

**EXECUTIVE ORDER 156**

**CREATING A SPECIAL TASK FORCE TO REVIEW, INVESTIGATE, AND GATHER EVIDENCE NECESSARY TO SUCCESSFULLY PROSECUTE IRREGULARITIES COMMITTED AT THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE, BUREAU OF CUSTOMS AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICES OR AGENCIES UNDER OR ATTACHED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE.**

**WHEREAS**, there are prevalent reports and public perception of graft and corruption principally in the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs;

**WHEREAS**, there are on-going investigations in the One-Stop-Shop Inter-Agency Tax Credit and Duty Drawback Center which require the full support and assistance of the various agencies of the government;

**WHEREAS**, graft and corruption deprive the public coffers of much needed revenue, demoralize the government work force and undermine public confidence in the government;

**WHEREAS**, this administration is committed to fight graft and corruption;

**WHEREAS**, there is an urgent need to form an inter-agency task force with the sole purpose of addressing graft and corruption committed in agencies under or attached to the Department of Finance and the prosecution of erring government personnel and their accomplices.

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

**Section 1. Creation.** There is hereby created a Special Task Force Against Irregularities Committed in Agencies Attached to or under the Department of Finance under the immediate control of and reporting directly to the President.

**Sec. 2. Composition.** The Task Force shall be composed of the Executive Secretary, Undersecretary of Finance Solomon S. Cua, Undersecretary of Justice Antonio M. Llorente, Executive Director Alberto Salanga of the One-Stop-Shop Tax Credit, Department of Finance and Gen. Panfilo Lacson, Chief of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force.

**Sec. 3. Assistance from Other Government Agencies.** All government offices, agencies and instrumentalities, particularly the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the



Bureau of Customs, the National Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation, the Philippine National Police, the Economic Intelligence and Investigation Bureau, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the Garment and Textile Export Board are hereby directed to assist the Task Force and shall provide the necessary assistance in the form of vehicles, equipment, workspace or personnel on detail or secondment when so requested by the Task Force. All government offices shall likewise provide all information required by the Task Force as if such information was requested by the President himself.

**Sec. 4. Powers, Duties and Functions.** The Task Force shall have the following powers, duties and functions:

- a) To investigate and gather evidence against individuals, corporations and other entities suspected of having committed irregularities at the Bureau of Internal Revenue, the Bureau of Customs, the Inter-Agency Tax Credit and Duty Drawback Center and other agencies under or attached to the Department of Finance;
- b) To gather and collate the required quantum of evidence and file the appropriate criminal, civil or administrative complaint before the appropriate court, administrative body, or agency;
- c) To recommend the settlement of cases for approval of the President, subject to appropriate rules on the settlement of claims by the government;
- d) To assist the prosecuting agency towards the successful prosecution of cases;
- e) To hire such personnel on a project or contractual basis as may be necessary to achieve its purposes;
- f) To receive donations, bequest, and other gratuitous benefits which will solely used to attain the objectives of the Task Force;
- g) To coordinate with other government agencies, non-government organizations, international organizations and other individuals or entities as may be found necessary by the Task Force;
- h) To recommend to the President the formation of such special investigating or prosecuting groups to be assigned to specific agencies or cases as may be necessary;
- i) To perform any and all acts as may be necessary to successfully implement this Order, subject to the control and supervision of the President.



**Sec. 5. Personnel.** The Task Force shall be assisted by such personnel as it may select. The Department of Budget and Management is hereby directed to automatically provide without reduction all requests for funds necessary for the transfer, detail, secondment or opening of personnel co-terminus with the project of the Task Force, including request for the hiring of personnel or contractual or consultancy basis.

**Sec. 6. Term.** The Task Force shall exist for a period of two (2) years from effectively hereof, after which its functions shall be turned over to the Department of Justice, unless there are circumstances which warrant the extension of its existence.

**Sec. 7. Funding.** Subject to the usual audit, the Task Force shall be provided with One Million Pesos (P1.0M) per month to be drawn from the One-Stop-Shop Inter-agency Tax Credit and Duty Drawback Center.

**Sec. 8. Penalty for Failure to Assist.** Failure by the appropriate government agency or personnel to provide assistance to the Task Force shall be deemed an administrative offense and shall be dealt with in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

**Sec. 9. Administrative Powers.** The Office of the President may adopt such rules and regulations, issue such orders, and organize or reorganize the personnel of the Task Force to successfully implement this Order.

**Sec. 10. Reportorial Requirements.** The Task Force shall submit a quarterly report of its funds and activities to the President.

**Sec. 11. Effectivity.** This Administrative Order shall take effect immediately.

**DONE** in the City of Manila, this 7th day of October in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and ninety-nine.

*[Handwritten Signature]*  
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By the President:

*[Handwritten Signature]*

**RONALDO B. ZAMORA**  
Executive Secretary

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