

**Atty. MA. MERCEDITAS N. GUTIERREZ**

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel & Chair, Presidential Anti-Graft Commission  
Office of the President

Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Maria Mercedes "Mercy" Gutierrez has already carved her own niche in Government as a respected public servant.

Born in Samal, Bataan province, Secretary Gutierrez first joined government service as a Presidential Legal Officer at the Office of the President in 1974. It was in 1983 that Atty. Gutierrez began her service with the Department of Justice first as State Counsel III, until she reached the top post as the Acting Secretary in 2004. During her stint at the DOJ, she spearheaded major assignments such as Chairing the Special Committee for the Protection of Women and Children, the Presidential Human Rights Committee, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples, the Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking (IACAT), Head of the Refugee Processing Unit and the Inter-Agency Council on the Remaining Vietnamese Nationals. She was also the Government lawyer in several celebrated Extradition cases.

Sec. Gutierrez has also represented the Government in various local and international conferences on issues relating to women and children's rights, criminal justice administration, refugee determination, and human rights. In addition to these, she headed negotiations with foreign governments on extradition and mutual legal assistance.

For her dedication and exemplary record in public service, she was appointed as Anti-Corruption Czar in December 2004.

She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education from the College of the Holy Spirit, Manila; Bachelor of Laws from the Ateneo de Manila University; and a Diploma in International Law and Development from the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, in the Netherlands.

A recipient of the Dangal ng Samal Award and Woman of Distinction, from the Venture Club of the Americas and from Soroptimist International, Sec. Gutierrez was also named one of the Outstanding Public Officials by the Consumers Union of the Philippines.

She has been the President of the Federacion Internacional de Abogadas (FIDA), Philippine Branch since 2002.

Secretary Gutierrez is married to Mr. Jesus N. Gutierrez of Malvar, Batangas. They have four children: Jesus II, Michael, Dino, and Margarita.