

BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 53

STRENGTHENING THE COMMITTEE FOR THE SPECIAL PROTECTION OF CHILDREN, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 275 (s. 1995)

WHEREAS, the protection of Filipino children remains to be a national concern in view of the growing complexity of child protection issues in the country and the continued increase in the number of cases of child neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and discrimination;

WHEREAS, Republic Act (R.A.) No. 7610, otherwise known as the "Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act", remains as the principal and comprehensive law for the protection of children against abuse and exploitation;

WHEREAS, other child-related protection laws have been enacted criminalizing acts committed against children and providing added protection, such as R.A. No. 9231 (An Act Providing for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor), R.A. No. 9208 (The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003), R.A. No. 9262 (Violence Against Women and Their Children Act), R.A. No. 9344 (The Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act), R.A. No. 9775 (Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009), and R.A. No. 9255 (An Act Allowing Illegitimate Children to Use the Surname of their Father);

WHEREAS, these recent laws also established special bodies that will coordinate and monitor their implementation such as the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) under R.A. No. 9208, the Inter-Agency Committee on Violence Against Women and Their Children (IAC-VAWC) under R.A. No. 9262, the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC) under R.A. No. 9344, and the Inter-Agency Council Against Child Pornography (IAC-ACP) under R.A. No. 9775;

WHEREAS, the Committee for the Special Protection of Children (CSPC), an inter-agency body created through Executive Order No. 275 (s. 1995) acts indirectly as the coordinating body for the implementation of R.A. No. 7610 and is responsible for the assessment, monitoring and implementation of the State's Policy to defend the right of children to assistance, including proper care, health and nutrition as well as special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and discrimination, and other conditions prejudicial to their development;

WHEREAS, it is extremely necessary to give importance to law enforcement as a crucial component of the overall approach to child protection; and



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WHEREAS, there is a need to intensify efforts on timely and adequate investigation and prosecution of violations of the rights of children as well as provide protection and assistance to children victims throughout the legal and judicial process.

NOW THEREFORE, I, BENIGNO S. AQUINO III, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. Role of the CSPC. The CSPC is hereby strengthened and reorganized to effectively function as the body principally responsible for coordinating and monitoring the investigation and prosecution of cases involving violations of R.A. No. 7610 and other child-related criminal laws.

The Committee shall also be responsible for formulating and monitoring the comprehensive program as stipulated in Article II, Section 4 of R.A. No. 7610.

SECTION 2. Coverage. The Committee shall cover and guarantee legal protection to the following:

- a. Physically abused children, including victims of cruelty and corporal punishment;
- b. Sexually abused children including child victims of related offenses under the Revised Penal Code (R.A. 3815), such as rape and other sexual assaults;
- c. Children in prostitution, including those in obscene exhibitions and indecent shows;
- d. Children trafficked within the contemplation of Article IV of R.A. No. 7610 and R.A. 9208;
- e. Child labor, including the worst forms of child labor;
- f. Children of indigenous peoples;
- g. Muslim children;
- h. Children in situations of armed conflict and those involved in armed conflict;
- i. Abandoned children, as defined under R.A. No. 9523;
- j. Neglected children;
- k. Other children who have experienced abuse, exploitation and discrimination under R.A. No. 7610; and
- l. Such other categories of children as may require the Committee's assistance.



The Committee shall give preferential attention to violent crimes committed against children, cases with great impact on national interest and those referred to it for immediate action.

SECTION 3. Composition. The Committee shall be chaired by the Secretary of Justice and co-chaired by the Secretary of Social Welfare and Development, with the following as members:

- a. Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights;
- b. Secretary of Foreign Affairs;
- c. Secretary of Labor and Employment;
- d. Secretary of Tourism;
- e. Secretary of the Interior and Local Government;
- f. Secretary of Health;
- g. Secretary of Education;
- h. Commissioner of Immigration;
- i. Director of the National Bureau of Investigation;
- j. Chief of the Philippine National Police;
- k. Prosecutor General; and
- l. Three (3) representatives of non-government or private organizations working and/or advocating for the protection of children.

The three (3) representatives of non-government or private organizations shall be nominated by any member of the Committee and appointed by the Chairperson, for a term of three (3) years, which appointment may be renewed upon re-nomination by the Committee and re-appointment of the Chairperson.

The Secretariat of the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) shall act as the Secretariat of the Committee.

SECTION 4. Functions and Duties. The Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

- a. Establish a system of collecting periodic reports from member agencies on cases filed before them including the status of such cases;



- b. Request member agencies and other government instrumentalities to address specific issues brought to the Committee's attention that require immediate action;
- c. Coordinate with other inter-agency councils and other similar structures and mechanisms for synchronization and harmonization of actions on the legal protection of children;
- d. Develop and/or recommend policies and guidelines to address gaps and issues identified in the investigation and prosecution of cases as well as in the legal protection of children;
- e. Formulate a uniform protocol for capacity-building of duty bearers and other stakeholders with emphasis on multi-disciplinary approach;
- f. Call upon non-member agencies for assistance when necessary in the exercise of its functions and duties;
- g. Submit to the Office of the President an annual report of its accomplishments; and
- h. Perform such other functions and duties as may be necessary to meet the objectives of this Order.

SECTION 5. Repeal. All orders, circular, memoranda, rules, regulations and other issuances or parts thereof inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed, modified or amended accordingly.

SECTION 6. Separability. If any part or provision of this Executive Order is held invalid or unconstitutional, other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force and effect.

SECTION 7. Effectivity. This Executive Order shall take effect immediately upon publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

DONE, in the City of Manila this 11th day of August, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Eleven.

By the President:

PAQUITO N. OCHOA, JR.
Executive Secretary

