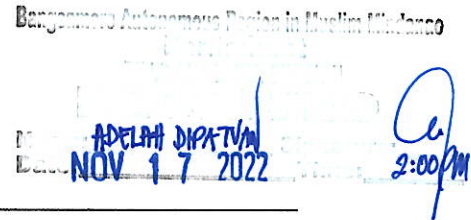


Republic of the Philippines
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY 2
Cotabato City

First Regular Session

BTA PARLIAMENT
BTA Resolution No. 89



Introduced by:
MP Engr. Baintan Adil-Ampatuan, MNSA

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RESOLUTION

STRONGLY APPEALING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DFA) TO RE-OPEN ITS CONSULAR OFFICE IN COTABATO CITY TO CATER TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (BARMM)

WHEREAS, as a matter of policy under the Republic Act No. 7157, otherwise known as the Philippine Foreign Service Act of 1991, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) is the government agency mandated to implement the three (3) pillars of the Philippine Foreign Policy, namely:

1. the preservation and enhancement of national security;
2. the promotion and attainment of economic security; and
3. the protection of the rights and promotion of the welfare and interest of Filipinos overseas;

WHEREAS, apart from the aforementioned mandate, the DFA is also the government agency that is charged with the issuance of passports, the most vital travel document and a primary national identity document;

WHEREAS, the DFA closed its consular office in Cotabato City, the current seat of government of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region;

WHEREAS, most residents of the City of Cotabato have had to travel outside of the region to apply for their passports. Particularly, residents have to travel to Davao City, General Santos City, Cagayan de Oro City, or Zamboanga City, which are hours and hundreds of kilometers away. In worse cases, residents even travel to

Visayas or Luzon. Thus, BARMM residents have incurred more costs in the processing of their application for the said travel document;

WHEREAS, due to economic hardships, more Filipino workers continue to look for jobs abroad to meet their needs and the needs of their families at home, including Muslim workers in the BARMM. The passport is crucial as most of the times, it is required before Filipino jobseekers can apply or so that they can be able to finalize their applications for overseas jobs;

WHEREAS, the "*Hajj*", one of the five (5) pillars of Islam, is a religious obligation that Muslims need to fulfill, as long as resources permit. It is performed in Mecca or *Makkah* in Saudi Arabia. It is expected that most of the pilgrims will come from BARMM as a majority of the country's Muslims reside in the BARMM. The passport is an essential requisite to be able to perform this;

WHEREAS, the passport is also a significant proof of identity. Almost all residents aspire to acquire one;

WHEREAS, BARMM, including Cotabato City is expected to be recipient of foreign assistance from donor agencies and institutions supporting the peace and development of this newly created autonomous region. Ambassadors, consuls, foreign and donor officials, and senior staff are expected to travel to BARMM on regular basis in relation to the ongoing concerns. Thus, it would be efficient if there was a consular office located in the region too;

WHEREAS, the BARMM participates actively in the Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines- East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) cooperation initiative, which aims to increase trade, tourism, and investments by facilitating the free movement of people, goods and services; utilizing the most efficient use of common infrastructure and shared natural resources; and taking the fullest advantage of economic complementation; the Department of Foreign Affairs plays a pivotal role in this international economic cooperation initiative;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED by the BTA Parliament, to pass and approve this Resolution strongly appealing to the Department of Foreign Affairs to re-open its Consular Office in Cotabato City to cater to the residents of the BARMM.

Resolution passed this _____ day of _____ 2022, Cotabato City, Philippines.

Adopted,


MP BAIN TAN ADIL-AMPATUAN, MNSA
Author