

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 178

**CREATING THE NATIONAL POLICE TASK FORCE ON
PROFESSIONAL SQUATTERS AND SQUATTING SYNDICATES**

WHEREAS, Sec. 27 of R.A. 7279 or the "Urban Development and Housing Act" (UDHA) provides that all local government units, in cooperation with the Philippine National Police (PNP), the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP) and PCUP-accredited urban poor organization in the area, shall adopt measures to identify and effectively stall the nefarious and illegal activities of professional squatters and squatting syndicates;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 129 dated 15 October 1993 entitled "Establishing an Institutional Mechanism to Curtail the Activities of Professional Squatting Syndicates and Professional Squatters and Intensifying the Drive Against Them" created the National Committee Against Squatting Syndicates and Professional Squatters to serve as an oversight, coordinative and recommendatory body relative to the implementation of the UDHA provisions on squatting syndicates and professional squatters;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 129 dated 15 October 1993 likewise created the Local Committee Against Squatting Syndicates and Professional Squatters to serve as the implementing arm of the National Committee Against Squatting Syndicates and Professional Squatters at the local levels;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 159 dated 12 October 1999 declared mass housing as the centerpiece program of the Estrada Administration and directed the fasttracked implementation of mass housing projects which will address the housing needs of the poor;

WHEREAS, the proliferation of professional squatters and squatting syndicates in urban centers nationwide hamper the effective implementation of the government's mass housing programs; and,

WHEREAS, there is need to strengthen the capability of local government units to effectively curtail the operations of professional squatters and squatting syndicates.



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

SECTION 1. CREATION OF THE NATIONAL POLICE TASK FORCE TO APPREHEND SQUATTING SYNDICATES AND PROFESSIONAL SQUATTERS. There is hereby created a National Police Task Force on Squatting Syndicates and Professional Squatters hereinafter referred to as the "Task Force," to vigorously pursue the apprehension and prosecution of professional squatters and squatting syndicates nationwide.

The Task Force shall be chaired by the Chief, Philippine National Police (PNP) and shall be composed of elements of various law enforcement agencies/entities as may be identified by the Chairman.

SEC 2. FUNCTIONS. In coordination with the National Committee Against Squatting Syndicates and Professional Squatters, the Task Force shall:

- a. Initiate the identification of professional squatters and squatting syndicates including the names of public officials and/or private individuals or companies abetting or tolerating the commission of the act;
- b. Conduct surveillance activities to check and verify initial intelligence information gathered concerning the identities of suspected professional squatters and squatting syndicates including the names of public officials and/or private individuals abetting or tolerating the commission of the act;
- c. Closely coordinate with the Prosecutor's office and the concerned local government units in gathering evidence, as well as testify during court proceedings to ensure the speedy prosecution of identified professional squatters and squatting syndicates;
- d. Provide police protection to victims of squatter syndicates and professional squatters, including the rightful beneficiaries of the government's housing program, who may have been victimized in various forms such as collection of exorbitant fees, issuance of fake titles, sowing disinformation;
- e. Direct local police chiefs, through the PNP regional directors, to extend full support and assistance to the Local Committee



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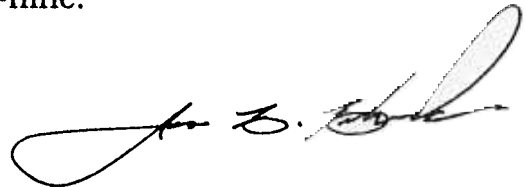
Against Squatting Syndicates and Professional Squatters created pursuant to Executive Order No. 129, in line with the intensified drive against squatting syndicates and professional squatters;

- f. Submit regular report on its activities and accomplishments to the President, through the Presidential Commission on Mass Housing (PCMH); and,
- g. Perform such other functions as may be directed by the President.

SEC. 3. REPEALING CLAUSE. All executive orders, rules, regulations and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent with this Executive Order are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVITY. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

Done in the City of Manila, this 23rd day of November in the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and ninety-nine.



By the President:



RONALDO B. ZAMORA
Executive Secretary

