

**INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION
ON THE ELIMINATION
OF ALL FORMS OF
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**



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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION
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CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION

Seventh periodic reports of States Parties due in 1982

Addendum

PHILIPPINES 1/

[29 January 1982]

FOREWORD

The present Report should be considered, whenever appropriate, as supplementing and/or amending the other periodic reports previously submitted to the Committee.

1/ Reference documents and attachments referred to in the report will be available for consultation by members of the Committee in the files of the Secretariat, in the original language, as submitted by the Government.

For previous reports submitted by the Government of the Philippines and the summary records of the meetings of the Committee at which the reports were considered, see:

- (1) Initial report - CERD/C/R.3/Add.13 (CERD/C/SR.42 and 56);
- (2) Second periodic report - CERD/C/R.30/Add.11 and Add.37 (CERD/C/SR.140);
- (3) Third periodic report - CERD/C/R.70/Add.7 and Add.11 (CERD/C/SR.191);
- (4) Fourth periodic report - CERD/C/R.90/Add.20 (CERD/C/SR.321);
- (5) Fifth periodic report - CERD/C/20/Add.9 and Add.30 (CERD/C/SR.409);
- (6) Sixth periodic report - CERD/C/66/Add.12 and Add.19 (CERD/C/SR.485-486).

Part I. GENERAL

A. Statement on General Policy of Eliminating Racial Discrimination.

It is the paramount policy of the Philippine Government to take appropriate and positive steps at eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms, as defined in the CERD Convention, both at the domestic and the international levels. As it were, the general legal framework within which it is prohibited and eliminated in the Philippines, and the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life are promoted and protected - is subsumed or safeguarded in such legal and institutional instruments to which the Republic of the Philippines adheres to. These are, among others:

1. The 1973 Constitution which is presently in effect even before and after the lifting of martial law on 17 January 1981. Thus, the relevant constitutional provisions upon which the elimination of racial discrimination could be anchored upon are - the Preambular statement; Article II on the Declaration of Principles, specifically Sections 6, 7 and 9; Article IV on the Bill of Rights, specifically, Sections 1, 7, 8 and 23; Article IV on the Exercise of the Right of Suffrage; and Article XV on General Provisions contained in Section 1 thereof;

2. Adherence to international human rights instruments and other related Conventions which have become part of the law of the land such as, among others, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the ILO Convention against Discrimination in Education; the International Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

Moreover, the Philippine Government reaffirms its commitment to the maintenance and preservation of its democratic and basic human rights which include and are not limited to the following: the freedom of worship, the right to public and universal education, the upholding of due process and of the rule of law, and many others.

B. On whether the provisions of the Convention can be invoked before the Courts or, inter alia, whether they have to be implemented by way of internal laws and related regulations in order to be enforced by the authorities concerned.

Notwithstanding the policy position of the Philippine Government that racial discrimination, as defined by the CERD Convention, does not institutionally nor effectively exist in the Philippines, the provisions of the Convention shall be implemented by way of internal laws or administrative regulations only in those instances where existing constitutional or penal safeguards become inadequate or are non-existent. Thus, it is in this context that Presidential Decree No. 1350-A was enacted in order to strengthen the existing safeguards and to make explicit to the public that racial discrimination is a crime in the Philippines.

C. On Information on the Demographic Composition of the Philippines.

With respect to the ethno-linguistic demographic data contained in Document No. CERD/C/66/Add.19, these are to be supplemented by the data contained in the attached Table (10) - Population by Mother Tongue (Ethnic Group). This is official data taken from the 1 May 1975 Philippine National Census. It is to be noted that the 1975 Census tabulations were made on the basis of responses to the question: "What is your ethnic origin (and/or mother tongue?)" and without considering the respondents' residence or place of birth at the time of the 1975 census.

Moreover, such "ethnic grouping" as Cebuano, Tagalog, Ibanag, including the Maranao, Samal, and the like, should be properly classified under the heading of Malayo-Polynesian ethnic group. This grouping is distinct from the Negrito, technically classified under the Melanesian ethnic group. Also in this regard, the usual Muslim minority and which is actually a distinction based on religion, is variously composed of such particular groups as the Bagobo, Badjao, Bukidnon, Tausog, Maguindanao, Maranao, and the like.

In those instances when a group is considered as a linguistic or ethnic group, the same groups could and do enjoy all the rights that are lawfully due to every Filipino citizen, regardless of whether he is a Maranao, a Kalinga, an Ilocano, or of any other group. The exercise of all the usual civil, political, or social rights by any inhabitant are properly safeguarded by existing national laws, including the 1973 Constitution.

Part II. INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY A STATE PARTY IN RELATION
TO ARTICLES 2 TO 7 OF THE CONVENTION

ARTICLE 2

On the implementation of Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Convention by which States parties condemn racial discrimination and undertake to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating racial discrimination in all its forms, and promoting understanding among all races.

Comments on Article 2, paragraph 1 (including subparagraphs A to E)

1. The Philippine Government does not practice racial discrimination against persons, groups of persons or institutions, either by way of public policy, administrative regulations or legislative enactments. In this regard, the statement of general policy enunciated in Part I of this Report is reiterated.
2. The Philippine Government does not sponsor, defend nor support racial discrimination by any persons or organizations. On the contrary, all public authorities and institutions are lawfully bound to uphold the democratic and libertarian principles of public administration and governance, and in accordance with the bureaucratic dictum that the "public office is a public trust".

Furthermore, there are sacrosanct constitutional safeguards against the practice of racial discrimination such as the provision for the Offices of the Sandiganbayan and the Tanodbayan, all of which are now fully operational, functioning and hearing the various cases brought before them.

3. On the matter of reviewing national and local policies that have the effect of creating or perpetuating racial discrimination wherever it exists, it is the considered view of the Philippine Government that there exist no such policies, whether national or local. Though in those instances where racial discrimination-like practices or manifestations of racial discrimination may have occurred, the Philippine Government believes that these should be attributed to the normal functioning of complex societal factors (e.g., a multi-racial and multi-ethnic society, varied cultures co-existing amongst the inhabitants, etc.) and for which the Philippine Government shall strive to adopt remedial measures whenever necessary and appropriate.
4. On measures taken to give effect to the undertaking to prohibit and bring to an end racial discrimination by any persons, groups or organization, the same comments embodied in Part I.B. above, is reiterated.
5. On measures to encourage, where appropriate, integrationist multi-racial organizations and movements and other means of eliminating barriers between races, and to discourage anything which tends to strengthen racial division, the Philippine Government has had adopted and/or implemented numerous measures some of which are as follows:

(a) Presidential Decree No. 91 of 6 January 1973, amending the 1973 Appropriations Act by allocating \$P2.0 million as budget of the Commission on National Integration (CNI) for the national cultural minorities and to give wider latitude to the operations of the Presidential Assistance on National Minorities (PANAMIN);

(b) Presidential Decree No. 93 of 9 January 1973, establishing guidelines for liberalizing the traditional/barter trades between the Sulu archipelago and adjacent areas.

P.D. 93 also allows members of the Metro Manila Muslim traders group to buy \$P5,000 worth of barter goods from the barter trade centres of Jolo and Zamboanga City or two purchases per month for marketing in the Muslim flea markets in Manila.

In 1981, this barter trade industry made gross sales amounting to about \$P90 million and led to the employment of more than 5,000 Muslims in Metro Manila alone;

(c) Presidential Decree No. 193 of 15 May 1973 and Letter of Instructions (LOI) No. 81, transferring the CNI scholarship programme to the Ministry of Education and Culture. This scholarship programme for deserving cultural minorities was meant to integrate them to the mainstream of national life and for affording them more positive opportunities for socio-economic development of their respective groups. LOI No. 81 on the other hand, increased the number of scholarships/beneficiaries to 4,000 scholars yearly and carries an annual stipend per scholar of \$P1,565;

(d) Presidential Decree No. 254 of 2 August 1973, establishing a Philippine Amanah Bank and the extension of banking services to the Muslim areas of Mindanao;

(e) Presidential Decree No. 291 of 12 September 1973, implementing a public policy of recognizing and enforcing Philippine Muslim holidays as legal and non-working holidays in predominantly Muslim areas;

(f) Presidential Decree No. 1302 of 15 February 1973, creating a Philippine Pilgrimage Authority tasked with supervising the orderly participation of Muslim Filipinos in the annual holy pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia;

(g) Presidential Decree No. 1618 of 25 July 1979, implementing the organization of the Sangguniang Pampook and the Lupong Tagapagpaganap of the autonomous government of Regions IX and XII;

(h) Presidential Decree No. 1083 of 4 February 1977, ordaining and promulgating a code recognizing the system of Filipino Muslim personal laws. (See also comment No. 4 of Part III below);

(i) Presidential Decree No. 690, creating the Southern Philippines Development Authority (SPDA) and promulgating its charter, in place of the Commission on National Integration, the Mindanao Authority, the Presidential Task Force for Reconstruction and Development of Mindanao (created under Executive Order No. 411 of 2 April 1973), and the Special Programme of Assistance for the Rehabilitation of Evacuees (LOI No. 30 of 20 October 1972);

(j) LOI No. 71-A of 28 April 1973, directing the Ministry of Education and Culture to allow and authorize the use of Arabic as a medium of instructions in the schools or areas permitting its use;

(k) LOI No. 82 of 28 May 1973, directing the University of the Philippines Board of Regents to study ways and means for establishing a Centre for Islamic Studies in the University;

(l) LOI No. 126 of 13 September 1973, directing the Philippine Postmaster-General to dedicate a stamp in honour of the Filipino Muslim hero, Sultan Mohammed Dipatuan Kudarat for the year 1973-1974 at \$P0.10 each;

(m) LOI No. 142 of 30 October 1973, establishing a Maharlika Village in Bicutan, Taguig, Metro Manila, for the housing and settlements needs of Filipino Muslims;

(n) Presidential Proclamation No. 1195 of 22 October 1973, reserving for settlement purposes exclusively for Muslim evacuees and landless Muslims certain parcels of land of the public domain in Lanao del Sur, under the administration of the Ministry of Agrarian Reform;

(o) Executive Order No. 697 of 28 May 1981, creating the Ministry of Muslim Affairs and abolishing the Office of the Commission for Islamic Affairs (created under Executive Order No. 549 of 23 July 1973). This move is aimed at elevating the welfare of the Muslims at the highest governmental level, concentrating and integrating all the national efforts aimed at the full integration of Muslim Filipinos into the body politic, with a view to the further strengthening and the enrichment of the national aspiration towards national unity and identity and without sacrificing their individual beliefs, culture, traditions and institutions.

With respect to the other national cultural minorities, the PANAMIN continues to be the sole national agency for implementing development projects and other integration measures vis-a-vis the national cultural minorities. Thus, at present, the PANAMIN is now implementing 26 of some 42 impact projects for the calendar year 1981-1982. These projects are geared towards making the minority groups and other hill tribes a fully productive economic force.

The main vehicle of the PANAMIN projects is the formation of profit-oriented agro-industrial enterprises owned by the hill tribes themselves. And as such, it is envisaged that these projects shall strengthen the hill tribes' faith in the central government and should ensure their continued cultural and ethnic identity.

Likewise, the PANAMIN projects involved, among other things, the restoration of former tribal lands to their original owners, the delivery of essential governmental services, and the improvement of the productivity of the hill tribes.

6. The Batasang Pambansa, at its 1981 First Regular Session, deliberated on two parliamentary bills relating to the Muslims and other ethnic minorities, as follows:

(a) Parliamentary Bill No. 255 - An Act promoting and bringing about the employment in the private sector of more Muslims and members of other national cultural minorities, by granting temporary tax incentives to individual proprietors, partnerships, and corporations employing and/or educating and/or training Muslims and other members of the national cultural minorities; and

(b) Parliamentary Bill No. 254 - An Act promoting or bringing about the employment of more Muslims and members of other national cultural minorities at all levels of the national government and its agencies and instrumentalities, including government-owned or controlled corporations.

On the implementation of Article 2, paragraph 2 by which States parties shall, when the circumstances so warrant, take in all fields, special and concrete measures to ensure the adequate development and protection of certain racial groups or individuals belonging to them for the purpose of guaranteeing them the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, nor such measures to entail, as a consequence, the maintenance of unequal or separate rights for different racial groups ... etc.

Comments on Article 2, paragraph 2

The Philippine Government believes that the same information as above, should appropriately apply.

ARTICLE 3

Under Article 3 States parties particularly condemn racial segregation and apartheid and undertake to prevent, prohibit and eradicate, in territories under their jurisdiction, all practices of this nature.

Comments on Article 3

1. The Philippine Government has never practiced apartheid nor adopted any racial or segregationist policies. Neither has any crime of apartheid been committed in the Philippines. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is conducting a study on what recommendations should be made to appropriate authorities, for the adoption of legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures to give effect to the provisions of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid;
2. Contributions to the specialized funds and activities in furtherance of the international struggle against apartheid such as the Support and Solidarity Fund for the Liberation of Southern Africa; the United Nations Fund for Namibia; Institute for Namibia in Lusaka; United Nations Fund for the "Front-Line States"; and the Publicity Fund Against Apartheid;
3. The Philippines has no relations whatsoever with the minority and racist régime of South Africa and Namibia, and has diligently observed all United Nations resolutions against South Africa;
4. The Philippines has issued circulars and related instructions to its Foreign Service establishments concerning the ban on travel and commercial relations with South Africa and its nationals;
5. The Philippines has withdrawn or refused to participate in sporting and other international competitions which included the representatives of the apartheid régime in South Africa. For example, in 1977, the Philippine Government withdrew its candidate during the finals in the Miss World contest held in London; and
6. The Philippines, in line with its policy against apartheid, conducted a series of conferences/ seminars on Apartheid and Decolonization in 1981 such as the Conference of Solidarity with the Colonial Peoples of South Africa, held in the National Library Auditorium, Rizal Park, Manila, on 30 May 1981.

ARTICLE 4

Article 4, among others, provides that States parties condemn all propaganda and all organizations which are based on ideas or theories of racial superiority or which attempt to justify or promote racial hatred and discrimination in any form, and to undertake to adopt immediate and positive measures designed to eradicate all incitements to, or acts of discrimination.

Comments on Article 4

1. The Philippine Government reiterates its position that racial discrimination based on propaganda or organizations professing racial discrimination are non-existent in the Philippines. Accordingly, there is no need to declare as punishable any act, practice, organization or institutions which have as their basis racial discrimination, if they do not exist;
2. The Philippines will not permit its public authorities or public institutions to promote or incite racial discrimination.
3. In this regard, the Philippine Government, in reply to the United Nations Secretary-General's Note No. 6/GO/237/44 (6), dated 19 January 1981, requesting the comments of the Philippine Government on those problems and measures, both at the international and national levels, to eradicate nazism, fascism, neo-fascism, and related ideologies based on religious intolerance, hatred and terror, stated that said ideologies are not practiced nor do they overtly exist in the Philippines.

ARTICLE 5

Article 5, among others, obliges States parties to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, in the enjoyment of all the political, civil, economic and social rights enumerated under said article.

Comments on Article 5 (including subparagraphs A to F)

1. The Philippines considers that with respect to the enjoyment by everyone of all the rights enumerated under Article 5, the 1973 Philippine Constitution amply provides the institutional and legal foundations for the observance of said rights. Thus, Article IV on the Bill of Rights, among others, incorporates many provisions dealing with the equal protection and of due process of the laws; the right of the individual to be secure in his person and abode; the privacy of communications, the right of the writ of habeas corpus; the liberty of abode and of travel; the right to a speedy disposition of their cases before all judicial, quasi-judicial or administrative bodies, and many others.

But more importantly, the 1973 Philippine Constitution incorporates a set of duties and obligations of citizens (Article V) which, inter alia, ordains every citizen qualified to vote to register and cast his vote, to engage in gainful work in order to assure himself and his family a life worthy of human dignity.

2. Article VI of the 1973 Constitution specifically provides for the exercise by every Filipino not otherwise disqualified by law to exercise his right to vote. Incidentally, the right of suffrage carries with it the right to participate in the political and public processes of governance or of the opportunity to be voted in public office.

ARTICLES 6 AND 7

Concerning the implementation of Articles 6 and 7 of the CERD Convention, the Philippine Government has no additional information to add to what was reported in document No. CERD/C/66/Add.12, as reported in the Sixth Periodic Report of the Philippines.

Part III. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN REPLY TO VARIOUS QUESTIONS
RAISED IN THE SIXTH PERIODIC REPORT OF THE PHILIPPINES

1. On the matter of relationship between the regional autonomous governments established in Regions IX and XII with the central Government:

Presidential Decree No. 1618 of 25 July 1979 describes the powers of the autonomous governments and their relationship to the central Government, all in accordance with the Tripoli Agreement and the results of the 17 April 1977 referendum-plebiscite. Accordingly, the relevant provisions and highlights of the Decree are as follows:

(a) That internal autonomy shall be construed as within the framework of the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of the Philippines and its Constitution, and that the legislative and executive machineries of the autonomous regions shall exercise the powers and responsibilities specified in the Decree in accordance with the Provisions of the Constitution and the laws of the Republic of the Philippines;

(b) That the autonomous regions shall undertake all internal administrative matters for their respective regions but that they shall not act on matters which are within the jurisdiction and competence of the National Government, which include, but are not limited to, national defence and security; foreign relations; foreign trade; currency, monetary affairs, foreign exchange; banking and quasi-banking, and external borrowing; disposition, exploration, development, exploitation or utilization of all natural resources; air and sea transport; postal matters and telecommunications; customs and quarantine; immigration and deportation; citizenship and naturalization; national economic, social and educational planning; and general auditing;

(c) That all security and/or police forces in the autonomous regions shall be organized, maintained and utilized in accordance with applicable laws, policies and rules and regulations, and shall be under the supervision and control of the National Government;

(d) The Sangguniang Pampook has the power of regional legislation over such matters as the organization of the regional administrative system; economic, social and cultural development of the Autonomous Regions; agricultural, commercial and industrial programmes; infrastructure development; urban and rural planning; taxation and other revenue raisers, maintenance, operation and administration of schools; establishment, operation and maintenance of health, welfare and other social services, programmes and facilities; preservation and development of customs, traditions, languages and culture indigenous to the autonomous regions; and such other matters that will promote the general welfare of the people in the region. It is the Sanggunian that determines the development goals and objectives of the autonomous regions;

(f) The Autonomous Government has the following as its sources of income: taxes, fees or charges through enactment of regional tax measures; appropriations and grants-in-aid from the National Government; amounts realized from commercial, industrial and agricultural projects owned or controlled by the autonomous government; contributions from local governments as provided by law; a percentage of the national income from mines and mineral resources from within the region as provided by law; transfer of the proceeds of certain national and local taxes as prescribed by law; and donations, endowments and other forms of aid from individuals, organizations or governments in accordance with national policy. Moreover, the autonomous regions are entitled to a yearly amount of at least 1/13th of 1 per cent of the total national internal revenue collections;

(g) The Lupong Tagapagpaganap implements the policies, programmes and legislative enactments by the Sanggunian; formulates operational policies and prepares the budget and submits it to the Sanggunian for enactment. The Lupon exercises full supervision and control over the implementation of regional development projects funded from the income of the autonomous governments;

(h) The Lupon oversees the activities and performance of the regional directors of the Ministries of Health, Education and Culture, Public Works and Highways, Agriculture, Social Services and Development, Human Settlements, Industry and Youth and Sports Development. It may recommend the transfer of these regional directors outside of the autonomous regions. Likewise, the Lupon enjoys power and supervision over all the local governments within the autonomous regions such as in the following: conduct of periodic performance audits of the local government officials, granting of exemptions to local governments as well as to national line agencies located inside the autonomous regions from certain National Government restrictions.

Generally, the Autonomous Government's relationship with the National Government can be subsumed under the following guidelines:

(a) With respect to legislation, national laws shall be supreme vis-a-vis regional laws enacted by the Sangguniang Pampook;

(b) The President shall have the power of general supervision and control over the autonomous regions. And in this regard, the President may call upon the Ministry of Local Governments and Community Development to assist him in the exercise of his supervision over the autonomous regions, particularly in matters relating to the administration of the regions and their relationship with the local government units therein; and

(c) The Lupong Tagapagpaganap ng Pook shall report regularly to the President on the status of development programmes in the region and the performance of local government officials, and shall make recommendations on any actions that should be taken by the National Government to accelerate development in the region.

2. The establishment of the Autonomous Governments in Regions IX and XII does not in any way alter negatively the democratic and free exercise of the various civil, political, social and economic rights by the inhabitants of the regions. On the contrary; the exercise of such rights are now given a firm foundation and appropriate political structure such that the granting of autonomy strengthens the prevailing constitutional and legal safeguards for the exercise of said rights - the inhabitants of the autonomous regions can look up to an indigenous leadership; a political and democratic forum is created for policy and political deliberations by the regions' inhabitants; and that appropriate limits have been delineated to insulate the autonomous regions from the otherwise complicating encroachments by the other non-Muslim areas.

The Philippine Government firmly believes that regional autonomy is a positive development in the political governance of the autonomous areas. It is therefore, a timely attempt at promoting the general welfare of the regions and their inhabitants, in conjunction with the pace of national development.

Accordingly, the granting of autonomy need not work out to the disadvantage of other groups. What has been done is to raise the socio-economic level of opportunities of the Muslim areas in order to approximate the otherwise more developed non-Muslim areas. Thus, the granting of autonomy should be perceived more as a movement towards establishing greater societal equity and regional balance.

3. On the question of whether there are any institution promoting regional harmony among the different groups, i.e., for integrating the various national cultural minorities.

Under the present set up of the New Republic, it is basic public policy that the various cultural communities or national cultural minorities be integrated into the national body politic, through the provision of economic development and the establishment of social justice and the inculcation of national pride among the citizenry of their Filipino identity. The Philippine Government has taken strong measures towards ensuring the equality of opportunity for all the cultural minorities, with special reference to redressing the imbalance and disparities in the distribution of societal and governmental benefits.

Moreover, in the task of bridging the gap between the diverse minority groups, the Philippine Government rejects the idea of assimilation and goes beyond the mere concept of national integration, proceeding from the principle that integration connotes an interpenetration of cultures. Accordingly, it is the paramount concern of the Philippine Government to so strengthen and reinforce all the minority groups so that each of them may be able to acquire the capacity to transcend its particular interests and commit itself to the larger Filipino national community.

In furtherance of this policy, the Philippine Government has taken the following measures:

(a) Creation/establishment of governmental institutions or bodies to oversee the promotion and implementation of the aforesaid national policy, such as: the Presidential Assistance on National Minorities; the Commission on National Integration; the Office of Islamic Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Islamic Affairs, among others;

(b) Cross-cultural exchanges aimed at highlighting and preserving the identities of the different minority groups such as can be seen in the following activities: a national programme of scholarships to deserving members of the minority groups; holding of an annual Koran reading contest; creation of tourism development projects in respect of the cultural heritage of the minority groups, implementating the use of Arabic as medium of instructions in Muslim areas, among others;

(c) Implementation of socio-economic development programmes, including the establishment of agro-industrial impact projects for the benefits and interest of the different minority groups, e.g., BLISS settlement projects, the PANAMIN impact projects, KKK-related socio-economic projects, and numerous other projects that aim to deliver basic national governmental services to the different minority groups.

4. On Presidential Decree No. 1035 on the Code of Filipino Muslim personal laws.

P.D. No. 1035 was enacted in furtherance of the policy of integrating the national cultural minorities and to strengthen their respective group identity. The scope of the Decree covers the Muslim populace.

Also, in implementation of paragraph 3 of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement, the Decree provided for the establishment of some 56 Shari'a District or Circuit Courts for the areas covered by the autonomous regions.

Similarly, the Decree provides for the position of the Grand Mufti or the Jurisconsult in Islamic Law, who is appointed by the President and holds office for a term of seven years. The Office of the Jurisconsult shall be under the administrative supervision of the Philippine Supreme Court.

The Jurisconsult's functions include the rendering of legal opinions upon the written request of any interested party, regarding any question relating to Muslim law.

At this stage, any perceived limitations of the Decree on Filipino Muslim law should be viewed as arising primarily from its being an innovative or initial attempt at making the Muslim legal system as part of the larger legal system of the Philippines.

5. On the allocation of resources to the Autonomous Regions.

Batas Pambansa Blg. 40 or the 1980 Philippine Appropriations Act allocated the amount of ₱20.0 million each to the two Autonomous Regions for financing their respective regional current operating expenditures and for capital outlays (see Annex - Batas Pambansa Blg. 40). On the other hand, the national service agencies of the central Government have their respective allotments to the two Autonomous Regions for fiscal years 1979 and 1980 as follows:

	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980</u>
Region IX	₱457 514 000.00	₱610 274 000.00
Region XII	536 465 000.00	693 027 000.00

It is to be noted that Region IX and XII have five provinces each. (For details of these appropriations, please see Annex - the 1980 Philippine Budget Profile Staff Papers 2).

These budgetary allocations for the two regions compared favourably with those allotted for the other regions. Most notably, the percentage shares of the depressed regions such as Region II, VIII, IX and XII, have increased from 23.3 per cent to 24.5 per cent for the period. (For details, please refer to Tables 10 and 16 of the Annexed 1980 Philippine Budget Profile Staff Papers 2).

6. On the participation of Muslims in the 17 April 1977 Referendum-Plebiscite.

The April 1977 referendum-plebiscite was observed by some 37 international observers/diplomats from 20 countries and that it was their expressed opinion that the referendum-plebiscite was free, open and orderly and that its results represented an accurate expression of the people's will.

The referendum was held in some 13 provinces in Southern Mindanao (Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, North Cotabato, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, Sulu, Basilan, Tawi-tawi, Palawan, Davao del Sur and South Cotabato). These 13 provinces have populations composed of both Muslims and non-Muslims, though the Muslim inhabitants constituted a small minority.