

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

H. No. 9045

BY REPRESENTATIVES DIMAPORO (M.K.), DALIPE, PALMA, HATAMAN, ARBISON, MASTURA,
DIMAPORO (S.A.), SAKALURAN, ABALOS, ADIONG, BALINDONG, SALI, PAGLAS AND ACHARON

**AN ACT PROVIDING THE MUSLIM FILIPINOS BETTER ACCESS TO SHARI'A
COURTS, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9997,
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MUSLIM
FILIPINOS ACT OF 2009"**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 8 of Republic Act No. 9997 is hereby amended to read as
2 follows:

3
4 **"SEC. 8. Powers and Functions.** – To accomplish its mandate, the
5 Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

6 "x x x

7
8 "(p) Assist the [National Statistics Office (NSO)] **PHILIPPINE**
9 **STATISTICS AUTHORITY (PSA)** in conducting census on the actual
10 population of Muslim Filipinos in the country;

11 x x x

12
13 "(z) xxx

14
15 "(aa) [Promulgate such rules and regulations and exercise such
16 powers and functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and
17 objectives outlined in this Act; and] Provide services to Muslim Filipinos by
18 facilitating the filing or submission of legal documents in connection with the
19 cases filed by Muslim Filipinos in the Shari'a Courts, and charge appropriate
20 fees for such services;

1 “(bb) [Perform such other functions as may be necessary for its effective
2 operations and continued enhancement as a government entity.] Pursue Public-
3 Private Partnership Projects for the benefit of Muslim Filipinos;
4

5 “(cc) Promulgate such rules and regulations and exercise such powers and
6 functions as may be necessary to carry out the purposes and objectives of this
7 Act; and
8

9 “(dd) Perform such other functions as may be necessary for its effective
10 operations and continued enhancement as a Government Entity.”
11

12 SEC. 2. Section 11 of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:
13

14 “SEC. 11. *Bureaus.* – x x x
15

16 “(g) Bureau of Legal Affairs. – The Legal Affairs Bureau shall be
17 responsible for providing Muslim Filipinos with legal education and assistance
18 in case of litigation involving their persons or interests; act as the legal counsel
19 of the Commission; and investigate cases involving its personnel and submit
20 appropriate recommendations pertaining thereto. The Bureau shall also
21 investigate valid complaints brought before the Commission.
22

23 “The Bureau of Legal Affairs shall also ensure that Muslim Filipinos have
24 equitable access to Shari’a Courts. Thus, it may facilitate the filing or
25 submission of appropriate documents with the proper Shari’a Court for
26 Muslim Filipino Litigants who are in a Region where there is No Existing
27 Shari’a Court.
28

29 “The required Number of Personnel and Legal Officers for the effective
30 implementation of this Section shall be determined by the Commission.”
31

32 “The Commission Shall, in coordination with the Supreme Court, establish a
33 mechanism for the filing or submission of legal documents within the
34 Jurisdiction of The Shari’a Circuit and District Courts, including those
35 provided under Title VI Chapter One of Presidential Decree No. 1083,
36 Otherwise Known as the “Code on Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines.”
37 The Mechanism may be facilitated and Administered by the Commission
38 through the Bureau of Legal Affairs to provide services to Muslim Filipinos
39 who have no access to Shari’a Courts in their Region.
40

41 “The Mechanism shall consider the prevailing rules of the proceedings in the
42 Shari’a Court of the place where the court is located.
43

44 “A Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission and the Supreme
45 Court may be entered into for the implementation of the Provisions of this
46 section which shall not be construed as an impediment on the jurisdiction of
47 the courts.”

1 SEC. 3. A new section denominated as Section 11-A is hereby inserted after Section
2 11 of the same Act, to read as follows:

3
4 "SEC. 11-A. *Digital Transformation for Shari'a Court Services.* –
5 The Commission and the Department of Information and Communications
6 Technology (DICT) shall, in coordination with the Supreme Court, create a
7 digital platform that allows paperless filing of routine documents, such as
8 Marriage Certificate, Birth Certificate, Death Certificate and the Collection of
9 Appropriate Court Fees for this purpose. The Commission is authorized to
10 enter into Public-Private Partnerships to facilitate the filing of documents as
11 provided in this Act.
12

13 "Any information or data obtained by the Commission and DICT through a
14 Digital Platform allowing paperless filing for the above documents shall be
15 treated with confidentiality and the right to privacy of the parties shall be
16 observed."
17

18 SEC. 4. A new section denominated as Section 17-A is hereby inserted after Section
19 17 of the same Act to read as follows:

20
21 "SEC. 17-A. *Statistical Data on Muslim Filipinos.* – The PSA and
22 the Commission shall coordinate on the Collection of Statistical Data for
23 Muslim Filipinos in the National, Regional, Provincial, City, and Municipal
24 levels. The Commission and the PSA shall prepare an Annual Report on the
25 Muslim Filipino population. The Annual Report shall include the Latest
26 Census of Population of Muslim Filipinos, Muslim Births, Marriages, and
27 Deaths for the year."
28

29 SEC. 5. A new section denominated as Section 23-A is hereby inserted after Section
30 23 of the same Act to read as follows:

31
32 "SEC. 23-A. *Reportorial Requirements.* – The Secretary shall submit
33 to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
34 the Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Cultural Communities and
35 Muslim Affairs, and the Chairperson of the House Committee on Muslim
36 Affairs an Annual Report on the Implementation of this Act."
37

38 SEC. 6. Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the Commission, in
39 coordination with the Department of Budget and Management and the Supreme Court of the
40 Philippines, shall promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions
41 of this Act.
42

43 SEC. 7. All existing laws, executive orders, presidential decrees, rules and
44 regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are repealed or
45 modified accordingly.
46

47 SEC. 8. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the *Official*
48 *Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,