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Marcos creates special committee on LGBTQIA+ affairs

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Metro Manila (CNN Philippines, December 23) — President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has created a special committee to address concerns of the LGBTQIA+ community and provide them an avenue to take part in the government's policy formulation.

Marcos signed Executive Order No. 51 on Friday, directing the establishment of a Special Committee on LGBTQIA+ Affairs under the existing Inter-Agency Committee on Diversity and Inclusion.

The special panel is tasked to strengthen efforts to combat continued discrimination experienced by members of the community and ensure their continuing dialogue with the government "despite the absence of an established body specifically dedicated to promote their rights and address their concerns," the order stated.

The president also said there is a need to reconstitute the inter-agency committee to ensure that the country continues to comply with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. These treaties mandate states parties to guarantee that their citizens' rights are exercised without discrimination of any kind.

The new panel on LGBTQIA+ affairs will be led by a chairperson with the rank of an undersecretary, to be chosen by the president from "reputable organizations" representing the community.

Marcos also renamed the Inter-Agency Committee on Diversity and Inclusion as the "Diversity and Inclusion Committee," which will be led by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

The committee – which was created by Executive Order No. 100 signed in 2019 by former President Rodrigo Duterte — was previously chaired by the Department of the Interior and Local Government, and vice-chaired by the DSWD. Marcos noted, however, that it will continue to perform the same functions under its mandate.

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