

**LAW ENFORCEMENT**

**Mutual Legal Assistance**

**Treaty Between the  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
and the PHILIPPINES**

Signed at Manila November 13, 1994



NOTE BY THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Pursuant to Public Law 89—497, approved July 8, 1966  
(80 Stat. 271; 1 U.S.C. 113)—

“ . . .the Treaties and Other International Acts Series issued under the authority of the Secretary of State shall be competent evidence . . . of the treaties, international agreements other than treaties, and proclamations by the President of such treaties and international agreements other than treaties, as the case may be, therein contained, in all the courts of law and equity and of maritime jurisdiction, and in all the tribunals and public offices of the United States, and of the several States, without any further proof or authentication thereof.”

## **PHILIPPINES**

### **Law Enforcement: Mutual Legal Assistance**

*Treaty signed at Manila November 13, 1994;  
Transmitted by the President of the United States of America  
to the Senate September 5, 1995 (Treaty Doc. 104-18,  
104<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1<sup>st</sup> Session);  
Reported favorably by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations  
July 24, 1996 (Senate Executive Report No. 104-26,  
104<sup>th</sup> Congress, 2d Session);  
Advice and consent to ratification by the Senate  
August 2, 1996;  
Ratified by the President November 4, 1996;  
Exchange of instruments of ratification at Manila  
November 22, 1996;  
Entered into force November 22, 1996.*

TREATY

BETWEEN

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

AND

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

ON

MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS

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TREATY  
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MUTUAL LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN CRIMINAL MATTERS

The Government of the United States of America and  
the Government of the Republic of the Philippines,

Desiring to provide more effective cooperation between the  
two States in the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of  
crimes, such as public corruption and narcotics trafficking; and

Desiring to improve coordination and mutual assistance in  
criminal matters in general;

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

Scope of Assistance

1. The Contracting Parties shall provide mutual assistance, in accordance with the provisions of this Treaty, in connection with the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of criminal offenses, and in proceedings related to criminal matters.

2. Assistance shall include:

- (a) taking the testimony or statements of persons;
- (b) providing documents, records, and items of evidence;
- (c) serving documents;
- (d) locating or identifying persons or items;
- (e) transferring persons in custody for testimony or other purposes;
- (f) executing requests for searches and seizures;
- (g) assisting in proceedings related to forfeiture of assets, restitution, and collection of fines; and
- (h) any other form of assistance not prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.

3. Assistance shall be provided without regard to whether the conduct which is the subject of the investigation, prosecution, or proceeding in the Requesting State would constitute an offense under the laws of the Requested State.

4. This Treaty is intended solely for mutual legal assistance between the Parties. The provisions of this Treaty shall not give rise to a right on the part of any private person to obtain, suppress, or exclude any evidence, or to impede the execution of a request.

## Article 2

### Central Authorities

1. Each Contracting Party shall designate a Central Authority to make and receive requests pursuant to this Treaty.

2. For the United States of America, the Central Authority shall be the Attorney General or a person designated by the Attorney General. For the Republic of the Philippines, the Central Authority shall be the Secretary of Justice or a person designated by the Secretary of Justice.

3. The Central Authorities shall communicate directly with one another, or through the diplomatic channel, for the purposes of this Treaty.



Article 3

Limitations on Assistance

1. The Central Authority of the Requested State may deny assistance if:
  - (a) the request relates to a political offense;
  - (b) the request relates to an offense under military law which would not be an offense under ordinary criminal law;
  - (c) the execution of the request would prejudice its security or similar essential interests; or
  - (d) the request is not made in conformity with the Treaty.
  
2. Before denying assistance pursuant to this Article, the Central Authority of the Requested State shall consult with the Central Authority of the Requesting State to consider whether assistance can be given subject to such conditions as it deems necessary. If the Requesting State accepts assistance subject to these conditions, it shall comply with the conditions.
  
3. If the Central Authority of the Requested State denies assistance pursuant to this Article, it shall inform the Central Authority of the Requesting State of the reasons for the denial.

Article 4

Form and Content of Requests

1. A request for assistance shall be in writing except that the Central Authority of the Requested State may accept a request in another form in emergency situations. In the latter case, the request shall be confirmed in writing within ten days thereafter unless the Central Authority of the Requested State agrees otherwise. All requests and all documents accompanying the request shall be in the English language, unless otherwise agreed.

2. The request shall include the following:
- (a) the name of the authority conducting the investigation, prosecution, or proceeding to which the request relates;
  - (b) a description of the subject matter and nature of the investigation, prosecution, or proceeding, including the specific criminal offenses which relate to the matter;
  - (c) a description of the evidence, information, or other assistance sought; and
  - (d) a statement of the purpose for which the evidence, information, or other assistance is sought.

3. To the extent necessary and possible, a request shall also include:

- (a) information on the identity and location of any person from whom evidence is sought;
- (b) information on the identity and location of a person to be served, that person's relationship to the proceedings, and the manner in which service is to be made;
- (c) information on the identity and whereabouts of a person to be located;
- (d) a precise description of the place or person to be searched and of the articles to be seized;
- (e) a description of the manner in which any testimony or statement is to be taken and recorded;
- (f) a list of questions to be asked of a witness;
- (g) a description of any particular procedure to be followed in executing the request;
- (h) information as to the allowances and expenses to which a person asked to appear in the Requesting State will be entitled;
- (i) a description of any property sought to be restrained, frozen, or forfeited; and
- (j) any other information which may be brought to the attention of the Requested State to facilitate its execution of the request.

Article 5

Execution of Requests

1. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall promptly execute the request or, when appropriate, transmit it to the authority having jurisdiction to do so. The competent authorities of the Requested State shall do everything in their power to execute the request. The Courts or other competent authorities of the Requested State shall have authority to issue subpoenas or other orders necessary to execute the request.
  
2. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall make all necessary arrangements for and meet the costs of the representation in the Requested State of the Requesting State in any proceedings arising out of a request for assistance.
  
3. Requests shall be executed in accordance with the laws of the Requested State except to the extent that this Treaty provides otherwise. However, the method of execution specified in the request shall be followed except insofar as it is prohibited by the laws of the Requested State.
  
4. If the Central Authority of the Requested State determines that execution of a request would interfere with an ongoing criminal investigation, prosecution, or proceeding in that State, it may postpone execution, or it may make execution subject to conditions determined necessary after consultations with the

Central Authority of the Requesting State. If the Requesting State accepts the assistance subject to the conditions, it shall comply with the conditions.

5. The Requested State shall use its best efforts to keep confidential a request and its contents if such confidentiality is requested by the Central Authority of the Requesting State. If the request cannot be executed without breaching the requested confidentiality, the Central Authority of the Requested State shall so inform the Central Authority of the Requesting State, which shall then determine whether the request should nevertheless be executed.

6. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall respond to reasonable inquiries by the Central Authority of the Requesting State concerning progress toward execution of the request.

7. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall promptly inform the Central Authority of the Requesting State of the outcome of the execution of the request. If the request is denied, the Central Authority of the Requested State shall inform in writing the Central Authority of the Requesting State of the reasons for the denial.

Article 6

Costs

The Requested State shall pay all costs relating to the execution of the request, except for the fees of expert witnesses, the costs of translation, interpretation, and transcription, and the allowances and expenses related to travel of persons pursuant to Articles 10 and 11, which fees, allowances, and expenses shall be paid by the Requesting State.

Article 7

Limitations on Use

1. The Central Authority of the Requested State may request that the Requesting State not use any information or evidence obtained under this Treaty in any investigation, prosecution, or proceeding other than that described in the request without the prior consent of the Central Authority of the Requested State. In such cases, the Requesting State shall comply with the conditions.
  
2. The Central Authority of the Requested State may request that the information or evidence furnished under this treaty be kept confidential or be used only subject to terms and conditions it may specify. If the Requesting State accepts the information

or evidence subject to such conditions, the Requesting State shall use its best efforts to comply with the conditions.

3. Information or evidence which has been made public in the Requesting State in accordance with paragraph 1 or 2 of this Article may thereafter be used for any purpose.

4. Nothing in this Article shall preclude the use or disclosure of information to the extent that there is an obligation to do so under the Constitution of the Requesting State in a criminal prosecution. The Requesting State shall notify the Requested State in advance of any such proposed use or disclosure.

#### Article 8

##### Taking Testimony or Evidence in the Requested State

1. A person in the Requested State from whom evidence is requested pursuant to this Treaty shall be compelled, if necessary, to appear and testify or produce evidence, including documents, records, or items.

2. Upon request, the Central Authority of the Requested State shall furnish information in advance about the date and place of the taking of the testimony or evidence pursuant to this Article.

3. The Requested State shall permit the presence of such persons as specified in the request during the execution of the request, and, to the extent allowed by its laws, shall permit such persons to question the person giving the testimony or evidence.

4. If the person referred to in paragraph 1 asserts a claim of immunity, incapacity, or privilege under the laws of the Requesting State, the testimony or evidence shall nonetheless be taken and the claim made known to the Central Authority of the Requesting State for resolution by the authorities of that State.

5. Evidence produced in the Requested State pursuant to this Article or which is the subject of testimony taken under this Article may be authenticated by an attestation, including, in the case of business records, authentication in the manner indicated in Form A appended to this Treaty. Documents authenticated by Form A shall be admissible in evidence in the Requesting State.

#### Article 9

##### Records of Government Agencies

1. The Requested State shall provide the Requesting State with copies of publicly available records, including documents or information in any form, in the possession of government departments and agencies in the Requested State.



2. The Requested State may provide copies of records, including documents or information in any form, which are in the possession of a government department or agency in that State but which are not publicly available, to the same extent and under the same conditions as it would be available to its own law enforcement or judicial authorities. The Requested State may in its discretion deny a request pursuant to this paragraph entirely or in part.

3. Official records produced pursuant to this Article may be authenticated by the official in charge of maintaining them through the use of Form B appended to this Treaty. No further authentication shall be necessary. Documents authenticated under this paragraph shall be admissible in evidence in the Requesting State.

#### Article 10

##### Testimony in the Requesting State

1. When the Requesting State requests the appearance of a person in that State, the Requested State shall invite the person to appear before the appropriate authority in the Requesting State. The Requesting State shall indicate the extent to which the expenses will be paid. The Central Authority of the Requested State shall promptly inform the Central Authority of the Requesting State of the response of the person.

2. The Central Authority of the Requesting State may, in its discretion, determine that a person appearing in the Requesting State pursuant to this Article shall not be subject to service of process, or be detained or subjected to any restriction of personal liberty, by reason of any acts or convictions that preceded his departure from the Requested State.

3. The safe conduct provided for by this Article shall cease seven days after the Central Authority of the Requesting State has notified the Central Authority of the Requested State that the person's presence is no longer required, or if the person has left the Requesting State and voluntarily returned to it. The Central Authority of the Requesting State may, in its discretion, extend this period up to fifteen days if it determines that there is good cause to do so.

#### Article 11

##### Transfer of Persons in Custody

1. A person in the custody of the Requested State whose presence in the Requesting State is sought for purposes of assistance under this Treaty shall be transferred from the Requested State to the Requesting State for that purpose if both the person and the Central Authority of the Requested State consent to the transfer.

2. A person in the custody of the Requesting State whose presence in the Requested State is sought for purposes of assistance under this Treaty may be transferred from the Requesting State to the Requested State if the person consents and if the Central Authorities of both States agree.

3. For purposes of this Article:

- (a) the receiving State shall have the authority and the obligation to keep the person transferred in custody unless otherwise authorized by the sending State;
- (b) the return of the person transferred to the custody of the sending State shall be subject to such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon by the Central Authorities;
- (c) the receiving State shall not require the sending State to initiate extradition proceedings for the return of the person transferred; and
- (d) the person transferred shall receive credit for service of the sentence imposed in the sending State for time served in the custody of the receiving State.

#### Article 12

##### Location or Identification of Persons or Items

If the Requesting State seeks the location or identity of persons or items in the Requested State, the Requested State

shall use its best efforts to ascertain the location or identity of the persons or items.

Article 13

Service of Documents

1. The Requested State shall use its best efforts to effect service of any document relating, in whole or in part, to any request for assistance made by the Requesting State under the provisions of this Treaty.
2. The Requesting State shall transmit a request for the service of a document requiring the appearance of a person before an authority in the Requesting State a reasonable time before the scheduled appearance.
3. The Requested State shall return a proof of service in the manner specified in the request.

Article 14

Search and Seizure

1. The Requested State shall execute a request for the search, seizure, and delivery of any item to the Requesting State if the

request includes the information justifying such action under the laws of the Requested State.

2. Upon request, every official who has custody of a seized item shall certify, through the use of Form C appended to this Treaty, the continuity of custody, the identity of the item, and the integrity of its condition. No further certification shall be required. The certificate shall be admissible in evidence in the Requesting State.

3. The Central Authority of the Requested State may require that the Requesting State agree to terms and conditions deemed necessary to protect third party interests in the item to be transferred.

#### Article 15

##### Return of Documents, Records, and Items of Evidence

Upon the request of the Central Authority of the Requested State at the time it furnishes documents, records, or items incident to a request, the Central Authority of the Requesting State shall return such documents, records, or items furnished to it in execution of a request as soon as possible. If agreed upon by the Central Authorities, such documents, records, or items shall instead be disposed of in a mutually acceptable manner.

Article 16

Assistance in Forfeiture Proceedings

1. If the Central Authority of one Contracting Party becomes aware that proceeds or instrumentalities of offenses that may be forfeitable or otherwise subject to seizure are located in the other Contracting Party, it may so inform the Central Authority of that other Party. If the Party receiving such information has jurisdiction in this regard, it may present this information to its authorities for a determination whether any action is appropriate. These authorities shall issue their decision in accordance with the laws of their country. The Central Authority of the Party which received the information shall inform the Central Authority of the Party which provided the information of the action taken.

2. The Contracting Parties shall assist each other to the extent permitted by their respective laws in proceedings relating to the forfeiture of the proceeds and instrumentalities of offenses, restitution to the victims of crime, and the collection of fines imposed as sentences in criminal prosecutions. This may include action to temporarily immobilize the proceeds or instrumentalities pending further proceedings.

3. The Party that has custody over proceeds or instrumentalities of offenses shall dispose of them in accordance with its laws. Either Party may transfer all or part of such

assets, or the proceeds of their sale, to the other Party, to the extent not prohibited by the transferring Party's laws and upon such terms as it deems appropriate.

Article 17

Compatibility with Other Treaties

Assistance and procedures set forth in this Treaty shall not prevent either of the Contracting Parties from granting assistance to the other Party through the provisions of other applicable international agreements, or through the provisions of its national laws.

Article 18

Consultation

The Central Authorities of the Contracting Parties shall consult, at times mutually agreed to by them, to promote the most effective use of this Treaty. The Central Authorities may also agree on such practical measures as may be necessary to facilitate the implementation of this Treaty.

Article 19

Application

This Treaty shall apply to any request presented after the date of its entry into force whether or not the relevant acts or omissions occurred prior to that date.

Article 20

Ratification, Entry Into Force, and Termination

1. This Treaty shall be subject to ratification, and the instruments of ratification shall be exchanged at Manila as soon as possible.
2. This Treaty shall enter into force upon the exchange of instruments of ratification.
3. Either Party may terminate this Treaty by means of written notice to the other Party. Termination shall take effect six months following the date of notification.



IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned, being duly authorized  
by their respective Governments, have signed this Treaty.

DONE in duplicate at Manila this thirteenth day of November,  
1994.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:

*Warren Christopher*

FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES:

*Judith*

FORM A

Certificate of Authenticity of Business Records

I, \_\_\_\_\_, attest on penalty of criminal  
(Name)  
punishment for false statement or false attestation that I am  
employed by \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Business from which documents are sought)  
and that my official title is \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Title)

I further state that each of the records attached hereto  
is the original or a duplicate of the original records in the  
custody of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Name of Business from which documents are sought)

I further state that:

- A) such records were made, at or near the time of the occurrence of the matters set forth, by (or from information transmitted by) a person with knowledge of those matters;
- B) such records were kept in the course of a regularly conducted business activity;
- C) the business activity made such records as a regular practice;
- D) if such record is not the original, such record is a duplicate of the original.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Sworn to or affirmed before me, \_\_\_\_\_,  
(Name)

a \_\_\_\_\_ this  
(Notary Public, Judicial Officer, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_.

FORM B

Attestation of Authenticity of Foreign Public Documents

I, \_\_\_\_\_, attest on penalty of  
(Name)  
criminal punishment for false statement or attestation that  
my position with the Government of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Country)  
is \_\_\_\_\_ and that in that position I  
(Official Title)  
am authorized by the law of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Country)  
to attest that the documents attached and described below, are  
true and accurate copies of original official records which  
are recorded or filed in \_\_\_\_\_,  
(Name of Office or Agency)  
which is a government office or agency of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Country)

Description of Documents:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Title)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

FORM C

Attestation with Respect to Seized Articles

I, \_\_\_\_\_, attest on penalty of  
(Name)  
criminal punishment for false statements or attestation that  
my position with the Government of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Country)  
is \_\_\_\_\_. I received the articles  
(Official Title)  
listed below from \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Person)  
on \_\_\_\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date) (Place)  
in the following condition:

Description of Article:

Changes in Condition while in my custody:

Official Seal

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Title)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)