

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 551

CREATING A TASK FORCE ON THE REPATRIATION OF OVERSEAS  
FILIPINO WORKERS (OFWs) FROM LEBANON

**WHEREAS**, the continued conflict in Southern Lebanon has placed in danger the lives of our Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in Lebanon;

**WHEREAS**, while all preparations and evacuation plans are in place and have been going on smoothly, there is need to intensify the coordination in preparation for a worse case scenario;

**WHEREAS**, there is need to enlist in this effort the assistance not only of government agencies, but other foreign governments and international relief organizations as well;

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

**SECTION 1. Task Force** – There is hereby created a Task Force on the Repatriation of OFWs from Lebanon (Task Force) composed of the following:

Chair	-	Vice President of the Philippines
Vice Chair	-	Secretary of Foreign Affairs
Co-Vice Chair-	-	Secretary of Labor and Employment
Members	-	Executive Secretary
		Secretary of Health
		Secretary of Budget and Management
		Secretary of Social Welfare and Development
		Press Secretary

**SECTION 2. Powers and Functions** – The Task Force shall have, among others, the following functions:

- a) To coordinate the planning and implementation of plan of actions in the repatriation of OFWs and other Filipino nationals caught in conflict affected areas brought about by the fighting in Southern Lebanon;



- b) To coordinate with other governments, through their embassies and other international organizations like the Red Cross, Red Crescent, and the International Organization for Migration and enlist whatever assistance that they may be able to provide in the effort to bring our OFWs out of harms way.
- c) To ensure that all possible resources such as airplanes, sea vessels, vehicles, including funds are made available in a timely manner in order to effectively and efficiently undertake the transport of our OFWs out of the conflict affected areas and back to the Philippines;
- d) To involve the different diplomatic posts of the Philippines near the conflict affected area in the effort to bring our OFWs out of harms way.
- e) Through the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), assist repatriated OFWs by way of reprocessing them for possible re-deployment elsewhere;
- f) Through the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Department of Health (DOH), assist arriving OFWs needing de-stress and medical attention.

**SECTION 3. Support of Agencies** – The Task Force may enlist the support of other agencies such as the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), the Office of the Presidential Middle East Preparedness Committee, the Office of the Special Envoy to the Gulf Cooperation Council, and the Commission on Filipino Overseas.

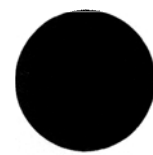
**SECTION 4. Secretariat** – The Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Labor & Employment shall jointly provide technical and administrative support to the Task Force.

**SECTION 5. Budget** – There is hereby made available the amount of One Billion (P1,000,000,000) Pesos, Five Hundred Million (P500,000,000) coming from OWWA funds, and Five Hundred Million coming from funds to be identified by the Department of Budget and Management, that may be disbursed when needed for the repatriation of Filipinos from Lebanon, subject to the usual accounting and auditing rules and regulations.

**SECTION 6. Repealing Clause** – All executive issuances, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Executive Order are hereby revoked, amended or modified accordingly.



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**SECTION 7. Effectivity** -- This Executive Order shall take effect immediately.

**DONE** in the City of Manila, this 26<sup>th</sup> day of July, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Six.

*Gloria M. Arroyo*

By the President:

*Eduardo R. Ermita*  
**EDUARDO R. ERMITA**  
Executive Secretary



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