

NINETEENTH CONGRESS OF THE)
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
Second Regular Session)



24 MAR 18 P5:37

SENATE
S. No. 2613

RECEIVED BY

(In substitution of Senate Bill No. 2462, taking into consideration
House Bill No. 9045)

Prepared and submitted jointly by the Committees on Cultural Communities and Muslim Affairs; Justice and Human Rights; Civil Service, Government Reorganization and Professional Regulation; and Finance with Senators Padilla, Tolentino, Revilla, and Angara, as authors thereof

AN ACT

PROVIDING FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SHARI'AH 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 SEC. 8. *Powers and Functions.* — To accomplish its mandate, the
4 Commission shall have the following powers and functions:

5 X X X

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

9 X X X

1 (z) x x x

2 **(AA) FACILITATE THE FILING OR SUBMISSION OF LEGAL**
3 **DOCUMENTS FOR CASES FILED IN THE SHARI'AH**
4 **COURTS;**

5 ~~[(aa)]~~ **(BB)** Promulgate such rules and regulations and exercise
6 such powers and functions as may be necessary to carry out the
7 purposes and objectives outlined in this act; and

8 ~~[(bb)]~~ **(CC)** Perform such other functions as may be necessary
9 for its effective operations and continued enhancement as a
10 government entity.

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

12 SEC. 11. *Bureaus.* — x x x

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

20 **THE BUREAU OF LEGAL AFFAIRS SHALL ALSO ENSURE**
21 **EQUITABLE ACCESS TO SHARI'AH COURTS. IT SHALL,**
22 **UPON REQUEST, FACILITATE THE FILING OR**
23 **SUBMISSION OF PLEADINGS AND OTHER COURT**
24 **SUBMISSIONS WITH THE PROPER SHARI'AH COURT FOR**

1 LITIGANTS WHO RESIDE IN A REGION WHERE THERE IS
2 NO EXISTING SHARI'AH COURT.

3 THE COMMISSION SHALL, IN COORDINATION WITH THE
4 SUPREME COURT, ESTABLISH A MECHANISM FOR THE
5 FILING OR SUBMISSION OF LEGAL DOCUMENTS WITHIN
6 THE JURISDICTION OF THE SHARI'AH CIRCUIT AND
7 DISTRICT COURTS, INCLUDING THOSE PROVIDED
8 UNDER TITLE VI, CHAPTER ONE OF PRESIDENTIAL
9 DECREE NO. 1083, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "CODE
10 OF MUSLIM PERSONAL LAWS OF THE PHILIPPINES." THE
11 MECHANISM SHALL BE FACILITATED AND
12 ADMINISTERED BY THE COMMISSION THROUGH THE
13 BUREAU OF LEGAL AFFAIRS.

14 THE NUMBER OF PERSONNEL AND LEGAL OFFICERS
15 NECESSARY FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF
16 THIS SUB-SECTION SHALL BE DETERMINED BY THE
17 COMMISSION.

18 Sec. 3. A new section designated as Section 11-A is hereby inserted after
19 Section 11 of the same Act to read as follows:

20 **SEC. 11-A. *DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FOR SHARI'AH***
21 ***COURT SERVICES.*** — THE COMMISSION AND THE
22 DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION AND
23 COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (DICT) SHALL, IN
24 COORDINATION WITH THE SUPREME COURT, CREATE A

1 **DIGITAL PLATFORM THAT ALLOWS PAPERLESS FILING**
2 **OF PLEADINGS AND OTHER COURT SUBMISSIONS.**

3 **THE COMMISSION SHALL FACILITATE THE PAPERLESS**
4 **FILING OF PLEADINGS AND OTHER COURT**
5 **SUBMISSIONS. THE COMMISSION SHALL RESPECT THE**
6 **RIGHT TO PRIVACY OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED AND**
7 **SHALL NOT BE ALLOWED TO RETAIN ANY COPY OF THE**
8 **DIGITAL DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO HEREIN.**

9 Sec. 4. A new section designated as Section 17-A is hereby inserted after
10 Section 17 of the same Act to read as follows:

11 **SEC. 17-A. *STATISTICAL DATA ON MUSLIM FILIPINOS.* —**
12 **THE COMMISSION AND THE PSA SHALL COORDINATE ON**
13 **THE PROPER COLLECTION OF STATISTICAL DATA FOR**
14 **MUSLIM FILIPINOS IN THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL,**
15 **PROVINCIAL, CITY, AND MUNICIPAL LEVELS. THE**
16 **COMMISSION AND THE PSA SHALL PREPARE AN ANNUAL**
17 **REPORT WHICH SHALL INCLUDE THE DATA ON MUSLIM**
18 **BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS FOR THE YEAR**
19 **BASED ON THE TRANSMITTED REGISTERED CIVIL**
20 **REGISTRY DOCUMENTS FROM LOCAL CIVIL REGISTRY**
21 **OFFICES, SHARI’AH CIRCUIT REGISTRARS, AND THE**
22 **PHILIPPINE FOREIGN SERVICE POSTS ABROAD.**

23 Sec. 5. A new section designated as Section 23-A is hereby inserted after
24 Section 23 of the same Act to read as follows:

1 **SEC. 23-A. REPORTORIAL REQUIREMENTS. — THE**
2 **SECRETARY SHALL SUBMIT AN ANNUAL REPORT ON THE**
3 **IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS ACT TO THE PRESIDENT OF**
4 **THE SENATE, THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF**
5 **REPRESENTATIVES, THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE SENATE**
6 **COMMITTEE ON CULTURAL COMMUNITIES AND MUSLIM**
7 **AFFAIRS, AND THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE HOUSE**
8 **COMMITTEE ON MUSLIM AFFAIRS.**

9 Sec. 6. Implementing Rules and Regulations. — Within ninety (90) days from
10 the approval of this Act, the Commission, in coordination with the Department of
11 Budget and Management, Supreme Court of the Philippines, and the PSA shall
12 promulgate the necessary rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this
13 Act.

14 Sec. 7. Repealing Clause. — All existing laws, executive orders, presidential
15 decrees, rules and regulations or parts thereof inconsistent with the provisions of this
16 Act are hereby repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

17 Sec. 8. Effectivity. — This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its
18 publication in the *Official Gazette* or in a newspaper of general circulation.

19 Approved,