

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 198

**CREATING THE INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE FOR THE JAPAN
PHILIPPINES ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (JPEPA) SENATE
RATIFICATION**

WHEREAS, a Philippine Coordinating Committee (PCC) has been created to study the feasibility of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) under E.O. 213 dated 28 May 2003 composed of the following government agencies:

- 1) Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)
- 2) Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
- 3) Department of Agriculture (DA)
- 4) Department of Budget and Management (DBM)
- 5) Department of Education (DepEd)
- 6) Department of Energy (DOE)
- 7) Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)
- 8) Department of Finance (DOF)
- 9) Department of Health (DOH)
- 10) Department of Justice (DOJ)
- 11) Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)
- 12) Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)
- 13) Department of Science and Technology (DOST)
- 14) Department of Tourism (DOT)
- 15) Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTe)
- 16) National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)
- 17) Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP)
- 18) Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

WHEREAS, the aforementioned government agencies, and other pertinent agencies vital to the JPEPA negotiations, have contributed their time and effort in the successful negotiation of the JPEPA and concurred to the ratification of the treaty;

WHEREAS, the JPEPA was signed by both leaders of the Philippines and Japan on 09 September 2006;

WHEREAS, the JPEPA requires legislative concurrence after executive ratification, with Executive Order No. 459 (series of 1997) providing for the guidelines in the negotiation of international agreements and its ratification;

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WHEREAS, the Office of the President transmitted on 17 August 2007 to the 14th Congress of the Senate of the Philippines the Instrument of Ratification of the JPEPA for Senate concurrence;

WHEREAS, the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations is leading the Senate hearings of the JPEPA for the judicious deliberation of the Agreement;

WHEREAS, there is a need to create a Task Force composed of different government agencies which will be tasked to put forward to the Senate the benefits, advantages and opportunities to the Philippine economy of a bilateral agreement with Japan;

NOW THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

Section 1. *Creation of JPEPA Task Force.* -A JPEPA Task Force (JTF) is hereby created to act with resolve and urgency for the ratification of the Agreement in the Senate;

Section 2. *Composition.* -The Task Force shall be composed of the representatives from the following government agencies:

- 1) Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)
- 2) Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
- 3) Department of Agriculture (DA)
- 4) Department of Budget and Management (DBM)
- 5) Department of Education (DepEd)
- 6) Department of Energy (DOE)
- 7) Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)
- 8) Department of Finance (DOF)
- 9) Department of Health (DOH)
- 10) Department of Justice (DOJ)
- 11) Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE)
- 12) Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH)
- 13) Department of Science and Technology (DOST)
- 14) Department of Tourism (DOT)
- 15) Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTe)
- 16) National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA)
- 17) Securities and Exchange Commission (SEe)
- 18) Office of the Solicitor General (OSG)

Each government agency enumerated above shall have at least one (1) representative who shall at least be a third ranking official of the concerned agency. Other government offices, including the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, private groups or resource persons may be invited to join the Task Force as may be necessary and appropriate.

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Department of Trade and Industry shall act as Task Force co-chairs.

Section 3. *Functions.* -The Task Force, which shall be convened immediately after this Administrative Order takes effect, shall have the following functions:

- 1 To coordinate with other agencies of government the necessary information required for Senate ratification of the JPEPA;
- 2 To organize the resource documents pertinent to the Senate hearings of the JPEPA;
- 3 To attend the hearings of the JPEPA in the Philippine Senate;
- 4 To perform such other functions as may be directed by the President.

Section 4. *Special Experts Panel on JPEPA.* -To assist the Task Force in its functions, a Special Experts Panel is hereby organized to be composed of public officials and private individuals who are leading figures in the areas of law, international trade and economic cooperation.

Section 5. *Secretariat and Technical Support.* -The Department of Trade and Industry shall provide

secretariat support to the Task Force. Each agency shall designate a team to act as technical arm of the Task Force.

Section 6. *Funding.* -Financial requirements that may be needed by the Task Force shall be sourced out by the Department of Budget and Management from available funds of the concerned agencies forming part of the Task Force, subject to the usual government accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

Section 7. *Effectivity* This Administrative Order shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Manila, this 28th day of September, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand and Seven.

Sgd: H.E. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo

By the President:

Sgd: Eduardo R. Ermita
Executive Secretary

