



Republic of the Philippines
Commission on Elections
Manila

EN BANC

IN THE MATTER OF THE
ACCREDITATION OF PPCRV
AS THE CITIZEN'S ARM OF
THE COMMISSION FOR
PURPOSES OF THE GENERAL
REGISTRATION AND
CONTINUING
REGISTRATION OF VOTERS
AND FOR THE NATIONAL
AND LOCAL ELECTIONS SET
ON 09 MAY 2016

SPP NO. 14-001

Present:

Brillantes Jr., S.S.	Chairman
Tagle, L.N.	Commissioner
Yusoph, E.R.	Commissioner
Lim, C.R.S.	Commissioner
Parreño, A.A.	Commissioner
Guia, L. T. F.	Commissioner
Lim, A.D.	Commissioner

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
FOR RESPONSIBLE VOTING
(PPCRV),

Petitioner.

X-----X Promulgated on: JAN 29 2015

RESOLUTION

Before the Commission *En Banc* is a *Petition*¹ filed by the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) on 28 August 2014 seeking for its accreditation as a citizens' arm of the Commission for the continuing registration of voters and in the actual conduct of the 9 May 2016 National and Local Elections.

In its petition, PPCRV avers the following:

1. Petitioner is a bona fide national parish-based, non-partisan citizens' movement duly organized by and composed of civic-minded citizens drawn from the various sectors of the Philippines society, mandated to help form the civic conscience of the Filipino voters and campaign for an honest, meaningful, and peaceful elections. x x x

2. This petition is being filed before this Honorable Commission pursuant to Article 9 (c), Section 2 of the 1987 Constitution where it states that the Commission on Elections has the following powers:

(5) Register, after sufficient publication, political parties, organizations, or coalitions which, in addition to other requirements, must present their platform or program of government; and accredit

¹Records 1-12.

citizen's arm of the Commission on Elections.
(emphasis and underscoring supplied)

3. The PPCRV has a mass-based constituency composed of individuals of voting age and registered voter, with operating chapters based in the various parishes in provinces, cities and municipalities throughout the country, which carry out all orders, instructions and/ or directives/ promulgated by the PPCRV's National Executive Board (NEB). The Council's membership has grown in number as evidenced by the May 2004 elections where almost 750,000 PPCRV members and volunteers from 3,333 parishes participated in poll watching and election related activities.

4. PPCRV was organized in 19 October 1991 as a program of the Archdiocese of Manila in preparation for the 1992 Synchronized National and Local Elections wherein it was accredited by the Honorable Commission as its citizen's arm. From then on, Petitioner has grown to become a national movement grounded on faith, moral values, and authentic democracy.

5. Over the years, PPCRV has played a major role during and in-between election time by mobilizing its volunteers to man polling precincts in the country, helping safeguard the integrity of the ballot, ensuring a meaningful electoral process, and campaigning non-stop for voters' education and information on key issues.

6. In 1997, the Honorable Commission likewise accredited Petitioner for purposes of the General and Continuing Registration and other related activities under *Republic Act No. 8189*. Thus, on 3 June 1997, the Honorable Commission issued a Resolution granting PPCRV's petition
x x x

7. In 2009, herein petitioner was again accredited as citizen's arm of this Honorable Commission in connection with the resumption of the System of Continuing Registration and Succeeding Registrations as provided under *Republic Act No. 8189*.

8. Petitioner has managed to be accredited as a national citizen's arm in the following electoral exercises:

- (a) 1993, 1994, 1997 and 2002 Barangay Elections;
- (b) 1993 Special Elections for Governor of Bataan;
- (c) 1994 Special Elections for Congressman of the Second District of Rizal;
- (d) 1992, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004, and 2007 National and Local Elections;
- (e) 1996 and 2002 Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) Election;
- (f) 1997 Recall Election in Kalookan City;
- (g) 1999 Regional Elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM);

- (h) 1999 October plebiscite on the creation of the City of Novaliches;
- (i) 2000 April Recall Elections for the City Mayor of Pasay City;
- (j) 2008 Elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM); and *(sic)*
- (k) 2010 Automated National and Local Elections;
- (l) 2011 Special Elections for Congressman of the First District of Ilocos Sur;
- (m) 2012 Special Elections for Congressman in the 4th District of Zambales;
- (n) 2012 Special Elections for Congressman of the Fifth District of Negros Occidental;
- (o) 2012 General Registration in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)
- (p) 2013 Automated National and Local Elections;
- (q) 2013 Barangay Elections

9. Petitioner was likewise part of the Comelec Advisory Council and has played a vigilant role in matters related to the automation of elections, as well as in overseeing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) concerns relating to or in any way affecting the access of the voters of their right and the exercise of said right of suffrage.

10. Petitioner is also a pro-active partner of the Commission in enabling the vulnerable sectors, especially the Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) to have greater access in the electoral process.

PPCRV commits to perform the following in the event that the petition for accreditation is granted:

(a) It shall be subject to the direct and immediate control of this Honorable Commission and shall comply with the lawful orders of the Commission in the performance of its specific functions and activities as provided in *Section 52(k) of the Omnibus Election Code*, and such other functions and activities which the Commission may assign to it;

(b) It is *(sic)* not supporting any candidate, political party, organization or coalition of political parties involved in the forthcoming activities under Republic Act 8189;

(c) It shall remain strictly non-partisan and impartial during the entire period fixed for the holding of the aforesaid activities;

(d) It does *(sic)* not seek to achieve its objectives, goals or programs through violence or other unlawful means, nor aim to propagate any ideology opposed to the principles of a republican and democratic government and that it will

undertake to police its ranks and prevent infiltration of persons or groups of persons who may, directly or indirectly, destroy its character of non-partisanship and impartiality;

(e) It shall submit to the Commission a list of its responsible officials and other officers constituting its Board and there shall be no changes therein without due notice to the Honorable Commission;

(f) It is (*sic*) not supported by or under the influence of any foreign government or any of its agencies and instrumentalities;

(g) It shall not solicit or receive, directly or indirectly, any contribution or aid of whatever form or nature from any foreign government, whether natural or juridical, in its monitoring of the conduct of elections; and

(h) It shall submit regularly a written report of its operations during the period of its accreditation and a Narrative Summary Report after the conclusion of the pertinent election exercise which is the subject of its accreditation.

On 2 September 2014, the Commission *En Banc* issued an *Order*² directing PPCRV to cause the publication of its petition in a newspaper of general circulation, together with said order. This is pursuant to Section 4, Rule 33 of the COMELEC Rules of Procedure. Said order also set the hearing of the petition on 9 September 2014.

On the scheduled hearing on 9 September 2014, Atty. Robespierre S. Cu, appeared as counsel for PPCRV. Atty. Cu presented Ambassador Henrietta T. De Villa, PPCRV's National Chairperson, as witness. To establish PPCRV's compliance with all the juridical requirements, Atty. Cu presented Exhibits "A" to "E" with sub-markings.³ No opposition was filed against PPCRV.

In an *Order*⁴ issued on even date, the Commission *En Banc* admitted the exhibits presented by PPCRV as evidence, subject to the filing of a board resolution authorizing the filing of the petition.

On the same date, PPCRV submitted a *Compliance*⁵. Attached therewith is Secretary's Certificate attesting to a resolution by PPCRV's Board of Trustees authorizing the filing of the petition and designating Ambassador De Villa as the official representative of the organization relative thereto.

We rule.

Section 1, Rule 33 of the COMELEC Rules of Procedure provides:⁶

²*Id.* at 15.

³*Id.* at 16-33.

⁴*Id.* at 36-38.

⁵*Id.* at

Section 1. *Who may be Accredited as Citizens' Arm of the Commission.* – Any *bona fide* non-partisan group, association or organization from the civic, youth, professional, educational, business or labor sectors with identifiable leadership, membership structure, and with demonstrated capacity to promote the public interest and assist the Commission in its functions and activities as mandated by the Constitution and by law, may be accredited as citizens' arms of the Commission.

Perusing the records submitted in the petition, as well as the documents on file with the Commission, it is evident that PPCRV has proven its compliance with the requirements of Rule 33 of the COMELEC Rules of Procedure. It has shown before the Commission *En Banc* that it is a *bona fide* non-partisan organization with identifiable leadership and membership structure. It has also demonstrated its capacity to promote public interest and assist the Commission in its functions and activities.

Further, it is without question that PPCRV had been an accredited citizens' arm of the Commission every national and local elections since 1992. It has fielded citizen poll watchers in the precincts all over the country. The Commission *En Banc* also recognizes that PPCRV have been undertaking voters' education activities since its establishment. It has a history of supporting the Commission in the latter's programs and project. All these taken together, proves that PPCRV deserves another opportunity to directly serve the country by being a citizens' arm of the Commission for the 9 May 2016 National and Local Elections.

WHEREFORE, the Commission *En Banc* RESOLVED, as it hereby RESOLVES, to **GRANT** the petition and **ACCREDIT** the **PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL FOR RESPONSIBLE VOTING (PPCRV)** as citizen's arm of the Commission pursuant to Section 2(5) of Article IX (C) of the 1987 Constitution and Section 52 (k) of the Omnibus Election Code, as amended, and other election laws in connection with the 9 May 2016 National and Local Elections.

Accordingly, it shall have the following duties:

1. Assist the Commission in its voter registration drive to get qualified citizens, including those from the vulnerable sectors of the society, to register, to validate their registration by submitting their biometrics data for the Commission's voter database, or to reactivate their registration;
2. Assist the Commission in ensuring the integrity of the voters' list through activities including, but not limited to, house to house canvass in areas identified by the Commission as pilot areas for voter registry audit;
3. Assist the Commission in its citizen and voter education and information activities on the exercise of right to vote, including promoting

awareness and familiarity of voters with the chosen voting and counting system and technology.

4. Assist the Commission in all stages of election preparation, particularly in planning, procurement, testing, evaluation, election worker training, logistics, preparation of machines and equipment, ballot and election document printing, deployment and storage, by providing non-partisan watchers, as the Commission may deem necessary;

5. Assist the Commission and its deputies, in the conduct and management of elections by providing non-partisan citizen watchers at the polling places, voting centers, and canvassing venues, and helping ensure that the duly promulgated rule, procedures, and instructions are followed; and by assisting voters locate the polling place where they will be assigned to vote.

6. Assist the Commission in its post-election activities when deemed necessary by the Commission; and

7. Assist in all other activities, as the Commission may deem necessary.

In order for PPCRV to perform its duties as an accredited citizens' arm as herein provided, the Commission shall provide it with the necessary information or data, in hardcopy or in electronic form, as the Commission deems appropriate including the list of voters and project of precincts. The Commission shall also direct its deputies to support and cooperate with PPCRV.

The accreditation shall be subject to the following conditions:

1. That PPCRV shall be subject to the direct and immediate control of the Commission and shall comply with all lawful orders of the Commission in the performance of its specific functions and activities as provided in Section 52 (k) of the Omnibus Election Code, and such other functions and activities which the Commission may assign to it;
2. That PPCRV shall be non-partisan and impartial during the election period;
3. That PPCRV shall not be under the influence whatsoever of any foreign government corporation, or entity and shall not solicit or receive, directly or indirectly, any contribution or aid of whatever form or nature from any government, corporation or entity;
4. That neither shall PPCRV nor any of its members seek to achieve its objectives or programs through violence, or aim to propagate any ideology opposed to the principles of a republican and democratic government;

5. That PPCRV shall undertake to police its ranks and prevent infiltration by persons or group of persons who may, directly or indirectly, destroy its character of impartiality;
6. That PPCRV shall submit to the Commission a list of its responsible officials and other offices constituting its board and there shall be no changes therein without the approval of the Commission;
7. That PPCRV shall make available to the Commission its personnel, facilities, equipment, papers and effects and coordinate its activity with other accredited citizens' arm of the Commission;
8. That PPCRV shall submit a written report of its activities/operations and its observation of the 9 May 2016 National and Local Elections within one (1) month after said elections;
9. That PPCRV recognizes and understands that this accreditation is not exclusive and that the Commission may accredit other qualified organizations and groups to perform similar functions, with which PPCRV must work and coordinate under the over-all supervision of the Commission; and
10. That this accreditation shall be deemed automatically revoked in case it violates any of the conditions herein set forth.

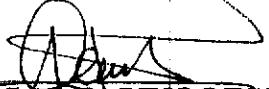
The Executive Director of the Commission in coordination with the Clerk of the Commission shall implement this resolution immediately upon its promulgation, furnishing copies thereof to all field officers nationwide including the candidates and the political parties or coalition of political parties.

The Education and Information Department shall cause the publication of this resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation.

SO ORDERED. *QW*


SIXTO S. BRILLANTES, JR.
600019957
Chairman


LUCENITO N. TAGLE
Commissioner


ELIAS R. YUSOPH
Commissioner



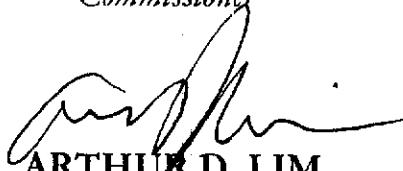
CHRISTIAN ROBERT S. LIM
Commissioner



AL A. PARRENO
Commissioner



LUIE TITO F. GUIA
Commissioner



ARTHUR D. LIM
Commissioner

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the conclusions in the above resolution were reached in consultation among the members of the Commission (*En Banc*) before the case was assigned to the writer of the opinion of the Commission.



SIXTO S. BRILLANTES, JR.
E000019958
Chairman