**[ EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 152, September 28, 1999 ]**

**PROVIDING FOR THE ACTIVATION OF THE CENTRAL EAST ASIA GROWTH CIRCLE PROGRAM AS AN ECONOMIC AND DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVE AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

**WHEREAS**, the Government recognizes the global trend where different economies are liberalizing economic relations in trade and investment and the resulting need for the country's products and services to be globally competitive;

**WHEREAS**, different economies have adopted the strategy of forming regional economic cooperation blocs to strengthen their respective economies, such as the Brunei Indonesia Malaysia Philippines (Mindanao) – East Asia Growth Area (or BIMP-EAGA);

**WHEREAS**, the countries across the South China Sea, to the east and to the north of the Philippines, which are the Philippines (North Luzon), China, Hongkong, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan, comprise the economic heartland of Asia, where Japan, South Korea, Hongkong and Taiwan are countries rich in capital and advanced technology, where China is a huge market and where the Philippines is rich in minerals, raw materials, natural and human resources;

**WHEREAS**, these economic complementarities can be harnessed through the formation or activation of a regional economic cooperation bloc which will convert the region into an economic powerhouse and provide significant economic benefits to the member countries;

**WHEREAS**, the aim of this concept is to increase trade and investments through an improved business climate, with the ultimate target of creating new jobs and livelihood opportunities for the ordinary Filipino in the region;

**WHEREAS**, the national government has taken the initial steps in making the country, specifically the four (4) administrative regions North of the National Capital Region, hereinafter referred to as the North Luzon, namely: Regions 1, 2, 3, and the Cordillera Administrative Region, ready to meet the challenges of a globally competitive environment through economic integration.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA**, President of the President, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

**SECTION 1.** THE CREATION OF THE CENTRAL EAST ASIA GROWTH CIRCLE PROGRAM. There is hereby created under the Office of the President, a program which is initially to be called the Central East Asia Growth Circle and hereinafter called the CEA-GC, and which shall promote and encourage the active and extensive economic cooperation of the economies above-mentioned in the area of the South

China Sea.

**SEC. 2. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY,** The CEA-GC program shall be implemented by adopting a strategy of phased progression in establishing economic cooperation with focus areas within the Growth Circle resulting in a multilateral economic cooperation agreement among the member countries.

**SEC. 3. PRESIDENTIAL ACTION OFFICER FOR CEA-GC.** The President shall appoint a Presidential Action Center Officer for the Central East Asia Growth Circle Program (PAO-CEAGC) with the rank of undersecretary, and with the following duties and functions:

- a) Promote foreign investments, trade and tourism activities in North Luzon which would enhance socio-economic development in the area with focus on but not limited to developing linkages with countries in the Central East Asia Growth Circle;
- b) Coordinate the related activities of concerned departments, RDC's and specialized government development agencies in North Luzon, and ensure their active, but coordinated participation in the program;
- c) Mobilize private sector participation in all activities of the program;
- d) Cause the preparation of economic and feasibility studies, and explore, sources of financing of priority programs and projects, whether governmental or private that will support and encourage the active participation of the North Luzon integrated economy in the program;
- e) Advocate to the constituents of North Luzon, their elected executives and representatives in Congress and the National Government, national policies which will foster the active participation of North Luzon, in such policy areas as banking investment and lending by financial institutions, transport and telecommunication, infrastructure, export of agricultural and other products, tourism, environment, reforestation, education, science and technology and human resources development;
- f) Negotiate for sources of funds to include the Overseas Development Assistance on a bilateral or multilateral basis in accordance with existing rules and regulations;
- g) Provide the machinery for extending the necessary planning, management and technical assistance to prospective and existing investors in North Luzon;
- h) Receive and administer donations, contributions, grants, requests or gifts in cash or in kind from foreign governments, international agencies, private entities, and contribute to the