

**IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT
NO. 9997, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE NATIONAL COMMISSION
ON MUSLIM FILIPINOS ACT OF 2009"**

**RULE I
GENERAL PROVISIONS**

SECTION 1. *Title.* These Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), are hereby adopted and promulgated pursuant to Section 24 of R.A. No. 9997.

SECTION 2. *Declaration of Policy.* It is the policy of the State to ensure the rights and well-being of Muslim Filipinos with due regard to their beliefs, customs, traditions and institutions, as well as to further ensure their contribution to national goals and aspirations and to make them active participants in nation-building.

**RULE II
DEFINITION OF TERMS**

SECTION 3. *Definition of Terms.* The terms used in this IRR shall mean, as follows:

- (a) *Amirul Hajj* – refers to one who heads the Muslim Filipino pilgrimage delegation during the annual Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (K.S.A.) who, by law, shall be the head of the Commission. Ideally, the head of delegation shall be knowledgeable on hajj rituals and with established administrative and managerial skills.
- (b) *Awqaf* – means endowment, donation or gift as contemplated and understood in Islamic law.
- (c) *Balik Islam* – refers to a person who reverts to Islam and continues to adhere to its tenets and principles.
- (d) Commission or NCMF – refers to the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos.
- (e) Commissioner – refers to any of the nine (9) members of the Commission.

- (f) Council – refers to the Council of Advisers which the Commission may create, pursuant to Paragraph 3, Section 5 of Article I of RA 9997, to be composed of cultural, religious, traditional and tribal leaders.
- (g) *Hajj* – refers to the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and is one of the five (5) pillars of Islam.
- (h) *Halal* – means lawful or permitted in Islam. It is sometimes referred to as acceptable or not forbidden among Muslims.
- (i) *Madaris* – the plural form for Madrasah.
- (j) Madrasah – A term used to describe Arabic school or institution of learning, whether public or private, with core emphasis on Islamic values and studies and Arabic literacy, vis-à-vis the Philippine educational system.
- (k) Muslim – refers to a person who professes Islam as his/her religion and observes the tenets and principles of Islam.
- (l) Muslim Filipinos – refer to the Muslim population of the Philippines, regardless of ethno-linguistic groupings and tribal affiliations.
- (m) Muslim Filipino Communities – refer to groups of Muslim Filipinos living in the same recognized geographic location.
- (n) Muslim Filipino Tribes/Ethno-linguistic groups – refer to the groups comprising the Muslims in the Philippines, namely, but not limited to, the following: Maguindanaons, Maranaws, Tausugs, Yakans, Sama, Iranons, Kalagans, and Jamamapuns.
- (o) *Mutawiff* – comes from the Arabic word *Tawaf*, which refers to a group, establishment or company in Saudi Arabia that provides services for inland transportation, food, housing and other related services to the Hujjaj or pilgrims during their legitimate stay in Saudi Arabia during the Hajj and/or Umrah seasons.
- (p) *Mutawiff* Fees – refer to fees or charges paid to a group or establishment in Saudi Arabia that provides services for inland transportation, food, housing and other related services for the *Hujjaj*

or pilgrims during their legitimate stay in Saudi Arabia at the time of *Hajj and/or Umrah* seasons.

- (q) National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) – refers to the office created under RA 8371.
- (r) Non-Government Organization (NGO) - refers to duly registered non-stock, non-profit organizations focusing on the upliftment of the basic or disadvantaged sectors of society by providing advocacy, training, community organizing, research, access to resources and other similar activities, as understood under Philippine context.
- (s) People’s Organization (PO) – refers to a self-help group belonging to the basic sectors and/or disadvantaged groups, composed of members having a common bond of interest, who voluntarily join together to achieve a lawful common social or economic end.
- (t) Muslim Settlement - refers to an area duly proclaimed and/or declared as such in accordance with the prescribed procedures adopted by the government and where a significant number of Muslim families live together as a community.
- (u) *Shari’ah* – refers to the broad concept of Islamic law which, under Philippine setting, would include Presidential Decree no. 1083, otherwise known as “The Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines”.
- (v) *Sheikh* – refers to a person knowledgeable on *Hajj* rites who leads, guides and provides appropriate hajj-related services to the *Jamaa* or *Hujjaj* (pilgrims) under him from the time they leave home for Saudi Arabia until their return.
- (w) *Ulama* – refers to a group of Islamic scholars who have jurisdiction over legal and social matters for the people of Islam.
- (x) Umrah Hajj – is a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia that can be undertaken at any time of the year.
- (y) *Zakat* – refers to a definite portion of wealth and assets which is given to those who are less fortunate.

RULE III
CREATION AND COMPOSITION OF THE COMMISSION
AND TERM OF OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS

SECTION 4. *Creation.* The National Commission on Muslim Filipinos, hereinafter referred to as the Commission, shall replace and take over the functions of the defunct Office on Muslim Affairs.

The Commission, which is under the Office of the President, shall cover both local and national affairs involving Muslim Filipinos that include the implementation of economic, educational, cultural, and infrastructure programs for Muslim Filipino communities outside of the jurisdiction of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) or the Bangsamoro Political entity.

SECTION 5. *Mandate.* The Commission shall preserve and develop the culture, tradition, institutions, and well-being of Muslim Filipinos in conformity with the country's laws and in consonance with national unity and development.

SECTION 6. *Composition.* The Commission, composed of nine (9) full-time members who are Muslim Filipinos, shall be headed by a Secretary. The composition of the Commission shall be as follows:

- (a) One (1) Commissioner from the Women Sector;
- (b) One (1) Commissioner from the Youth Sector;
- (c) One (1) Commissioner from the Ulama Sector; and
- (d) Six (6) Commissioners from the different Muslim Filipino tribes/ethno-linguistic groups.

To ensure a more equitable representation in the Commission, not more than two (2) from among the nine (9) Commissioners shall come from the same Muslim Filipino tribes/ethno-linguistic group at any given time.

The Commissioners are prohibited to appoint or designate representatives to act on their behalf in the Commission.

SECTION 7. *Appointment and Qualifications of the Commissioners.* The President shall appoint the regular members of the Commission. The Commissioners shall possess the following qualifications:

- (a) Have the endorsement of their respective tribes or sectors;
- (b) Have the highest degree of integrity;
- (c) Must be academic degree holders; and
- (d) Can speak and write English and/or Arabic fluently.

SECTION 8. *Term of Office.* The Secretary, appointed by the President from among the nine (9) Commissioners, shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Commission. He or she shall attend the cabinet-level meetings of the President and shall have the same rank, salary and privileges as that of a Cabinet Secretary. The Secretary shall serve for a period of two (2) years without prejudice to reappointment.

Should a Commissioner fail to complete his/her term, the President shall appoint a successor from the tribe or sector the Commissioner represents. The successor will serve for the unexpired portion of the term.

SECTION 9. *Removal from Office.* The President may remove any member of the Commission before the expiration of his/her term, for cause and after observance of the proper due process required by pertinent laws.

RULE IV POWERS AND FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMISSION

SECTION 10. *Powers and Functions.* To accomplish its mandate, the Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

- (a) Provide advice and assistance to the President in the formulation, coordination, implementation and monitoring of policies, plans, programs and projects affecting Muslim Filipino communities; when so authorized, represent the President on matters concerning Muslim Filipino communities; serves as a link between the President and public or private agencies, internal or external, that are involved in such programs and projects; and recommend such affirmative actions as may be necessary for their efficient and effective implementation;
- (b) Undertake and coordinate development programs and projects for the advancement of Muslim Filipino communities, including designing, implementing and maintaining settlements for Muslim Filipino communities: *Provided*, That the Commission shall not take jurisdiction or ownership over lands, and bodies of water traditionally and actually occupied by indigenous peoples and within the identified ancestral domains of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples: *Provided, further*, That lands may be identified by the Commission for the purpose of settling the homeless and displaced Muslim families to improve the conditions of the members of the Muslim communities;
- (c) Act as the primary government agency through which Muslim Filipinos can seek government assistance and redress; serve as the medium through which such assistance may be extended to Muslim Filipinos; for this purpose, the Commission is hereby authorized, subject to existing auditing rules and regulations, to give grants-in-aid out of its

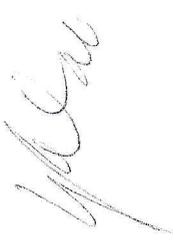
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appropriations or other appropriate funds to cooperating government agencies for such programs or projects for the development of Muslim Filipino communities; provide services including legal assistance, medical aid, relief, rehabilitation and other forms of assistance for socioeconomic upliftment of Muslim Filipino communities;

- (d) Participate in the peace process involving conflicts between Filipino Muslim groups and/or individuals and the government in cooperation with appropriate agencies, individuals and institutions. Pursuant hereto, the Commission's Secretary or his/her duly designated representative shall sit as a regular member of the government's peace panel negotiating peace with the Muslim Filipino groups or individuals;
- (e) Enter, subject to existing laws, policies and guidelines, into contracts, agreements or arrangements with government or private agencies/entities as may be necessary to attain the objectives of the Commission;
- (f) In accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations and subject to guidelines provided by the Office of the President, promote and enhance the development of domestic trade and commerce among the members of the Muslim Filipino communities; promote or facilitate the establishment by members of the Muslim Filipino communities joint venture and investments in cooperation or coordination with existing public enterprises, corporations or private entities; initiate and/ or organize, in accordance with pertinent laws, rules and regulations, enterprises based on the principles of Islamic business and finance for the benefit and welfare of the Muslim Filipino communities;
- (g) Recommend to the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) the proposed expenditure for the development of all Muslim Filipino communities;
- (h) Promote and develop the Philippine Halal Industry and accredit halal-certifying entities/bodies for the utmost benefit of Muslim Filipinos and in partnership or cooperation with appropriate agencies, individuals and institutions here and abroad;
- (i) Develop criteria for allocating additional resources for education, economic and cultural development programs;
- (j) Monitor and evaluate the performance of all existing policies and development programs of the government that seek to strengthen and uplift the socioeconomic conditions of Muslim Filipinos and identify areas that need government intervention and support;



- (k) Acquire, lease or own property or assets in whatever form as may be necessary, and sell or otherwise dispose of the same, and serve as the custodian or administrator of such lands or areas and other properties or assets the President may reserve for the benefit of Muslim Filipino communities;
- (l) Solicit and accept grants, donations and gifts, in cash or in kind, in whatever source, in coordination with the appropriate agency for the benefit of the Muslim Filipinos, and administer the same in accordance with the terms thereof, or in the absence of any condition, in such manner consistent with the interest of Muslim Filipinos as well as existing laws;
- (m) Undertake studies, establish and maintain ethnographic research centers and museums on the cultures and institutions of Muslim Filipinos for policy formulation and program implementation and for the purpose of preserving their historical heritage;
- (n) Certify, whenever appropriate, membership of persons in Muslim Filipino communities for purposes of establishing qualifications for specific requirements of government and private agencies or for benefits as may be provided by law;
- (o) Provide legal and technical services for the survey, adjudication, titling, and development of Muslim Filipino ancestral lands and settlements proclaimed by the government for the Muslim Filipinos;
- (p) Assist the National Statistics Office (NSO) in conducting census on the actual population of Muslim Filipinos in the country;
- (q) Administer all programs, projects and activities, formulate the necessary rules and regulations, and coordinate with pertinent offices to ensure the success of the annual Hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca, K.S.A.;
- (r) Promote the development of a Hajj Assistance Fund that shall be created from contributions of Muslim Filipinos and other donors which shall be used to support the financial needs of deserving Muslim Filipinos intending to participate in the annual Hajj;
- (s) Administer and hold in trust awqaf (endowment) properties and/or awqaf institutions, and receive by way of grant, donations or gifts, awqaf investments in accordance with the principles of Islamic investments and finance;
- (t) Prescribe rules and regulations for the establishment of awqaf institutions, administration of awqaf assets, and settlement of disputes



among awqaf beneficiaries pursuant to the general principles of Shari'ah (Islamic Law);

- (u) Formulate and adopt continuing programs and activities to strengthen Madaris (plural of Madrasah) schools, Islamic Studies, and Shari'ah and Islamic jurisprudence, in coordination with appropriate agencies of the government;
- (v) Promote and supervise, in coordination with appropriate agencies of the government, the implementation of the Madrasah education system throughout the country except in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) where the system shall be implemented and supervised by the Department of Education-ARMM; and provide assistance in the expeditious accreditation of Madrasah educational institutions with the appropriate agencies of the government;
- (w) Ensure that the curriculum of the Madrasah education system shall conform with the basic curriculum of the national formal education system which, along with teachings on Arabic Language, Islamic Studies, and Filipino and Islamic Values shall include, among others, the subjects on Filipino and English Grammar and Usage, Philippine History and Geography, Science and Technology, Mathematics, Physical Education and Sports Development, and Vocational Education to secure the local and international competitiveness of Muslim Filipino graduates from the Madrasah educational institutions;
- (x) Develop criteria for the grant of local and foreign scholarships and the selection of deserving students and teachers of Madrasah and other educational institutions;
- (y) Provide and/or facilitate access to local and foreign scholarships to deserving Muslim Filipinos in coordination with formal educational institutions here and abroad;
- (z) Ensure the continuous transfer of technology to Muslim Filipino communities to uplift the quality of life of Muslim Filipinos;
- (aa) Formulate and implement policies and measures on transparency and accountability of officials and employees of the Commission in their day-to-day activity, and strictly adhering to existing accounting and auditing rules and procedures and the existing government procurement law;
- (bb) Ensure that the Hajj and related activities thereto shall not in any manner serve to enrich or cause to enrich any employee of the Commission;



- (cc) Promulgate such rules and regulations and exercise such powers and functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and objectives outlined in this Act; and
- (dd) Perform such other functions as may be necessary for its effective operations and continued enhancement as a government entity.

RULE V
POWERS, FUNCTIONS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF NCMF OFFICIALS/BUREAUS AND/OR OFFICES

SECTION 11. *Organizational Structure.* The Commission shall be composed of the offices of the Secretary, the Commissioners, the Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director and their immediate staff, the Bureaus, Services, Regional Offices, Field Offices and Sub-offices.

SECTION 12. *The Secretary.* The Secretary is the Chief Executive Officer and the Presiding Officer of the Commission and shall have the following powers, duties and functions:

- (a) Exercise administrative supervision over the Commissioners;
- (b) Exercise administrative supervision and control over all the personnel, except the Commissioners, and the properties of the Commission;
- (c) Sit as a regular member of the Government's peace panel negotiating or talking with the Moro and/or Muslim rebel groups. If appropriate, the Secretary may delegate subordinate officials to represent the Commission;
- (d) Act as the *Amirul* Hajj and the head of Filipino pilgrimage delegation to the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, K.S.A.; and
- (e) Perform such other duties as may be assigned to the Commission by the President.

SECTION 13. *The Commissioners.* The Commissioners are full-time regular members of the Commission and shall have the same rank, salary and privileges as those of Department Assistant Secretaries. They shall assist the Secretary in the performance of the mandate and thrust of the Commission. The Secretary may assign or delegate appropriate responsibilities to any of the Commissioners; provided, the exercise of such responsibility shall not prejudice or jeopardize the mandate of concerned Bureaus, Regional Offices, Services and other

operating units. In no case shall the Commissioners appoint representatives to act on their behalf during *En banc* meetings of the Commission.

SECTION 14. *The Secretariat.* The Commission shall organize a Secretariat that shall assist the Secretary in the performance of his/her functions and shall serve as the technical arm of the Commission. It shall be headed by an Executive Director who shall be appointed by the President.

The Executive Director shall perform the following functions:

- (a) Execute the policies and programs of the Commission and shall be responsible for the efficient and effective day-to-day management of the operations of the Commission;
- (b) Recommend to the Secretary, for approval of the Commission, the budget of the Secretariat, its staffing pattern, position classification and compensation scheme, and the appointment of its personnel subject to existing laws, rules and regulations; and
- (c) Perform such other duties and functions as may be lawfully delegated or assigned by the Secretary.

SECTION 15. *Bureaus.* The Bureaus of the Commission shall consist of the Bureau of Muslim Economic Affairs (BMEA), Bureau of Muslim Cultural Affairs (BMCA), Bureau of Muslim Settlement (BMS), Bureau of External Relations (BER), the Bureau of Pilgrimage and Endowment (BPE), Bureau of Peace and Conflict Resolution (BPCR), and the Bureau of Legal Affairs (BLA). Each of these Bureaus shall be headed by a Director who shall hold the same rank, salary and privileges of regular Staff Bureau Director.

The Bureau Director shall be appointed by the President among the names or nominees submitted by the Commission to the President.

- (a) **The Bureau of Muslim Economic Affairs (BMEA)** shall have the following functions:
 - 1) Promote and develop economic livelihood programs and projects through the extension of loans, entrepreneurship, trade and marketing assistance to the members of Muslim Filipino communities;
 - 2) Promote and develop cooperative endeavors among Muslim Filipinos in coordination with concerned agencies and



institutions, including the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA);

- 3) Promote and implement manpower training and community self-help projects for the economic development of Muslim communities;
- 4) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

(b) **The Bureau of Muslim Cultural Affairs (BMCA)** shall have the following functions:

- 1) Conduct research and related-studies on the cultural development of Muslim Filipino communities to provide inputs for policy formulation and review of program and project implementation;
- 2) Propose policies, plans and programs for the preservation, promotion and development of the cultures, traditions, institutions and well-being of the Muslim Filipino communities;
- 3) Formulate and implement an education program especially designed to improve literacy among Muslim Filipinos, including study of Arabic Language, Shari'ah and Islamic heritage;
- 4) Assist and facilitate the applications of Madrasah institutions for registration and accreditation with the Department of Education (DepEd);
- 5) Facilitate, supervise, oversee and implement the conduct of the Annual Qur'an Reading Competition; and
- 6) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

(c) **The Bureau of Muslim Settlement (BMS)** shall have the following functions:

- 1) Promote and develop Muslim Filipino settlements especially those proclaimed and/or reserved for Muslim Filipinos, in coordination with concerned agencies of the government;

- 2) Formulate land-use development policies and plans for Muslim ancestral and tribal lands, including proclaimed and/or reserved settlement areas for Muslim Filipinos in coordination with concerned government agency/ies; and
- 3) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

(d) **The Bureau of External Relations (BER)** shall have the following functions:

- 1) Establish working linkages among Muslim Filipino communities and organizations within and outside the country through print, broadcast and electronic communications;
- 2) Serve as the public information arm of the Commission and assist in information dissemination and advocacy activities, in coordination with other concerned government agencies;
- 3) Promote the image of the Muslim Filipino communities through mass media and other medium of effective, efficient and economical communication and information dissemination;
- 4) Establish proper linkages with embassies, international and domestic multilateral agencies engaged in providing grants, donations, endowments, and other similar assistance to help finance socio-economic projects for the Muslim Filipinos;
- 5) Coordinate with concerned agencies for the welfare, benefit and upliftment of the conditions of Muslim Filipino overseas workers, students and their families; and
- 6) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

(e) **The Bureau of Pilgrimage and Endowment (BPE)** shall have the following functions:

- 1) Administer, manage, and supervise the conduct of the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, K.S.A.;
- 2) Formulate and implement programs, projects and activities for the efficient, effective and economical administration

management and supervision of the annual pilgrimage activities in accordance with the guidelines adopted by the Commission;

- 3) Accredit qualified and deserving sheikhs or pilgrim leaders in accordance with the criteria and standards adopted by the Commission;
- 4) Formulate schedule of activities and timetables consistent with the guidelines and schedules adopted by the host country of the annual pilgrimage;
- 5) Promote and develop the establishment of "Hajj Assistance Fund" to provide appropriate fund assistance to qualified and deserving Muslim Filipino pilgrims with fund proceeds from contributions, donations, grants and other gratuitous support from philanthropists and philanthropic organizations or institutions. Said fund shall be subject to the provisions of Executive Order No. 338 dated May 17, 1996 and COA-DBM-DOF Joint Circular No. 1-97 dated January 2, 1997 and to existing accounting and auditing rules and regulations;
- 6) Administer, if feasible and doable, *Awqaf* properties and institutions and conduct of research and related-studies for the establishment and maintenance of Hajj towns, Islamic centers and *Awqaf* projects; and
- 7) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

(f) **The Bureau of Peace and Conflict Resolution (BPCR)** shall have the following functions:

- 1) Initiate and conduct peace initiatives and effective settlement mechanisms for the solution of conflicts between and among Muslim Filipinos, including conflicts involving non-Muslims where the parties submit to such resolution mechanism;
- 2) Introduce concept, plan, and implement projects and activities to promote peace, harmony and understanding among Muslim Filipino communities and monitor the progress thereof;

- 3) Coordinate with different relevant traditional institutions to strengthen relationships among Muslims and to settle disputes through mediation, arbitration and other effective modes of dispute resolutions among Muslims;
- 4) Assist the Secretary and participate in the national peace process efforts, particularly, for Muslim Mindanao, to prevent, de-escalate and find doable solution to conflicts through peaceful means;
- 5) Conduct studies and related analyses on the scarcity of human and natural resources as roots of conflict, and recommend to the Secretary nonviolent interventions to address such source of conflict;
- 6) Gather information and document human rights abuses in Muslim communities and recommend to the Secretary appropriate responses and/or approaches to remedy and/or rectify abuses; and
- 7) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

(g) **The Bureau of Legal Affairs (BLA)** shall have the following functions:

- 1) Provide Muslim Filipinos with legal education and assistance in case of litigation involving their persons or interests;
- 2) Act as the legal counsel of the Commission;
- 3) Initiate fact finding effort and investigate cases involving its personnel and submit appropriate recommendations pertaining thereto;
- 4) Monitor and evaluate compliance with existing laws and policies pertaining to Muslim Filipinos and their communities, including the protection of vested rights acquired or granted in their favor to strengthen and uplift their socio-economic conditions and, if appropriate, identify areas for government intervention; and



- 5) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

SECTION 16. *Services.* The Services of the Commission shall consist of the Administrative Service, Finance and Management Service and Planning Service, each of which shall be headed by a Staff Director who may be appointed by the Secretary and shall have the same rank, salary, and privileges of an Assistant Staff Bureau Director.

(a) **The Administrative Service** shall have the following functions:

- 1) Provide the Commission with economical, efficient and effective staff services relating to personnel, database, records, supply, logistics, equipment, collection, disbursement, security, custodial work and management; and
- 2) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

(b) **The Finance and Management Service** shall have the following functions:

- 1) Provide the Commission with efficient, effective and economical staff services and/or advices as well as related assistance on budgetary, financial and management services; and
- 2) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

(c) **The Planning Service** shall have the following functions:

- 1) Provide the Commission with efficient and effective staff services relating to planning, monitoring, and evaluation of programs, projects, and activities consistent with the National Plan of the Government;
- 2) Provide timely, accurate and relevant management information system to support the Commission's operation and decision-making functions; and
- 3) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.



SECTION 17. *Regional Offices, Field Offices, and Sub-Offices.* The Commission is hereby authorized to establish, operate, and maintain Regional/Field/Sub-Offices in such appropriate administrative regions or in strategic areas of the country subject to the Organizational Structure and Staffing Pattern (OSSP) approved by the DBM.

The Regional Office shall, within its administrative region, have the following functions:

- a) Implement laws, rules, regulations, policies, programs, and projects of the Commission;
- b) Establish field coordinating and monitoring units to enhance administrative operational efficiency;
- c) Provide efficient and effective service to Muslim Filipinos;
- d) Coordinate, if appropriate, with regional offices and agencies of the Executive Department;
- e) Coordinate with local government units within the sub-office/field office; and
- f) Perform such other functions as may be assigned by the Secretary.

SECTION 18. *Hajj Attaché.* The President shall appoint a *Hajj Attaché* from among the three (3) recommendees of the Commission within fifteen (15) days from the submission of such recommendees by the Commission. He/she shall possess related academic degree and must be able to read, write and speak fluently the Arabic language. The *Hajj Attaché* shall coordinate with the Ministry of Hajj of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on all matters pertaining to the conduct of the annual Hajj. The *Hajj Attache*' shall enjoy the same rank, salary, and privileges comparable to those Attachés of the national government.

SECTION 19. *Amirul Hajj.* The President shall appoint the Secretary of the Commission as the *Amirul Hajj* and head of Filipino pilgrimage delegation to Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and shall serve as the representative of the President in the annual Hajj.

SECTION 20. *Change of Pilgrim's Name.* The Commission shall authenticate the certification of a pilgrim's Hajj name as issued by the Hajj Attaché and the Ministry of Hajj of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Authentication issued by the Commission, which shall contain both the pilgrim's registered name in the

Philippine Civil Registry and his/her newly-issued Muslim name, shall be legally recognized by the national government as valid for all intents and purposes.

SECTION 21. *Council of Advisers.* A council composed of cultural, religious, traditional and tribal leaders from the Muslim Filipino communities may be constituted by the NCMF to advise it on matters pursuant to the Commission's mandate.

The Commission may promulgate such guidelines as may be necessary in organizing and convening the Council.

RULE VI TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

SECTION 22. Pursuant to RA No. 9997, the Office on Muslim Affairs has been abolished, and its personnel, appropriations, assets and properties, fixed and movable, and all contracts, records and documents pertaining thereto are hereby transferred to the Commission.

SECTION 23. All rules, regulations, policies and other issuances of the defunct Office on Muslim Affairs shall, if consistent with the mandate of the Commission, continue to be in full force and effect until subsequently amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 24. No officer or employee in the Commission shall be removed except for a valid cause and after due notice and hearing. A valid cause for removal exists when, pursuant to a bona fide reorganization, a position has been abolished or rendered redundant or there is a need to merge, divide or consolidate positions in order to meet the exigencies of the service, or other lawful causes allowed by the Civil Service Law.

SECTION 25. In the absorption or transfer of regular or permanent officials and employees of the defunct OMA to the new organizational structure and staffing pattern (OSSP) of the Commission, the provisions of R.A. 6656 (An Act to Protect the Security of Tenure of Government Employees) and other related laws shall be observed; provided that they possess the necessary qualifications, and shall not suffer any loss of seniority or rank or decrease in emoluments.

Officials and employees who shall be separated from the service as a result of the abolition and reorganization shall receive retirement and other benefits under applicable existing laws.

SECTION 26. *Retirement and Separation Benefits.* Officials and employees of the defunct OMA shall be entitled to retirement and/or separation benefits granted under existing laws.

Specifically, officials and employees separated and/or phased-out from the service as a result of the abolition of the OMA under the provision of this Act shall, within three (3) months from their separation and/or phase-out from the service receive a separation pay in accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations. In addition, those who are qualified to retire shall be allowed to retire and be entitled to all benefits provided under existing retirement laws. The fund of the Commission may be used to fund this purpose.

Further, officials and employees separated and/or retired from the Commission shall not be eligible for reappointment to or employment in the Commission whether on a permanent, temporary, casual or contractual status within a period of three (3) years after separation or retirement.

RULE VII MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

SECTION 27. Appropriations. The amount for the operating expenses of the Commission shall be as provided in the annual General Appropriations Act. Any additional funds that will be needed to cover the new functions and duties of the Commission under R.A. 9997 shall be subject to the usual budget process and deliberations by the Congress of the Philippines.

SECTION 28. Record of Transactions. The Commission shall keep proper accounts and records of all its transactions and affairs, and shall exert all efforts to ensure that all payments made out of its moneys are correctly made and properly authorized, and that adequate control is maintained over the assets of, or in the custody of the Commission and the expenditures it may incur in conformity with generally accepted accounting principles and in accordance with pertinent laws and regulations as provided for by the Commission on Audit and other concerned agencies.

SECTION 29. Applicability and Coverage of the Civil Service Law. The hiring, appointment, employment, promotion, disciplinary control, separation, and other terms and conditions of the service of all officials and employees of the Commission and such other matters affecting its officials and employees shall be consistent with the provisions of the Civil Service Law, rules and regulations as well as those adopted or promulgated by the Career Executive Service Board, if applicable.

SECTION 30. Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) Coverage for Employees. All regular or permanent officials and employees of the Commission shall be deemed members of the GSIS and shall enjoy all the benefits of said System as well as other government agencies that are mandated to protect and ensure the benefits and privileges available to officials and employees similarly situated.

SECTION 31. Periodic Performance Evaluation. The Secretary is hereby required to formulate and enforce a system of measuring and evaluating periodically and objectively the performance of the Commission and submit the same annually to the President and to the Congress of the Philippines.

SECTION 32. Amendment. This IRR may be amended, modified or revised jointly by the Commission and the Department of Budget and Management as provided under Section 24, Article III of R.A. 9997. Said amendment, modification or revision, shall become effective fifteen days (15) after publication in two (2) major newspapers of general circulation.

SECTION 33. Separability Clause. If any section or provision of this IRR is declared invalid or unconstitutional, the other sections or provisions thereof not affected thereby shall continue to be in full force and effect.

SECTION 34. Repealing Clause. All circulars, orders, memoranda and resolutions issued, under the defunct OMA and during the transition period prior to the approval of this IRR, that are inconsistent with the provisions hereof, are hereby revoked, repealed, modified or amended, accordingly.

SECTION 35. Effectivity. This IRR shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in at least two (2) major newspapers of general circulation.

DONE in the City of Manila this 26th day of November, 2014.


FLORENCIO B. ABAD
Secretary
Department of Budget and Management




YASMIN BUSRAN-LAO
Secretary
National Commission on Muslim Filipinos