

**MALACAÑANG
MANILA**

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 157

**CREATING AN INDEPENDENT COMMISSION TO ADDRESS
MEDIA AND ACTIVIST KILLINGS**

WHEREAS, the Philippines is a bastion of human rights;

WHEREAS, the Arroyo Administration stopped judicial executions with the abolition of the death penalty;

WHEREAS, the Arroyo Administration condemns political killings in the harshest possible terms;

WHEREAS, the Department of Justice and the Philippine National Police have been given a 10-week deadline to jail suspects in at least 10 media or leftist killings;

WHEREAS, the investigations shall not spare any sector;

WHEREAS, this task requires the cooperation not only on the part of law enforcement authorities and the military, but also among the families of the victims and other sectors concerned;

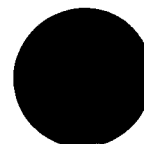
WHEREAS, witnesses are urged to come forward;

NOW, THEREFORE I, GLORIA M. ARROYO, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. Creation and Mandate – There is hereby created An Independent Commission to Address Media and Activist Killings.

SEC. 2. Composition – The Commission shall be composed of the following:

- a) Retired Supreme Court Justice Jose Melo as Chairman;
- b) The Director of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI);
- c) The Chief State Prosecutor;
- d) University of the Philippines Regent Nelia Gonzalez; and
- e) One representative from civil society to be appointed by the President;
- f) Atty. Rogelio Vinluan as General Counsel.



SEC. 3. Duties and Functions – The Commission shall have, among others, the following duties and functions:

- i) Prioritize and focus investigation of media and activist killings;
- ii) Be the Government's sole voice on the issue of media and activist killings;
- iii) Make a report to the President outlining its action and policy recommendations including appropriate prosecution and legislative proposals, if any, aimed at eradicating the root causes of extrajudicial killings and breaking such cycle of violence once and for all.

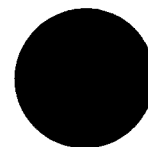
SEC. 4. Prosecution – The Government members of the Commission, namely the NBI Director and the Chief State Prosecutor, shall form a team to prioritize the prosecution of media and activist killings which shall be mandated to put the murderers behind bars at the soonest possible time.

SEC. 5. Powers – The Commission shall have, among others, the following powers:

- a) It shall have all the powers of an investigative body under Section 37, Chapter 9, Book I of the Administrative Code of 1987, including the power to summon witnesses, administer oath, take testimony or evidence relevant to the investigation and to issue compulsory processes to produce documents, books, records and such other matters in the performance of its functions;
- b) It shall have the power to clear or disapprove all pertinent media statements by any member or the Administration;
- c) It shall have the power to promulgate the necessary implementing rules and regulations as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Administrative Order;
- d) It shall have the power to call upon any agency of the Government for such assistance as it may require in the discharge of its functions;
- e) It shall have the power to engage the services of resource persons, professionals and other personnel which may be necessary to carry out its functions;
- f) It shall have the power to deputize the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the National Bureau of Investigation, the Philippine National Police, the Department of Justice, and any other law enforcement agency to assist it in the performance of its functions;
- g) It shall have the power to perform any other acts as may be necessary and appropriate to implement this Order.

SEC. 6. General Counsel – Atty. Rogelio Vinluan shall serve as General Counsel to assist the Commission in the discharge of its functions.

SEC. 7. Secretariat – The Commission shall be an independent body. It shall be supported by a Secretariat composed of technical and administrative personnel which shall provide staff support to the Commission.



SEC. 8. Funding – The Office of the President shall provide the funds for the operation of the Commission.

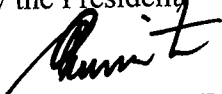
SEC. 9. Agencies' Support – The various departments, bureaus, offices, agencies or instrumentalities including government-owned or –controlled corporations are hereby directed to extend such assistance and cooperation as the Commission may need in the discharge of its functions.

SEC. 10. Effectivity – This Administrative Order shall take effect immediately upon its publication in a national newspaper of general circulation.

DONE, in the City of Manila, this 21th day of August, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Six.

Gloria M. Arroyo

By the President



EDUARDO R. ERMITA
Executive Secretary



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