



## What Is This Module About?

This module is about Mindanao and the ongoing quest of its people and the government for peace in the island.

For almost three decades now, peace has remained elusive for the people in Mindanao. The conflict there threatens the lives of the people not only in Mindanao and the Philippines but also of the world as a whole.

What is the root of the problem? Were there attempts to solve the problem by the government, the people in Mindanao and the international community? If so, were these attempts to restore peace successful?

These are just few of the questions that this module will try to answer.

This module is divided into three lessons:

Lesson 1 — *Mindanao: Land of Promise and Struggle*

Lesson 2 — *A Long Journey Towards Peace in Mindanao*

Lesson 3 — *Life After the Accord: Peace Remains Elusive*



## What Will You Learn From This Module?

After completing this module, you should be able to:

- ◆ explain the possible roots of conflict in Mindanao;
- ◆ discuss the different peace initiatives undertaken by the government to end the violence in Mindanao; and
- ◆ explain whether the peace initiatives undertaken by the government are successful or not in bringing peace to Mindanao.



## Let's See What You Already Know

Write the letter of the correct answer in the blank before each number.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Mindanao is the second largest island of the Philippines. Its total land area is \_\_\_\_\_.
- 45,000 square meters
  - 45,000 square kilometers
  - 95,000 square meters
  - 95,000 square kilometers
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Mindanao can be found in the \_\_\_\_\_ part of the Philippines.
- northern
  - eastern
  - western
  - southern
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ is a Cebuano-Visayan term that means native or indigenous.
- Moro
  - Muslim
  - Lumad
  - Christian
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Spain colonized the Philippines in the mid-sixteenth century. It converted majority of the Filipinos to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Islam
  - Christianity
  - Buddhism
  - Mormonism
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ is an international agreement that defines the territorial coverage of the Philippines.
- Treaty of Paris
  - Tripoli Agreement
  - Treaty of Milan
  - Territorial Agreement
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The Moro sense of nationalism was awakened by the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Mendiola Massacre
  - Jabidah Massacre
  - Mock Battle
  - EDSA Revolution

- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The leader of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) is \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. Nur Misuari
  - b. Hashim Salamat
  - c. Abu Sabaya
  - d. Ferdinand Marcos
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The first peace agreement signed by the government and the MNLF under the mediation of the Organization of Islamic Conference is \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. Final Peace Agreement
  - b. Treaty of Paris
  - c. Tripoli Agreement
  - d. Organic Act for the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Under the administration of \_\_\_\_\_, the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao was passed.
- a. Ferdinand Marcos
  - b. Joseph Estrada
  - c. Corazon Aquino
  - d. Fidel Ramos
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The peace agreement signed by President Ramos and Nur Misuari was the \_\_\_\_\_.
- a. Tripoli Agreement
  - b. Final Peace Agreement
  - c. Treaty of Paris
  - d. none of the above

Well, how was it? Do you think you fared well? Compare your answers with those found in the *Answer Key* on page 48 to find out.

If all your answers are correct, very good! This shows that you already know much about the topics in this module. You may still study the module to review what you already know. Who knows, you might learn a few more new things as well.

If you got a low score, don't feel bad. This means that this module is for you. It will help you understand some important concepts that you can apply in your daily life. If you study this module carefully, you will learn the answers to all the items in the test and a lot more! Are you ready?

You may go now to the next page to begin Lesson 1.

# Mindanao: Land of Promise and Struggle



Mindanao had taken the headlines of the newspapers by storm recently. Do you know why?

For many people, be it Filipinos or foreigners, Mindanao is considered as a land of promise because of its beauty and the richness of its natural resources. Yet, for a long time until today, many people view it as an unsafe place.

How much do you know about our brothers in Mindanao?

This lesson will introduce Mindanao as part of the Philippines in terms of geography, population and culture. Furthermore, it will present the diverse sociocultural profile of the place and the people of Mindanao.

This lesson will also provide a brief history of the struggle of its people for their national identity and self-determination as a separate state from the Philippines. It will also explain the possible roots of the conflict in Mindanao.

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- ◆ explain the differences of the various cultural groups in Mindanao;
- ◆ discuss briefly the history of the people of Mindanao and their struggle for national identity and self-determination; and
- ◆ explain the possible roots of the conflict in Mindanao.



## Let's Think About This

The Philippines is made up of 7,107 islands divided into three groups: Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. With a total land area of 95,000 square kilometers, Mindanao is the second largest island and is seen by many Filipinos as a land of promise.

Do you know where on the map of the Philippines Mindanao lies? If so, name some of the different provinces that comprise the island.

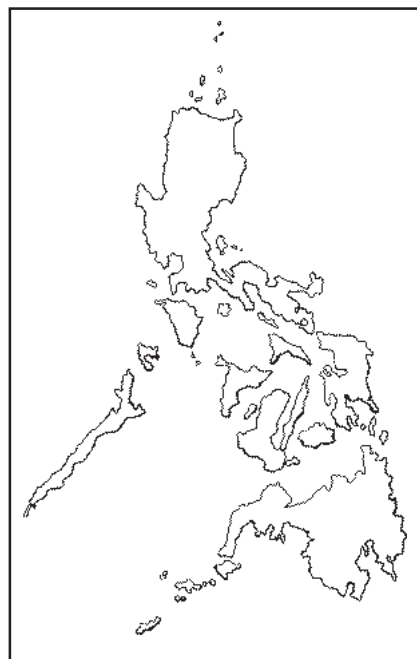
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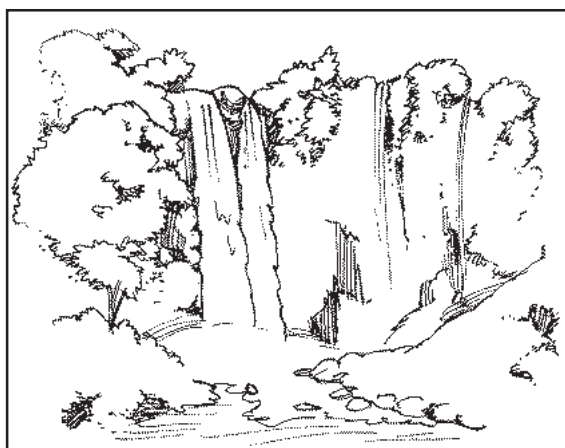


After you finish listing down the provinces, compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 48.

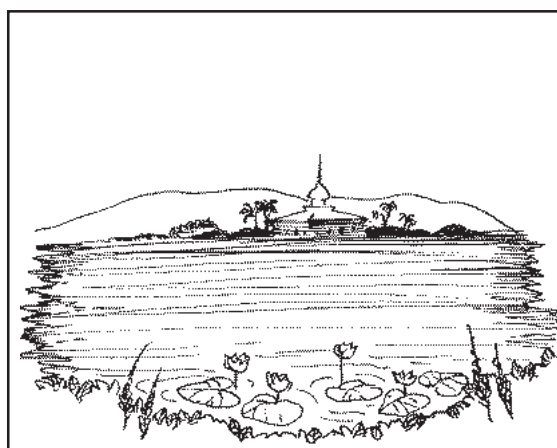


## Let's Try This

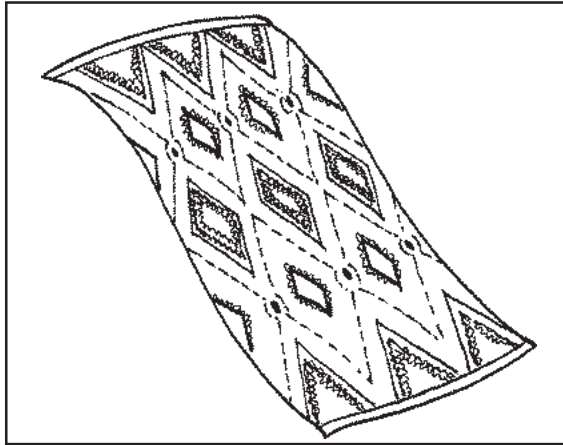
Below are some illustrations of places and things that Mindanao is famous of. Can you name them? Write the names of the places and/or the products that can be found in Mindanao in the blanks provided below the illustrations.



1. \_\_\_\_\_



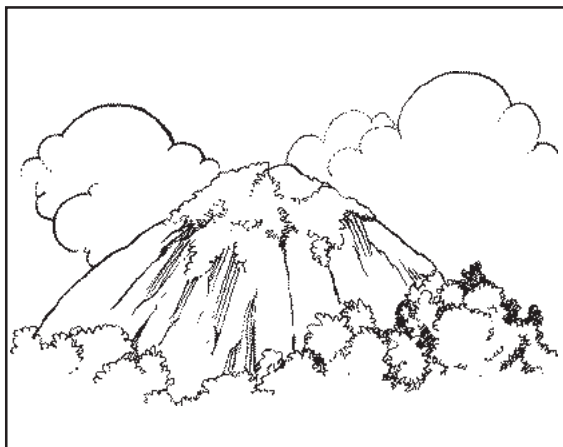
2. \_\_\_\_\_



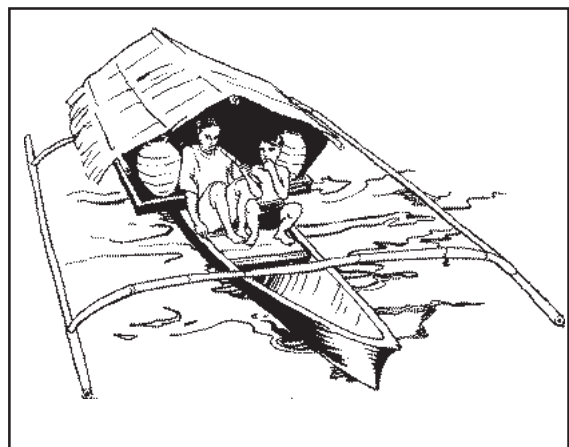
3. \_\_\_\_\_



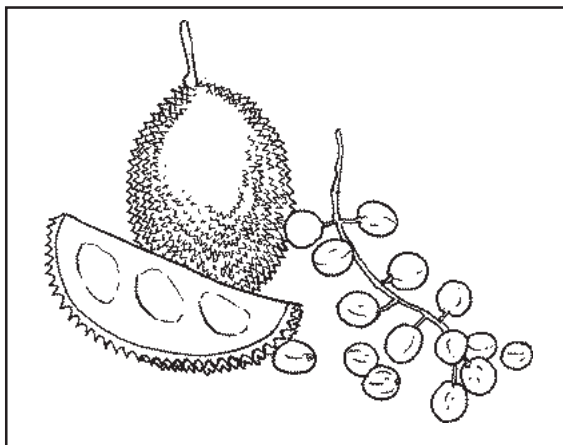
4. \_\_\_\_\_



5. \_\_\_\_\_



6. \_\_\_\_\_



7. \_\_\_\_\_



8. \_\_\_\_\_

When you have finished identifying the pictures/illustrations, compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 49.



## Let's Learn

Mindanao is a very beautiful and rich place. From the highest mountain peak to the deepest portions of the sea, there is beauty and richness that would surely capture the hearts of many people.

It shows a great variety of geographical or land features such as high and rugged mountain ranges, volcanic peaks, plateaus (elevated lands) and swampy plain areas—which are very conducive for agriculture. Mindanao also has a very indented coastline with fine bays and harbors, the reason why aside from agriculture, the people also depend on the sea for their living.

You can find the largest lake in our country in Mindanao — the Lanao Lake; the highest mountain — Mt. Apo; and the best source of hydroelectric power — the Maria Christina Falls.

Its fertile soil produces exotic fruits such as durian, *marang*, lanzones, exotic bananas and pineapples which can only be found in tropical countries.



## Let's Think About This

Do you know that there are three major cultural groups in Mindanao? — These are the Moros or the Muslim population, the Lumads or native or indigenous people who are neither Muslims nor Christians, and the Christians.

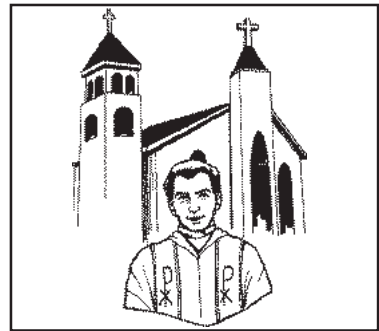
Can you identify them in the illustrations below? If so, write your answers in the blanks below the illustrations.



1. \_\_\_\_\_



2. \_\_\_\_\_



3. \_\_\_\_\_

Did you have a tough time identifying the people in the illustrations? You can learn more about them as you continue reading the following explanations. You can check if your answers are correct as you read the selections on the next pages.



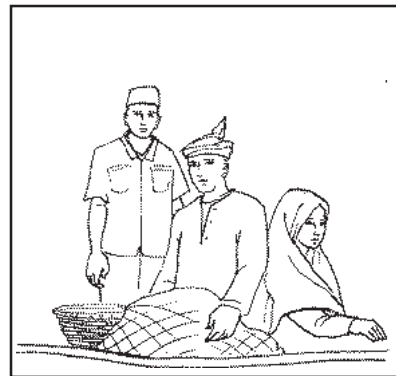
## Let's Study and Analyze

### Muslims

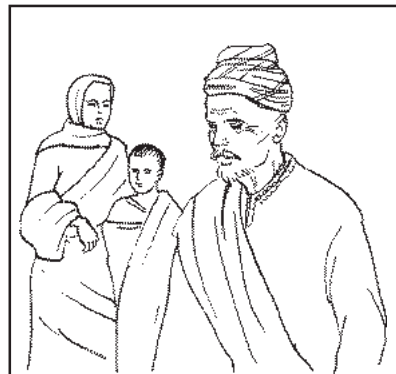
The culture of the people in Mindanao is diverse mainly because of two factors: the various indigenous or native groups which the government refers to as cultural minorities; and the geographical characteristics of the island.

There are at least 13 indigenous groups in Mindanao that have adopted Islam or the Muslim religion as a way of life. The three largest and most politically dominant are:

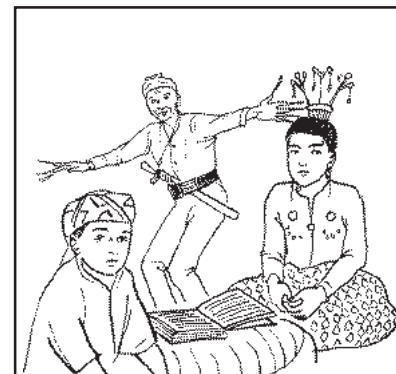
the ***Maguindanaon*** (people of the flooded plains) of the Cotobato provinces (Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat, North and South Cotabato);



the ***Maranaw*** (people of the lake) of the two Lanao provinces; and



the ***Tausug*** (people of the current/sea) of the Sulu archipelago.





The remaining ten are the *Yakan, Sama, Badjao, Kalagan, Sangil, Iranun* or *Ilanun, Palawani, Melebugnon, Kalibogan* and *Jama Mapun*.

Although the Muslim groups are living in geographically different environments and have different ways of living, they are bounded by a common religion—Islam.

In your opinion, are the terms Moro and Muslim similar? Do they have the same meaning? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Why do you say so?

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The terms ‘Muslim’ and ‘Moro’ have been used interchangeably to refer to the various cultural groups in Mindanao. It is important to take note, however, of the difference between the two. The term **Muslim** refers to a universal religious identity, while **Moro** denotes a geopolitical (geographical and political) identity distinct to the people of Mindanao who are Muslims and non-Muslims.

The term **Moro** was originally used by the Spaniards to refer to the people of Mindanao who shared the religion of the Moors who had once colonized Spain. The Moors’ religion was Islam, so they were Muslims. The term was used in the same way the term **Indio** was used for Filipinos who were converted to Christianity.

What do the terms **Indio** and **Moro** denote during the Spanish Regime?

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During the Spanish Regime, **Moro** and **Indio** both mean “inferior or having a lower status than the Spaniards and the mestizos.” The meaning of **Moro** was later transformed into something significant and important, on which the Muslims of the Philippines have taken pride of. This was due to the self-assertive attitude as institutionalized in the organization of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). You will learn more about this organization as you continue studying this module. As was said earlier, the term **Moro** is used nowadays to refer to the Filipinos in Mindanao who can either be Muslims or non-Muslims.

## Lumads

**Lumad** is a Cebuano-Visayan term meaning “native or indigenous.” Presently, it has been used to refer to various indigenous groups in Mindanao who are neither Muslims nor Christians.

There are 18 indigenous groups considered as Lumads. Among them are: *Ata, Bagobo, Banwaon, B’laan, Bukidnon, Dibabawon, Higaonon, Mamanwa, Mandaya, Manguwangan, Manobo, Mansaka, Subanon, Tagakaolo, Tasaday, T’boli, Teduray* and *Ubo*.



## Christians

Filipino Christians are those who were converted to Christianity from their pagan beliefs during the Spanish Regime. Spain was able to colonize Luzon and Visayas and some parts of Mindanao and Zamboanga. During the Spaniards’ time, however, most of Mindanao remained predominantly Muslim and pagan.



The population of Filipino Christians in Mindanao grew during the American Period and the Commonwealth Government due to the migration of the people from the north (Luzon) and central islands (Visayas) to the south (Mindanao). You will learn more about these in the succeeding discussions.



## Let’s Think About This

What do the differences in culture of the people in Mindanao suggest about the place?

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Have you finished answering the question? If so, you can compare your answer with the sample answer on the next page.

The different cultural groups in Mindanao illustrate how diverse the cultures of its people are. They have so many differences with each other. These differences may be attributed to the different religious beliefs that they have. For instance, the Muslims have Islam as their religion and they believe in the existence of Allah as their God. The Christians have the Roman Catholic church as the foundation of their faith. Lastly, the Lumads believe in the spirits of nature as the ones guiding them.

Do the geographical features of Mindanao contribute to the diversity of the culture of its people? \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Why do you think so?

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If you answered “yes,” you are correct! The geographical features of the islands such as the lakes, seas, valleys, mountains and plains, contribute to the differences of its people. Let’s take the different Muslim groups, for example. The Maguindanaons live in the plains. Thus, their way of living is dependent on agriculture. The Tausugs and Maranaws, on the other hand, depend on the richness of the seas and lakes, respectively.

Could their differences (both the Muslim groups and other cultural groups — Lumads and Christians) be the root of the conflict in Mindanao?

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If you are having a hard time answering the last question, don’t worry. It is really difficult to say whether the differences of the people in Mindanao is the root of the troubles there or not. To learn the answer to the last question, study carefully the following discussions.



## **Let’s Study and Analyze**

### **Brief Historical Sketch of the People of Mindanao**

We often read and hear about the conflict in Mindanao. For more than three decades now, Mindanao has been surrounded by violence because of the continuing conflict between the government and the Muslim separatist groups in the area.

The Muslims in Mindanao have a long history of struggle. This dates back to when the Philippines was colonized by Spain for 333 years. They fought bravely because they did not want to be conquered.

The Spaniards set foot on our country in the mid-sixteenth century. The Philippines, at that time, was subjected to colonial rule. Most of the Filipinos in Luzon and Visayas were converted to Christianity. Even though the Spaniards were able to conquer some parts of eastern Mindanao and Zamboanga, they failed to colonize the entire Mindanao. Muslims and Lumads fought bravely for their lands and survival.



During the Spanish Regime, biases and prejudices emerged between the Christianized Filipinos and the Muslims in Mindanao. These have somehow persisted up to the present and have created distrust between the majority of the Filipinos who are Christians and the Muslims of Mindanao. Occasional disputes occurred between them.

At that time, the people of Mindanao did not have much sense of nationalism yet—as compared to today. This was because Mindanao was composed of various sultanates and ethnic groups that differed from one another. They too fought and competed with each other.

The Americans came, fought and won over the Spaniards. History, however, tend to reveal that what happened was only a mock battle. The US paid \$20 million to Spain in exchange for the possession of the Philippines, which at that time had no defined territorial coverage. The two countries signed the Treaty of Paris that defined the territorial coverage of the Philippines, which extended to the south and included the islands of Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan.

During the American Regime, several laws were enacted that legitimized land ownership of individuals and corporations. These laws required the inhabitants of the Philippines to register their lands. The law set limits on how much land individuals and corporations could own. Unregistered lands automatically became open for exploration, occupation and purchase by citizens of the Philippines and the United States.

In your opinion, how did the land registration affect the Filipino Muslims and Lumads?

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In Mindanao, vast tracts of land occupied by Filipino Muslims and Lumads were sold or leased to settlers and plantation companies. This resulted to the dislocation and loss of ownership of Muslims and Lumads of their ancestral lands. Many of them failed to register their lands because they did not understand the registration procedures.

The situation during the American Period did not end even after the Filipinos established their own independent government—the Commonwealth Government.

According to Marites Danguilan Vitug and Glenda Gloria, in their book entitled, *Under the Crescent Moon: Rebellion in Mindanao*, the influx of the people from Luzon and Visayas to Mindanao started when the government launched a migration program in the 1950s. The people were tempted with the idea of cultivating their own land because this was abundant in Mindanao. Because of this migration, the migrants and the indigenous people of Mindanao began to compete for land ownership. Inevitably, clashes between them arose.

Rich individuals or multinational corporations owned most of the productive lands in Mindanao. They grew rice, corn, pineapples, coconuts, rubber and bananas. Also, the fertile land of Mindanao was exploited as wealthy loggers deforested the island. It is said that Mindanao has been contributing substantially to our country's income but according to the 1997 Philippine Human Development Report, five predominantly Muslim provinces were among the six poorest out of the 74 provinces in the country.



## Let's Review

1. Discuss the problems encountered by the people of Mindanao during the Spanish, American and post-independence periods.

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2. Do you agree that the problems encountered by the people of Mindanao during those periods are still present today? Explain your answer.

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3. In the early part of this lesson, it was stated that Mindanao is a rich and fertile island, if indeed it is, what could be the reason why five of its 13 provinces are among the poorest in our country?

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After you finish answering the test, compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on pages 49–50.



## Let's Study and Analyze

The awakening of the Moros' sense of nationalism was brought about by the Jabidah Massacre on March 1968. At least 23 army recruits, mostly from Sulu and Tawi-Tawi (areas in Mindanao that have a predominantly Muslim population), were allegedly killed by their superiors in Corregidor Island. This was, however, denied by the government.

It has been said earlier that during the Spanish and American regimes, the Muslims of Mindanao had no sense of Muslim or Moro nationalism yet. They (different Muslim groups) even fought with each other. These Filipino Muslims at that time were called Moros.

According to Vitug and Gloria, “the Philippines was to train a special armed unit named Jabidah that would create havoc in Sabah, Malaysia.” Most of the recruits came from different parts of Mindanao because many Filipinos there have migrated to Sabah. If war would occur between the Philippines and Malaysia, it was hoped that the Filipinos living in Malaysia would support the Philippines.

The army recruits were promised to be paid a sum of ₱50.00 a month but they didn't receive any. Their food supply was very meager and they slept on plain pieces of wood. Because of their miserable condition in Corregidor, the army recruits wrote a letter of complaint addressed to then President Marcos. A few days after the letter was filed, the army recruits were reduced in size because their superiors allegedly silenced them. Up to this date, their deaths remain unaccounted for.

The massacre ignited the Muslim rebellion. The period of 1968–1971 was known to be the period of growth of student activism and Muslim consciousness — the Muslims realized that they have a distinct history and identity from the rest of the Filipinos. It was during that time that the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) was established and began their endless struggle for separatism.



## Let's Review

1. In your opinion, how did the Jabidah Massacre ignite the Muslim rebellion?

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2. Why does the MNLF want Mindanao to be a separate state from the Philippines?

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Compare your answers with the sample answers in the *Answer Key* on pages 50–51.



## Let's Read

Read the following excerpts of feature articles that discuss the possible roots of conflict in Mindanao.

### Three Decades of Bloodshed

The Muslim (or Moro) and indigenous Lumads, now outnumbered by 'majority Filipinos' — the largely Christian descendants of twentieth century settlers from the northern and central Philippines — are asserting rights to their traditional lands and to self-determination.

Colonial rule started a process that was to alter Mindanao's demographic composition. It deprived the indigenous inhabitants of their land and spawned deep-seated prejudices among different ethno-linguistic (cultural) groups . . . In the early 1970s, the Bangsamoro (Muslim Nation) people united in a struggle for recognition which has invariably, although erroneously, been referred to as a 'Muslim-Christian' conflict.

Thousands of settlers arrived every week until the 1960s and the competition for land — aggravated by the clash of Moro and majority Filipino concepts of the land tenure and ownership — fueled social tension.

As a result of the influx of immigrants in the late 1960s, the Muslims were reduced to around 25% of Mindanao's population from about 75% at the turn of the century . . . While Mindanao contributed substantially to the national treasury, little was sent back in the form of infrastructure and social services, especially in Muslim areas.

[\(www.c-r.org/acc\\_min/\)](http://www.c-r.org/acc_min/)

\* \* \*

While Mindanao generates about 60 percent of the country's revenues (income), only a small percentage is injected back to fund various social and infrastructure projects in it.

The feeling among the Moro people that they are being oppressed, which, to some extent, is true. I believe, however, that the politicians have caused the conflict to go out of hand, if we can call it that. The solution? Equal treatment for the Moro people. Access to education, health and other basic services and employment.

[\(www.inquirer.net/issues/Nov. 20/features/fea2.htm\)](http://www.inquirer.net/issues/Nov.20/features/fea2.htm)



## Let's Try This

From the excerpts that you have just read, identify the probable causes of conflict in Mindanao.

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When you have finished answering the question, compare your answers with the discussion on the next page.





## Let's Learn

Many people say that the root of conflict is **religion** and cultural differences between Moros and Christians. Many political analysts say that the cause of the problem is political or simply **government neglect**. The Muslims and Lumads claim that the root of the problem is not only government neglect and religion but also **land ownership**.

The conflict in Mindanao could be attributed to economic deprivation, lack of political participation, inadequate or poor delivery of health and social services and lack of infrastructure, among others. Most Muslims feel that they have been neglected by our government. It has been said that Mindanao contributes a lot to the national budget because of its high level of land productivity. However, most of the indigenous (Muslims and Lumads) communities and areas have yet to benefit from the wealth of the land.

According to Macapado Muslim and Rufa Cagoco-Guam in their article entitled, *Mindanao: Land of Promise*, “while Mindanao contributed substantially to the national treasury, little was sent back in the form of public infrastructure and social services, especially in the Muslim areas. Soon their leaders could no longer mediate and Muslim defiance turned into an open rebellion.”

Tension between the migrant settlers, which are mostly Christians from the northern and central part of the country, and the so-called cultural minorities of Mindanao (Lumads and Muslims) arose as they competed for land, economic and political opportunities.



## Let's Try This

Do you agree with the content of the article? Why or why not? Explain your answer.

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Have you finished answering the question? If so, compare your answer with the sample answer in the *Answer Key* on page 51.

You can also discuss your answers with any of your co-learners, friends, family members or your Instructional Manager or Facilitator. Does he/she agree with your answer? Why or why not?

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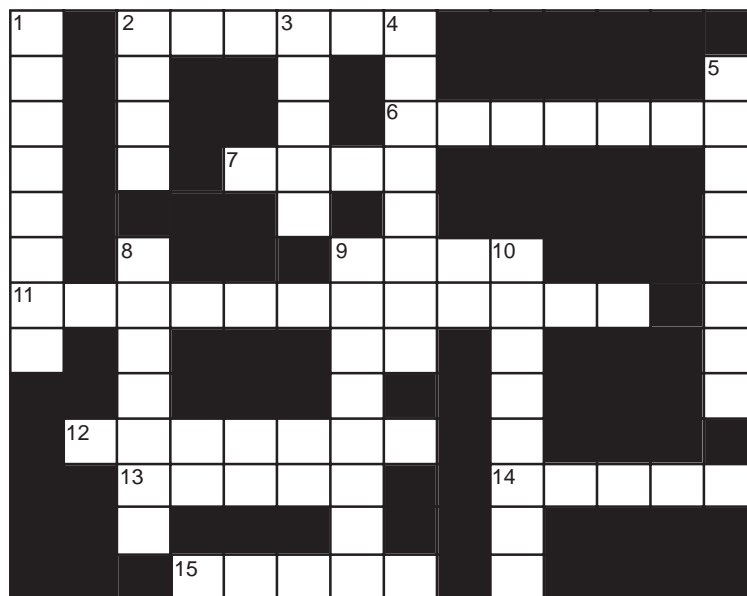


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## Let's See What You Have Learned

Did you learn a lot from Lesson 1? Well, let's see. Answer the crossword puzzle below using the clues on the next page.



### Across

2. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to a religious group of people that adopts Islam as their religion.
6. Government \_\_\_\_\_ is considered as one of the roots of the conflict in Mindanao.
7. The Muslims and Lumads are struggling to get their ancestral \_\_\_\_\_ back. It has been said that because of heavy migration and land registration, many indigenous groups in Mindanao were dislocated.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ is the rebel group that was established to reassert the rights of the Moro people to their lands. Its establishment was triggered by the Jabidah Massacre.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ is the religion of the majority of the Filipinos. This religion was brought by the Spaniards to the country.
12. The Philippines is divided into three major groups of islands, one of which is \_\_\_\_\_. This island group can be found at the central portion of the country and is composed of various islands and islets.
13. For 333 years the Philippines was colonized by \_\_\_\_\_.
14. The religion of the Muslims and most Moros is \_\_\_\_\_.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ is the largest island in the Philippines. This island is predominantly Christian.

### Down

1. For almost three decades now, Mindanao is still experiencing \_\_\_\_\_ and civil war.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to the people in Mindanao that have a distinct political identity. This term was given by the Spaniards to the "Islamized" people of Mindanao who share the religion of the Moors who once colonized Spain.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to indigenous or native groups in Mindanao that are neither Muslims nor Christians.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ is the second largest island in the Philippines.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ is another word for "battle" or "fight."
8. Because of the beauty and richness of the natural resources and geographical features of Mindanao, for many people, it is often referred to as a land of \_\_\_\_\_.
9. (see 4 Down)
10. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to the citizens of the Philippines.

Have you finished answering the test? Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 51.

How was it? Were you able to complete the puzzle correctly? If so, congratulations! You did a great job! If not, do not worry, study this lesson again to learn the answers. Good luck!



## **Let's Remember**

- ◆ Mindanao lies at the southern part of the Philippines. It has a total land area of 95,000 sq. km, which makes it the second largest island in the country next to Luzon.
- ◆ Mindanao is composed of several ethnic or cultural groups. The three major cultural groups in it are: Muslims or Moros, Lumads and Christians.
- ◆ Mindanao is such a beautiful place but for many years until today, the island is besieged by war and poverty.
- ◆ The Jabidah Massacre awakened the Moros' sense of nationalism.
- ◆ It has been said that the conflict in Mindanao was caused by religious and cultural differences of the people, government neglect and disputes over land ownership.

## A Long Journey Towards Peace in Mindanao

You learned in Lesson 1 the brief history of the people in Mindanao and their struggle. You also learned that despite the richness of Mindanao, it has been suffering from the harsh realities of war and poverty.

This lesson will discuss peace processes undertaken by our government to put an end to the escalating conflict in Mindanao. Peace processes under the Marcos, Aquino and Ramos administrations will be discussed.

Among the peace accords or agreements that this lesson will focus on are the Tripoli Agreement on December 23, 1976 and the Final Peace Accord signed by former President Ramos and Muslim opposition leader and current governor of the Muslim Region, Nur Misuari, on September 2, 1996.

After studying this lesson, you should be able to:

- ◆ identify the efforts of the government in bringing peace to Mindanao; and
- ◆ explain the different peace initiatives undertaken by the different administrations of the Philippines.



### Let's Try This

Are you familiar with the people involved in resolving the conflict in Mindanao? Well, let's see. Given below are pictures of important people in our history. They are known for their involvement in trying to put an end to the conflict in Mindanao. Write their names in the blanks provided.



a. \_\_\_\_\_



b. \_\_\_\_\_



c. \_\_\_\_\_



d. \_\_\_\_\_

After you have finished identifying the pictures, compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 52. Were you able to identify all the given personalities? If so, very good! You can learn more on how they worked towards peace in Mindanao as you continue studying this lesson.



## Let's Read

You learned in Lesson 1 that Mindanao is a beautiful island even if it has continuously been besieged by violence—and poverty that is both the cause and effect of war in the region.

Read the following articles about the violence in Mindanao that happened during the declaration of martial law.

### The Costs of Conflict

After the war in Mindanao erupted in 1972, it is estimated that 120,000 lives were lost, countless more wounded and billions of pesos lost in the damage of property (Nuñez, 1997). Moreover, there emerged a generation of orphans today concentrated in areas of war in Mindanao. Likewise, more than one million people were rendered homeless and poor and 200,000 to 300,000 Muslim refugees from this region were reported to be in Sabah, Malaysia (Muslim, 1994). At the height of the conflict, it was reported that about 80 percent of the entire military strength of the country were in Mindanao. The late President Marcos claimed that about 11,000 soldiers were killed during the first eight years of the war in Mindanao.

To counter the secessionist movement in Mindanao, the Marcos Administration increased its military spending to twice that spent on health and education. Due to the conflict, many fertile lands were left unproductive and communities abandoned in Mindanao. Investors became scared. Properties were destroyed and communities deprived of basic social services. Local political and social institutions weakened as the military and the national government took charge. The psychological effects to the Moros and Christians that had peacefully coexisted was immense.

—Mario Joyo Aguja

*Source: The Aftermath of Ethnic Violence—Postwar Reconstruction in the Southern Philippines: A Preliminary Assessment of the Role of the International Community.*

The word **secessionist** is synonymous to the word “separatist.” A secessionist movement refers to a group or an organization that aims to separate, as in the case of the Muslims, from the Philippines. They want to have their own independent nation, thus the term Bangsamoro (Moro Nation).



## Let's Try This

1. What do the two articles say about the condition of the Philippines during the war in Mindanao and martial law?

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2. What did Marcos do to end the violence in Mindanao?

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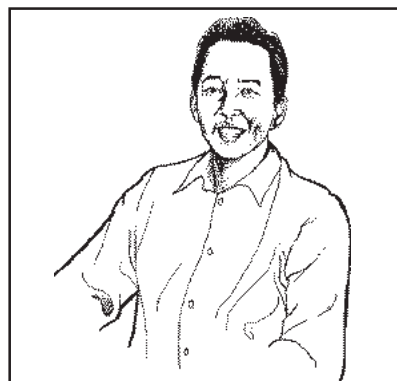
After you finish answering the questions, compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 52.



## Let's Study and Analyze

The cost of the conflict was so huge not only in terms of financial expenses but also in terms of the number of those injured and killed.

In 1975, with both sides suffering heavy losses, the government and the MNLF searched for a sensible and peaceful way to resolve the conflict. This was partly influenced by the international Islamic community, particularly the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).



The OIC, whose primary goal or philosophy is the Qur'anic concept of *ummah* or "one community of all Muslims in the world," tried to pressure both the government and MNLF to undergo peace negotiations.

The Marcos government, which was hesitant at that moment, agreed to negotiate with the MNLF only after oil-producing Muslim countries threatened the government with an oil embargo or blockade. Thinking that this would worsen the nation's already weakening economy, Marcos called for a ceasefire and opened the door for negotiations.

Former President Ferdinand Marcos and MNLF leader, Nur Misuari, signed the first peace agreement between the government and the MNLF on December 23, 1976 under the mediation of the OIC. The agreement was known as the Tripoli Agreement because the agreement was signed in Tripoli, Libya.

The move to settle the conflict in Mindanao peacefully had somehow paid off. The MNLF dropped its demands for independence and settled for political autonomy. That is, Mindanao will remain part of the country but has an independent government.



## Let's Review

Answer the following questions.

1. What prompted former President Marcos to negotiate with the secessionist group MNLF?

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2. What was the role played by the Organization of Islamic Conference in the signing of the peace agreement between the government and the MNLF?

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Have you finished answering the questions? Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 52.



## Let's Study and Analyze

### Tripoli Agreement

Under the Tripoli Agreement, Palawan, 13 of the 22 provinces of Mindanao and the nine cities located in these areas would be granted political autonomy from the central government in Manila. The autonomous regional government would have its own executive, legislative and judicial branches and a regional security force independent of the AFP.

The areas that would be granted autonomy listed in the agreement were: Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, North Cotabato, Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Davao del Sur, South Cotabato, Sarangani, Sulu, Palawan (which is now a part—politically and administratively—of Region IV or Southern Tagalog Region), “and all the cities and villages situated in the above-mentioned areas.”

The signing of the agreement, however, was not something that happened smoothly as it then appeared to be. A deadlock during the negotiations happened when the negotiators of the Marcos government objected to one of the provisions of the agreement, which was known as *Paragraph 15*.

Paragraph 15 of the Tripoli Agreement called for the establishment of a “provisional government” in the areas covered by the autonomy pact.

In your opinion, what does having a “provisional government” mean?

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A provisional government is a temporary government. The planned provisional government in Mindanao was aimed to oversee a smooth transition of governance from the central government to an autonomous one.

For the agreement to push through, former President Marcos, through one of the government's negotiating panels, proposed the addition of another provision. The provision was later known as *Paragraph 16* of the agreement. The paragraph stipulates that, "The Philippine government shall undertake all the necessary constitutional processes to implement the entire agreement."

What do you think was the implication of Paragraph 16 to the implementation of the Tripoli Agreement?

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It was because of that single provision that until today the Tripoli Agreement remains unimplemented. It was this provision that Marcos and the presidents after him based the implementation of the Tripoli Agreement according to their own interpretations. The MNLF thought that the autonomy of the 13 provinces was already a settled issue. The government, however, insisted on subjecting it to a plebiscite or a direct vote of the people who were living in those areas. The MNLF boycotted the plebiscite that Marcos called for.

Six months after the signing of the agreement, hostilities in Mindanao again erupted due to the lack of implementation of the Tripoli Agreement.



### Let's Think About This



What do you know about the picture above?

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The People Power on February 22–25, 1986 ended the 14 years of Marcos’s administration by peacefully overthrowing him. He was replaced by Corazon Aquino, the widow of Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr., one of Marcos’s opponents.

The February 1986 People Power Revolution provided a chance for the reopening of talks with the Muslims. After being sworn into office, Aquino initiated several peace talks with the various rebel groups in the country including the MNLF.

Not surprisingly, Nur Misuari was not threatened by Aquino’s presidency since the late Senator Aquino was sympathetic to the plight of the Filipino Muslims. In fact, he even declared support for her candidacy when she ran for president. Aquino, on the other hand, declared that she was willing to have a one-on-one meeting with Misuari just to bring peace in the country. The meeting, however, did not push through because bringing peace to Mindanao was such a tedious process and Aquino did not have enough time to focus on it. She was busy rebuilding the nation and blocking the military rebels’ attempts to overthrow her.

The Aquino Administration revised the Constitution which drew up provisions for the establishment of autonomous regional governments for Muslim Mindanao in the south and the Cordilleras in the north.

The Congress passed the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) on November 19, 1989. The legislation was subjected to a plebiscite wherein only four provinces — Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi — voted for inclusion in this new autonomous structure.



In your opinion, did the MNLF accept the legislation or the ARMM? Explain your answer.

If you answered “no,” then you are correct! The MNLF rejected the legislation. It claimed that not only had it been excluded from the process of drawing up the autonomy law but the plebiscite had reduced its territorial coverage from 13 provinces to four too. The MNLF maintained their position and insisted that the government should implement the Tripoli Agreement of 1976.

The passing of the Organic Act for the ARMM was recognized as the blueprint of the Aquino Administration in attaining sustainable or lasting peace in Mindanao.



## Let's Review

The following word puzzle is related to the peace process initiated by the Aquino Administration. Find the words using the clues below. The first one has been done for you.

1. When President Marcos was overthrown, he was replaced by \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The president who declared martial law was \_\_\_\_\_.
3. One of the four provinces in Mindanao that voted for autonomy was \_\_\_\_\_.
4. President Aquino initiated peace talks with the MNLF to preserve and maintain peace in \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ was the month when the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao was passed.
6. Another province that voted for autonomy was \_\_\_\_\_.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ Revolution
8. The answer to number 7 is also known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Revolution.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ was the legislation passed on November 19, 1989 authorizing the autonomy of some provinces in Mindanao.
10. The rebel movement that rejected the answer to number 9 was \_\_\_\_\_.

A	Q	U	I	N	O	J	I	F	D	E	S	S	M
A	B	Z	C	D	E	F	O	A	F	O	T	S	A
T	S	R	Q	P	T	A	W	I	T	A	W	I	R
U	X	Y	N	O	N	E	Y	P	P	L	V	Z	C
V	W	L	M	A	A	O	Q	A	V	I	P	X	O
F	J	K	D	A	I	O	V	X	C	U	O	I	S
L	I	N	Z	Y	A	Q	P	E	F	D	S	A	F
N	I	A	B	X	S	U	L	U	M	E	Q	W	M
M	M	R	A	W	D	F	G	C	X	B	E	R	N
F	E	D	C	V	E	U	O	P	Q	R	E	E	Y
G	H	S	T	U	P	I	V	B	A	P	U	R	O
O	N	M	L	K	J	Y	U	J	I	E	O	U	I
P	Q	R	R	E	W	O	P	E	L	P	O	E	P

Have you finished answering the puzzle? If so, very good! Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 53.



## Let's Study and Analyze

### Ramos Administration

Hostilities in Mindanao continued to exist. This somehow showed that the peace initiatives by the previous administrations prior to the Ramos Administration seemed inadequate in resolving the conflict in Mindanao. Previous governments failed to stop the rebellion due to the fact that the problem was more than just an armed struggle. The reasons were economic, political and cultural marginalization of the indigenous people of Mindanao. And by addressing these issues, President Ramos aimed to resolve the conflict in Mindanao.

Nearly 20 years after the Tripoli Agreement was signed, the Ramos Administration intended to settle the conflict in Mindanao peacefully by giving the agreement a chance for implementation. Ramos started negotiating with the MNLF. He used the Tripoli Agreement as the framework of his administration's move to resolve the problem in Mindanao. The Ramos Administration drafted plans for the development of the region.

On September 2, 1996, after four years of thorough negotiations, President Ramos and Misuari signed the "Final Peace Agreement in Mindanao." After the signing of the agreement, President Ramos was quoted as saying, "This Peace Agreement falls squarely into our aspiration of total peace and development for all, especially the millions of poor and destitute masses in our southern regions."



## Let's Review

Answer the following questions.

1. How did Ramos plan to resolve the conflict in Mindanao?

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2. What do you think was the reason why Misuari finally agreed to sign the Final Peace Agreement offered by the government?

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When you have finished answering the questions, compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 53.



## Let's Learn

### Final Peace Agreement

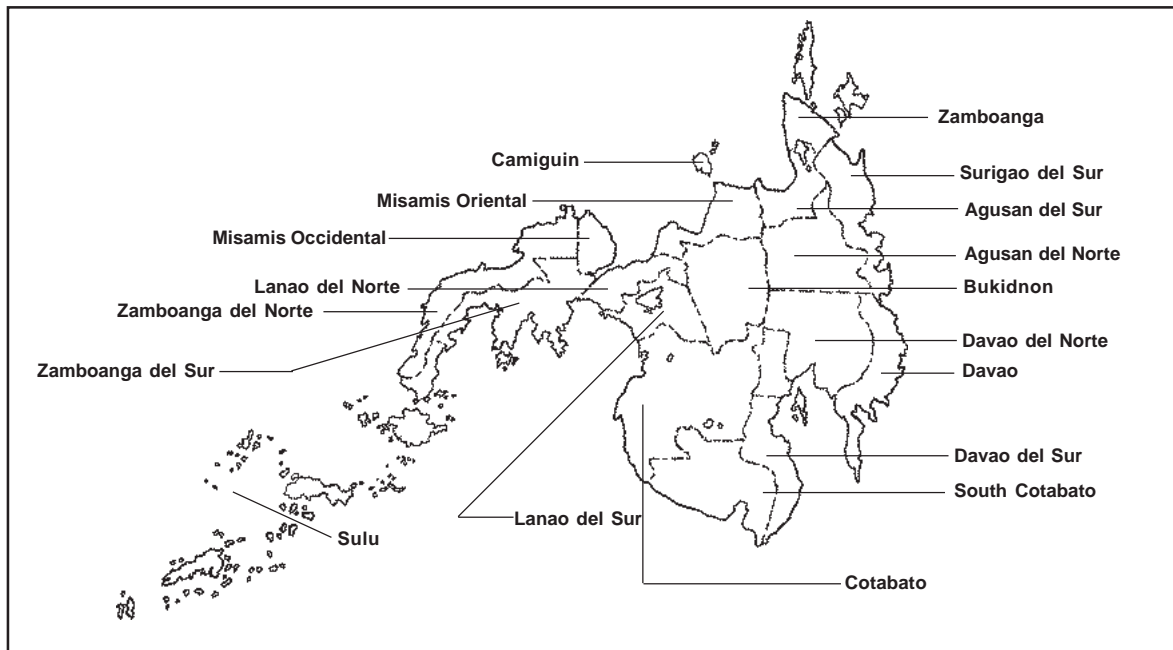


To answer the demands of the Moros on their lack of development, economic and political opportunities, the Final Peace Agreement's implementation was divided into two phases.

The first phase was a three-year transition period of confidence building that included Nur Misuari running for ARMM governor. The second phase of the implementation of the agreement was to provide autonomy to the provinces that voted for inclusion.

#### Phase I: Confidence Building

- ◆ Creation of a Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPAD) composed of Palawan, 13 of the 22 provinces of Mindanao, and nine cities located therein



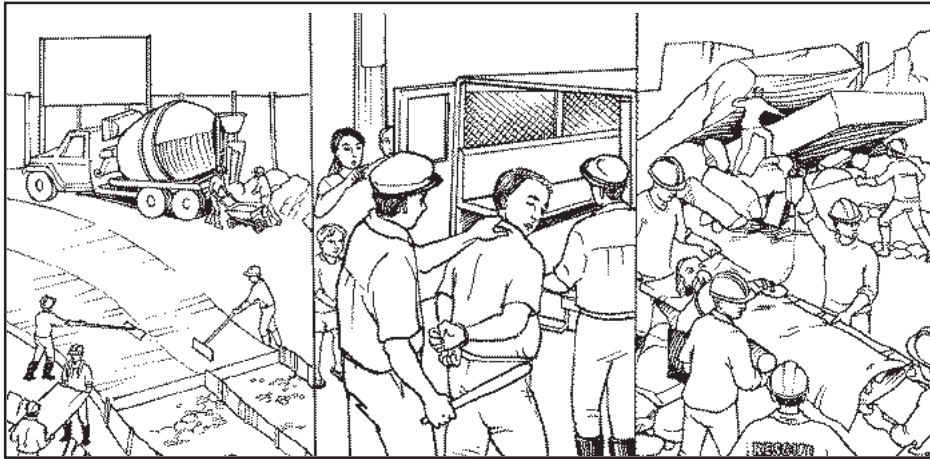
The 13 provinces were Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, North Cotabato, Maguindanao, Sultan Kudarat, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, Davao del Sur, South Cotabato and Sarangani, and Palawan.

The nine cities included Cotabato, Dapitan, Dipolog, General Santos, Iligan, Marawi, Pagadian, Zamboanga and Puerto Princesa.

This territorial coverage took effect during the first phase or the transition period, which started on September 1996 and ended on September 1999. During this period, developmental projects such as livelihood and infrastructure poured in on the areas covered by SZOPAD. It was hoped that by providing development in these areas, the people would vote for inclusion in the New Regional Autonomous Government (NRAG). After the said period, a plebiscite would be held and only the provinces and cities that would vote in favor of autonomy would be included in the NRAG.

- ◆ Establishment of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD)

The SPCPD's role was to manage peace and development efforts within SZOPAD. That is, projects for peace and development should be implemented. Examples of peace and development efforts were road-building and irrigation projects, catching criminals and providing emergency aid to victims of natural disasters.



◆ Establishment of a Consultative Assembly (CA)

The CA serves as a forum where all voices can be heard. Opinions and recommendations to improve the functions of the SPCPD can also be raised to the CA. The CA can also make rules and regulations for the effective and efficient services of the SPCPD.

**Phase II: Granting of Autonomy**

◆ NRAG was established on September 1999 in Phase II of the implementation of the agreement

The NRAG would have its own administrative system as well as representation in the national government. It would also have its own regional security force, an educational system that incorporates Islamic teachings, tax-raising powers and Shariah courts (courts that follow Islamic teachings). The area covered by NRAG would be determined by a plebiscite.

If many of the provinces of SZOPAD would vote in favor of autonomy, it would only mean that the government was able to gain the confidence of the people. It was hoped that after the success of Phase I, the rebel groups would give up their separatist motives and settle for an autonomous region.



**Let's Try This**

1. How did the Ramos Administration intend to win over the confidence of the people in Mindanao?

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2. Do you think providing development in the area, such as road-building and irrigation projects, emergency aids, etc. will end the hostilities in Mindanao? Explain your answer.

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When you have finished answering the questions, compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on page 54.



## Let's See What You Have Learned

- A. Give the complete names of the following acronyms and their functions.

1. ARMM – 

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2. NRAG – 

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3. SZOPAD – 

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4. CA – 

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5. SPCPD – 

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- B. What do the sentences below refer to? Choose the correct answers from the box below. Write your answers in the spaces after each sentence.

SPCPD	President Marcos	Tripoli Agreement
ARMM	Nur Misuari	President Aquino
November 19, 1987	Consultative Assembly	NRAG
September 2, 1996	Bangsamoro	SZOPAD
OIC	President Ramos	December 23, 1976

- The replacement of former President Marcos as the president of the Philippines after he was overthrown in the EDSA Revolution  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The blueprint of the Aquino Administration in attaining peace in Mindanao  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The agreement signed by the government and the MNLF that grants autonomy to 13 of the 22 provinces of Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan and nine cities located therein. However, six months after this agreement was signed, hostilities again erupted in Mindanao between the MNLF and military forces. \_\_\_\_\_
- The date when Congress passed the Organic Act for ARMM  
\_\_\_\_\_
- This is part of the implementation of the Phase I of the Final Peace Agreement. This was established to serve as a forum where opinions and recommendations to improve the functions of SPCPD can be raised.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- One of the signatories of the Tripoli Agreement. He declared martial law.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Another signatory of the Tripoli and the Final Peace Agreement. He was the leader of MNLF and was elected as governor during the establishment of the SPCPD. He is currently the governor of ARMM and the Chairman of SPCPD.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- The date when the Tripoli Agreement was signed \_\_\_\_\_
- Its establishment was part of Phase I of the Final Peace Agreement. Its function was to manage peace and development efforts within SZOPAD.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- He was one of the signatories of the Final Peace Agreement. His administration aimed to bring peace to Mindanao through development efforts. \_\_\_\_\_

11. The date the Final Peace Agreement was signed \_\_\_\_\_
12. The international organization that pressured the government and the MNLF to negotiate and enter into peace agreements \_\_\_\_\_
13. This means having a separate state for the Muslims of Mindanao \_\_\_\_\_
14. This territorial coverage was established as part of Phase I of the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement. All development and peace efforts will be concentrated on this territory. This is composed of Palawan, 13 of the 22 provinces in Mindanao and nine cities located therein. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Only the provinces under SZOPAD that will vote in favor of autonomy will be included in this new government structure of Mindanao. It is part of Phase II of the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement. \_\_\_\_\_

Have you finished answering the test? Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on pages 54–55.

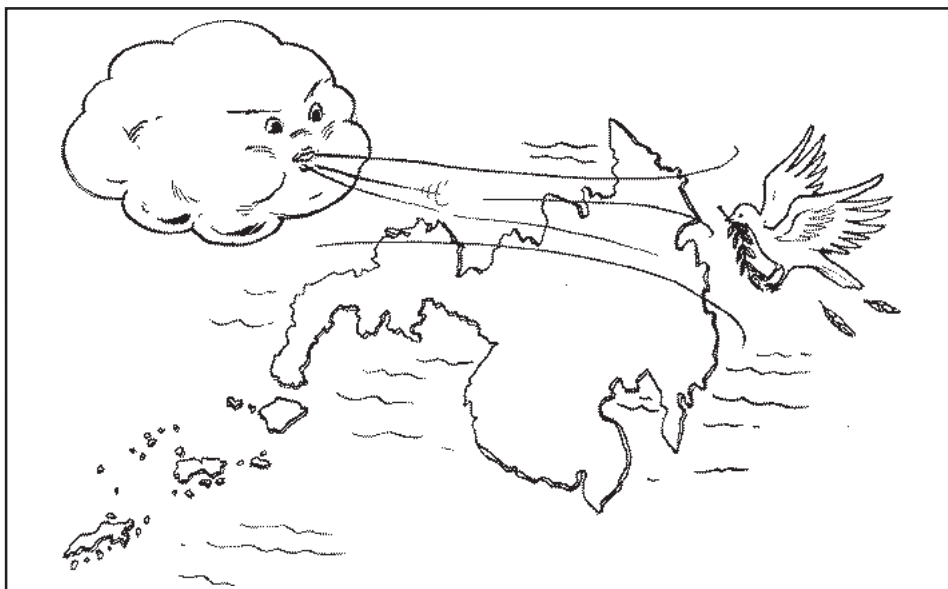


## Let's Remember

- ◆ Former President Ferdinand Marcos and MNLF leader Nur Misuari signed the first peace agreement between the government and the MNLF on December 23, 1976. This was called the Tripoli Agreement and was mediated by the Organization of Islamic Conference.
- ◆ Under the Tripoli Agreement, the government should grant autonomy to 13 of the 22 provinces of Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan islands.
- ◆ Former President Corazon Aquino's administration passed the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).
- ◆ Under the ARMM, only four provinces of Mindanao voted in favor of autonomy. This was rejected by the MNLF upon asserting that the Tripoli Agreement should be implemented and the movement should be included in drafting plans regarding the governance and development of Mindanao.
- ◆ Former President Fidel Ramos and MNLF leader Nur Misuari signed the Final Peace Agreement on September 2, 1996 after four years of thorough negotiations. The Final Peace Agreement was to be implemented in two phases.

- ◆ Phase I of the implementation of the Final Peace Agreement was for confidence building.
- ◆ Phase II, on the other hand, would grant the autonomy of the provinces that will vote in favor of autonomy.
- ◆ The effectiveness of Phase I can be measured through the number of provinces that will vote for autonomy. The number of those who will vote for autonomy will represent those who think Mindanao can survive as an autonomous region.

## Life After the Accord: Peace Remains Elusive



What can you say about the illustration above?

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In your opinion, were the peace agreements signed by the government and the MNLF effective in bringing peace to Mindanao? Why do you think so?

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You learned in Lesson 2 about the efforts of different administrations in attaining peace in Mindanao. What will be the next step? Is the Final Peace Agreement really “final”?

This lesson will discuss the effects of the peace initiatives and the peace accord between the government and the leaders of Mindanao on the people of the island and the Philippines as a whole.

After studying this lesson, you should be able to discuss whether or not the Final Peace Agreement was successful.



## Let's Think About This

Do you have old and recent newspapers in your house? If you have, collect them and scan their contents. Look for pictures or news articles on Mindanao.

After you finish collecting pictures and news articles, study them and reflect on the issues they deal with.

What do they tell you about the situation in Mindanao? List as many answers as you can in the spaces provided below.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. \_\_\_\_\_

Do you think there is already peace in Mindanao?

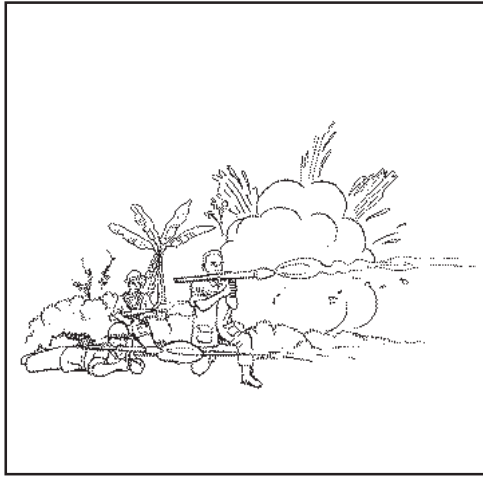
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On the next page are some sample illustrations that show the present condition in Mindanao. Describe your reflections about them in the spaces below the pictures.




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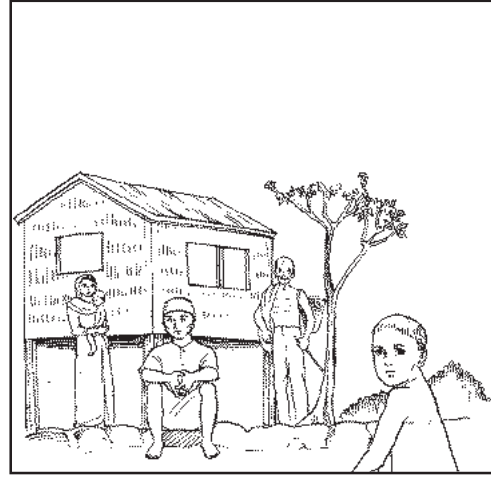
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Have you finished writing what you think about the present condition in Mindanao? There really are no right or wrong answers so, do not worry. Read on to find out more on the issues about Mindanao.

The illustrations show the distressing condition of Mindanao and its people. In the first illustration, you see the violence that has been going on in Mindanao before and after the agreements were signed. In the next one, notice that the place remains underdeveloped and the people are still impoverished.



## Let's Study and Analyze

Violence recently broke out in Mindanao between the Muslim rebels and the government. The sentences below narrate what has happened in Mindanao a few years after the Final Peace Agreement was signed.

### **September to December 1996**

- ◆ The Final Peace Agreement was signed on September 2.
- ◆ The MILF, another rebel group, distanced itself from the agreement but committed not to stand in the way of peace.
- ◆ Misuari ran for ARMM governor and won.

- ◆ Ramos issued Executive Order 371 which outlined the specific projects to be implemented in the SZOPAD. These projects dealt with health and sanitation services, education, housing, water supply, building roads and bridges, telecommunications, agriculture, etc.
- ◆ The government formed a new negotiating panel to hold talks with the MILF in October.
- ◆ The MILF held a huge assembly near Cotabato City from December 3–5 and reaffirmed its commitment to independence — a separate state of Muslim Mindanao.

### **1997**

- ◆ Heavy fighting between the MILF and the government left more than a hundred dead.
- ◆ A meeting of the MILF and the government in early February was suspended because of renewed fighting.
- ◆ The AFP launched its biggest offensive in June. By July, an agreement on a temporary end of hostilities was forged.
- ◆ Further meetings between the two sides followed.

### **1998**

- ◆ A new president, Joseph Estrada, was elected. He allegedly had an electoral alliance with politicians who opposed the peace agreement.
- ◆ Anti-agreement politicians did well in the local elections. MNLF leaders, save for one, lost their bid for local positions.
- ◆ A new government negotiating panel continued to talk to the MILF.

### **1999**

- ◆ September was the supposed deadline of Phase I of the Final Peace Agreement's implementation.
- ◆ New outbreaks of fighting between MILF and AFP followed by reestablishment of ceasefire.

Source: [http://www.c-r.org/acc\\_min/chrono.htm](http://www.c-r.org/acc_min/chrono.htm).





## Let's Try This

Answer the following question.

September 2, 1999 was the end of Phase I of the Final Peace Agreement's implementation. By September 3 of the same year the government should have been implementing the second phase that included the granting of full autonomy to the provinces of SZOPAD that voted for autonomy. Do you think the government was able to gain the confidence of the people of SZOPAD? Explain your answer.

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Have you finished answering the question? If so, compare your answer with the sample answer in the *Answer Key* on page 55.

Discuss your answer with any of your co-learners, friends or family members. You can also discuss your answer with your Instructional Manager or Facilitator. Do they agree with your answers? Why or why not?

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## Let's Think About This

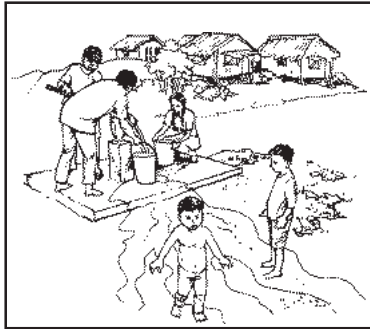
Read the excerpt of the speech of Fr. Eliseo R. Mercado, chairman of the Interim Ceasefire Committee and President of Notre Dame University, which was delivered during the Conference-Workshop on the Implementation of the 1996 Peace Accord and the Ongoing GRP-Peace Talks in November 1998.

“Our constituents continue to look for concrete and tangible fruits of the Peace Accord, particularly in depressed communities within the towns and cities covered by the SZOPAD. The people in these areas are not asking too much . . . They are simply asking for immediate state interventions in very basic services that should have already been provided in the regular programs of the different government departments and line agencies. Some of these urgent basic services include, among others, potable water, decent shelter, functioning clinics with qualified personnel and ample medicines, decent and equipped classrooms with qualified teachers and textbooks, regularly maintained farm to market roads, communal postharvest marketing facilities, access to soft credit for agricultural and small business enterprises and appropriate skills and livelihood training programs.”



## Let's Review

- A. Identify the basic services that the signing of the 1996 Peace Agreement should have provided the people of SZOPAD.



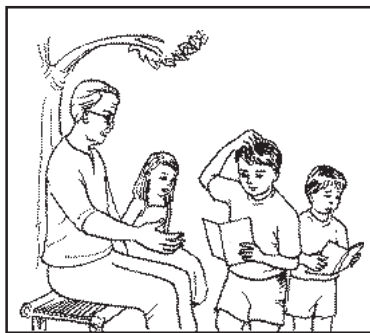
a. \_\_\_\_\_



b. \_\_\_\_\_



c. \_\_\_\_\_



d. \_\_\_\_\_



e. \_\_\_\_\_

- B. Do you think the failure of Phase I in providing the basic services of the people contributed to the continuing hostilities in Mindanao? Explain your answer.

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When you have finished answering the test, compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on pages 55–56.



## Let's Learn

You have probably seen on television, heard over the radio or read in the newspapers that violence continue to damage properties and take lives of the people in Mindanao. Violent clashes between the rebels and the military continue despite the peace agreement signed by MNLF and the Ramos Administration.

Why is this so? Does this mean that the peace agreement was ineffective in bringing peace to Mindanao?

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The agreement may have sealed cooperation and understanding between the MNLF and the government. However, unless the government proves its sincerity in wanting to bring peace to Mindanao, its people would continue to fight for their survival and self-determination.

This, however, does not mean that the 1996 Peace Agreement has no importance at all. The peace agreement remains a breakthrough in achieving peace in Mindanao. The peace agreement may not have solved the problems in Mindanao entirely but it is a considerable start towards attaining peace in Mindanao.

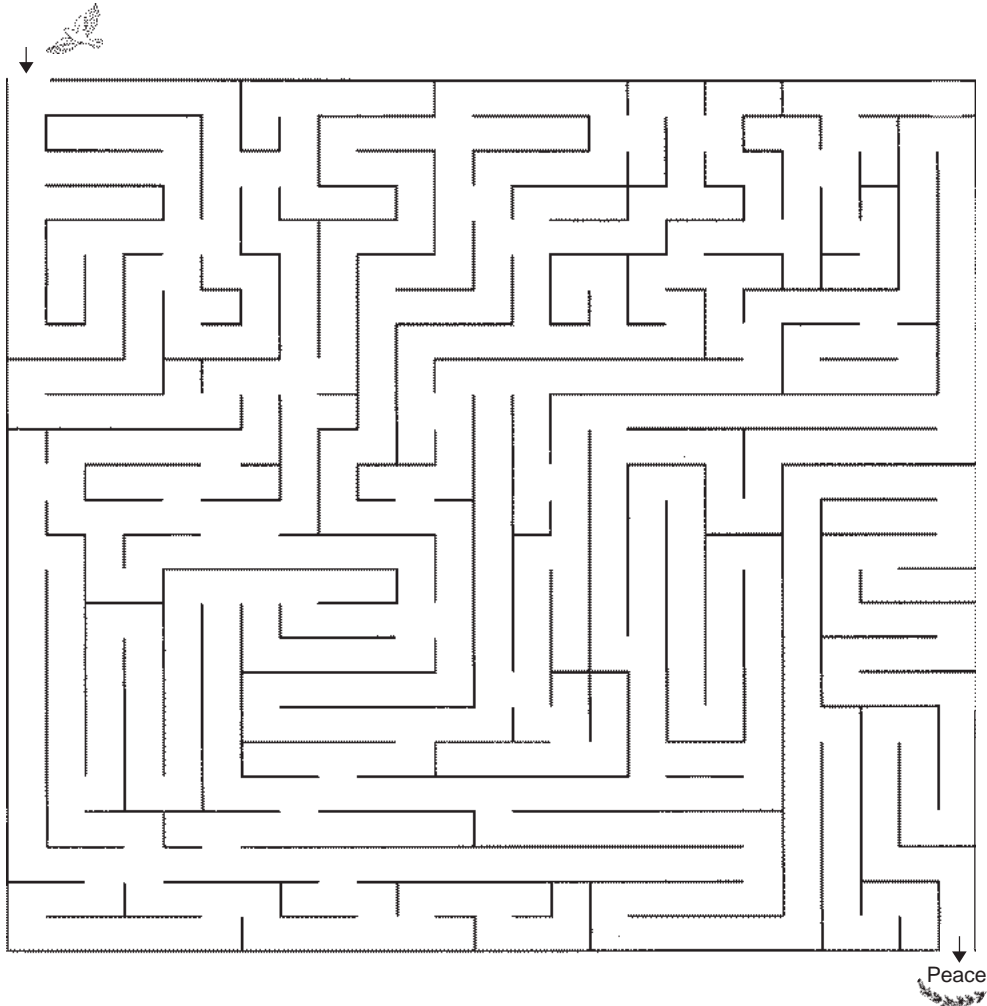
For indeed, it is difficult to attain peace especially since the government settled with only one of the rebel groups. It is important to note that there are other groups in Mindanao. The MILF, for example, recognized the government's peace initiatives, but remained cautious about the government's intentions behind the signing of the agreement. The MILF announced that they are also willing to negotiate with the government. However, as negotiations between the government and the MILF proceeded, clashes between the two also erupted. Other rebel groups include the NPA and the Abu Sayyaf, which are more aggressive.

The 1996 Final Peace Agreement proves that the government and the Muslim rebel groups are willing to end the violence in Mindanao. However, attaining peace is a long and tedious process especially because Mindanao and its people are so complex and diverse. This is probably the reason why peace remains elusive in Mindanao.



## Let's See What You Have Learned

- A. Have you ever solved a maze puzzle before? Below is one for you to do. Show the dove its way to the peace symbol at the bottom.



- B. What does the maze tell you?

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- C. What could be the barriers in attaining peace?

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D. Write a short essay about this topic:

“Peace Remains Elusive in Mindanao.”

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Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on pages 56–57.



## Let's Remember

- ◆ Despite the failures of Phase I of the Final Peace Agreement's implementation in providing the basic services of the people of Mindanao, the agreement remains a breakthrough in attaining peace in Mindanao.
- ◆ It is really difficult to forge peace in Mindanao especially because its people are so complex and diverse. They are different in so many ways. Unless they learn to live harmoniously with each other, peace would remain an unreachable dream.

Congratulations! This is almost the end of the module. So, how was it? Did you enjoy studying the module? Were you able to achieve deeper understanding regarding the conflict in Mindanao? If so, very good! If not, don't worry, you'll just have to study this module again and hopefully next time you'll see a lot of improvement. Good luck!



## Let's Sum Up

This module tells us that:

- ◆ The conflict in Mindanao is said to have been caused by the religious and cultural differences of the people, government neglect, and disputes over land ownership.
- ◆ Peace is a long and complicated process. The Filipino Muslims, like any other ethnic groups, simply want peace, development, participation, recognition and respect.
- ◆ It is important to know the issues regarding the conflict in Mindanao because it concerns our country and countrymen.



## What Have You Learned?

Answer the following questions:

1. Enumerate and explain the possible causes of the conflict in Mindanao.

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2. Explain the different peace initiatives undertaken by the different administrations — Marcos, Aquino and Ramos.

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3. Why does the problem in Mindanao remain unresolved?

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Compare your answers with those in the *Answer Key* on pages 57–60.

You can also discuss your answers with any of your co-learners, friends, family members or your Instructional Manager or Facilitator. Does he/she agree with your opinions? Why or why not?



## Answer Key

### A. Let's See What You Already Know (*pages 2–3*)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. d | 6. b  |
| 2. d | 7. a  |
| 3. c | 8. c  |
| 4. b | 9. c  |
| 5. a | 10. b |

### B. Lesson 1

*Let's Think About This (page 5)*

These are the provinces that comprise Mindanao:

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Zamboanga del Norte | 13. Surigao del Sur |
| 2. Zamboanga del Sur   | 14. Davao Oriental  |
| 3. Basilan             | 15. Davao           |
| 4. Sulu                | 16. Davao del Sur   |
| 5. Tawi-Tawi           | 17. South Cotabato  |
| 6. Camiguin            | 18. Lanao del Norte |
| 7. Surigao del Norte   | 19. Lanao del Sur   |
| 8. Misamis Occidental  | 20. Maguindanao     |
| 9. Misamis Oriental    | 21. North Cotabato  |
| 10. Agusan del Norte   | 22. Sultan Kudarat  |
| 11. Agusan del Sur     |                     |
| 12. Bukidnon           |                     |



*Let's Try This (pages 5–6)*

1. Maria Christina Falls
2. Lanao Lake
3. Tinalak fabrics
4. Philippine Monkey-Eating Eagle
5. Mt. Apo
6. Sulu – sea gypsies
7. Davao and Zamboanga – durian and lanzones
8. Davao – Banana and Pineapple plantations

*Let's Think About This (page 7)*

1. Muslims
2. Lumads
3. Christians

*Let's Review (pages 13–14)*

1. Sample Answer:

During the Spanish period, the people of Mindanao were predominantly Muslims and Lumads. They fought bravely against the Spaniards to protect themselves and their territory from Spanish invasion. However, their bravery was regarded by the Spaniards and the Christianized Filipinos as a violent act. This was the reason why until now Muslims or Moros are regarded as a violent race.

During the American occupation, the Moros found themselves being displaced from their ancestral lands. This was because of the land registration policies that were implemented during the period. Unregistered lands automatically became open for exploration and purchase by the citizens of the Philippines. Many lands were converted to fruit and rubber plantations that were owned by big companies and rich individuals.

Moros and Lumads encountered the same problem on land ownership and sudden dislocation during the post-independent government or the Commonwealth government. During these times, the Filipinos from Luzon and Visayas were encouraged to migrate to Mindanao. This was because Mindanao had a smaller population compared to Luzon and Visayas, not to mention, it was rich in natural resources. Because of this, many indigenous people and Moros were dislocated and the growth of the Christian population caused violent clashes among the other cultural groups. Development was concentrated on the Christian populated areas. The Moros and Lumads then started to demand for equal treatment.

2. Sample Answers:

Yes. I agree that the problems encountered by the Moros and Lumads especially during the country's post-independence are still present today. The Moros and Lumads are still struggling for the repossession of their ancestral lands and they are demanding from the government to give them equal opportunities, both economic and political. Other aggressive groups in Mindanao are struggling for self-determination, that is, a separate state, because they feel that the problems existed for a long time already and the government was incapable of solving them.

No. The problems encountered by the Moros and Lumads before are already solved. For example, during Ramos' term, he gave priority to the development of Mindanao. He and the Moro National Liberation Front signed an agreement that restored peace in the region.

3. Sample Answer:

Mindanao is a land of contrasting images of bounty and want, as it is a place of war and peace. It is true that Mindanao is a very rich land. It is because of this that many people are interested in possessing lands in this region, even at the expense of dislocating the indigenous people who once owned them.

*Let's Review (page 15)*

- a. The Jabidah massacre, which had unaccounted deaths of at least 23 Muslim recruits, have awakened the Filipino Muslims' sense of Moro nationalism. It became the eye-opener for them that they have a distinct culture, identity and history from the rest of the Filipinos.

- b. The Moro National Liberation Front wanted to have a separate state from the Philippines because many Muslims realized that they have a distinct history and identity from the rest of the Filipinos. They also felt that the government at that time had not been providing them their needs. They were dislocated from their ancestral lands and were treated as second class citizens. The Jabidah Massacre was, for the Muslims, a glaring example of the harsh treatment of the majority of the Filipinos against the Muslims.

*Let's Try This (page 17)*

Sample Answers:

I **agree** with the content of the article that religion is not the only cause of the conflict in Mindanao. I think that the conflict in Mindanao has a deeper cause than that. Economic deprivation, lack of political participation, inadequate delivery of health and social services and lack of infrastructure are among the more serious reasons why the conflict in Mindanao continues to escalate. Because the government was not able to provide them with these needs and failed to give them equal opportunities that other Filipinos enjoy, Moro resistance came into existence to demand what they think is rightfully theirs.

I **disagree** with the content of the article. The government is doing its best to provide for the needs of all Filipinos.

*Let's See What You Have Learned (pages 18–19)*

A.

1C		2M	U	S	3L	I	4M								
O		O			U		I								5S
N		R			M		6N	E	G	L	E	C	T		
F		O		7L	A	N	D								R
L					D		A								U
I		8P				9M	N	L	10F						G
11C	H	R	I	S	T	I	A	N	I	T	Y				G
T		O				N	O		L						L
		M				D			I						E
		12V	I	S	A	Y	A	S	P						
		13S	P	A	I	N			14I	S	L	A	M		
		E				A			N						
			15L	U	Z	O	N		O						

## C. Lesson 2

*Let's Try This (page 21)*

- a. Marcos
- b. Aquino
- c. Ramos
- d. Misuari

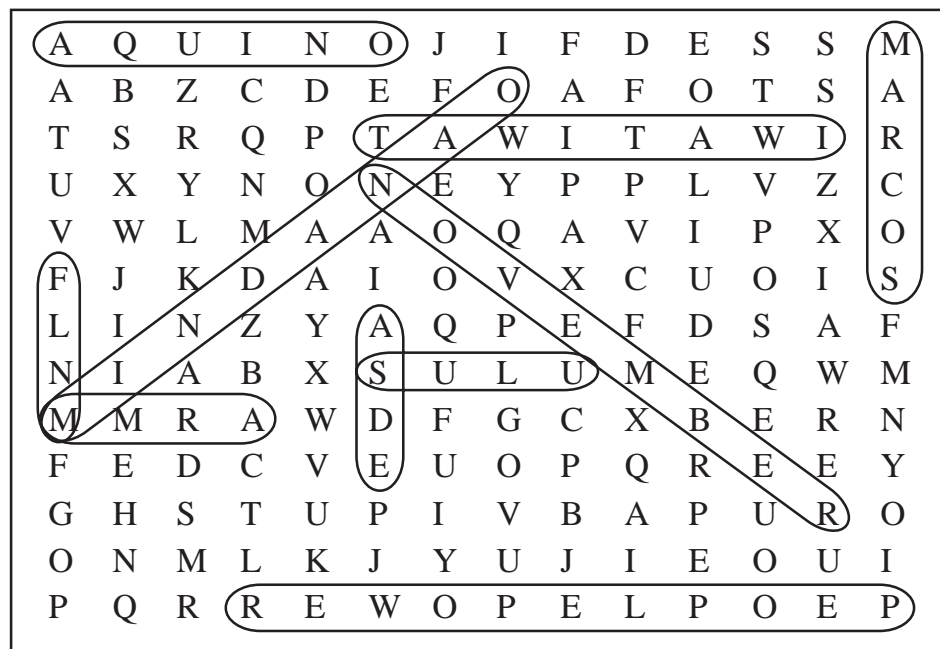
*Let's Try This (page 23)*

1. The two articles show the extent of the damage that ravaged the country especially Mindanao during the early 1970s. The war in Mindanao erupted almost at the same time when President Marcos declared martial law. During the war, death toll was estimated to have reached 120,000 and countless others wounded. Many people became homeless and many of the Muslims evacuated to Sabah, Malaysia.
2. In an attempt to control the violence in Mindanao, the Marcos administration increased its military spending and deployed thousands of troops in Mindanao.

*Let's Review (pages 24–25)*

1. Former President Ferdinand Marcos agreed to negotiate with the MNLF due to the growing cost of conflict. The government was also pressured by the international community, specifically, the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). The president was pressured to enter the agreement because oil-exporting countries, which are mostly Islamic, threatened the government with an oil embargo.
2. The Organization of Islamic Conference played a very important role in the signing of the agreement by the Philippine government and the MNLF. The OIC pressured both camps to settle their disputes peacefully. It convinced the MNLF to negotiate with the government and at the same time, it pressured the government to open for negotiations. The OIC also acted as the mediator of the two conflicting parties negotiating for the peace settlement.

*Let's Review (page 28)*



1. Corazon **Aquino**
2. Ferdinand **Marcos**
3. Tawi-Tawi/Sulu
4. Mindanao
5. November
6. Sulu/Tawi-Tawi
7. EDSA
8. People Power
9. ARMM
10. MNLF

*Let's Review (pages 29–30)*

1. President Ramos planned to resolve the conflict in Mindanao by providing development projects in the region and granting it autonomy through a plebiscite vote.
2. Misuari agreed to sign the Final Peace Agreement because the government showed sincerity in implementing the agreement. Also, too much money and lives have been wasted in Mindanao and many people were suffering from the continuous conflict. Maybe he felt that it's about time to sit down and talk things over, and finally settle their disputes peacefully.

*Let's Try This (pages 32–33)*

1. The Ramos administration intended to win over the confidence of the people by addressing their problems carefully. This included providing the basic services that the people need. President Ramos planned to bring development in Mindanao that would not only benefit the government but also the people. He aimed to attract foreign investors to set up business in Mindanao. Thus, providing financial resources and employment to the people living in the SZOPAD.
2. Yes. I think providing development in the area, such as road-building, irrigation, emergency aids — medicines, hospitals, health centers, industries etc., — would end the hostilities in Mindanao. Development projects would improve the lives of the people. Building of roads, for example, would make it easier for them to transport the products they produce to the market. The establishment of various industries such as clothing, textile and agriculture would give the people employment. It is important to remember that many people in Mindanao are tempted to take up arms because they feel that that's the only way to solve their problems.

No. I don't think providing development in the area will end the hostilities in Mindanao. The differences in ways of living and religion among the people in Mindanao would always create misunderstandings among them.

*Let's See What You Have Learned (pages 33–35)*

- A.
1. ARMM – Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao  
The ARMM is the blueprint of the Aquino administration in achieving peace in Mindanao. It is an autonomous government composed of four provinces of Mindanao.
  2. NRAG – New Regional Autonomous Government  
This will be the new administrative structure in Mindanao. Only the provinces that voted for autonomy will be included in this new autonomous region.
  3. SZOPAD – Special Zone of Peace and Development  
Serves as a territorial coverage where peace and development efforts are concentrated.
  4. CA – Consultative Assembly  
Serves as a forum where opinions and recommendations to improve the functions of SPCPD are raised.
  5. SPCPD – Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development  
Manages peace and development effort in ZSOPAD.

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| B. 1. President Aquino   | 9. SPCPD              |
| 2. ARMM                  | 10. President Ramos   |
| 3. Tripoli Agreement     | 11. September 2, 1996 |
| 4. November 19, 1987     | 12. OIC               |
| 5. Consultative Assembly | 13. Bangsamoro        |
| 6. President Marcos      | 14. SZOPAD            |
| 7. Nur Misuari           | 15. NRAG              |
| 8. December 23, 1976     |                       |

#### **D. Lesson 3**

*Let's Try This (page 41)*

Sample Answers:

Yes. I think the government was able to gain the confidence of the people of SZOPAD because the government really tried its best in attaining peace in Mindanao. But we must also understand that peace takes time to be fully achieved. The fact that MILF agreed to enter peace negotiations with the government is a proof that the rebels also want peace in Mindanao.

No. I don't think the government was able to gain the confidence of the people because if it did gain the confidence of the people, there should be no more violence in Mindanao. One reason why the government failed to gain the confidence of the people in Mindanao was the change of administration. It was not sure whether President Estrada would implement the agreement that Ramos signed. Unfortunately, in 1999, one of the rebel groups — Abu Sayyaf — kidnapped Filipinos and foreigners. This prompted President Estrada to declare an all-out war in Mindanao. Estrada was ousted from his office, and a new president was declared. For the agreement to be successful, the new government should stick to the agreement and implement it by providing the development that the government had promised to the people in Mindanao.

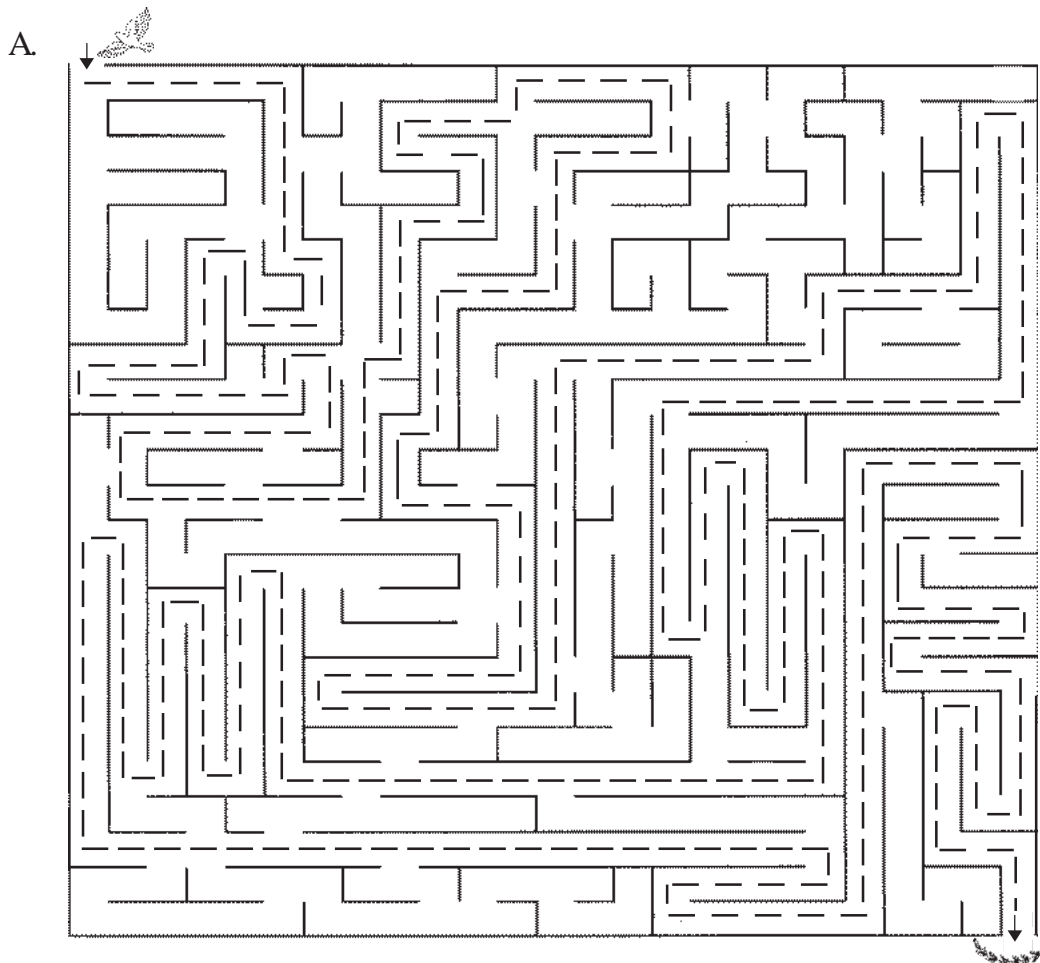
*Let's Review (page 42)*

- A. a. Potable water  
 b. Health service  
 c. Decent shelter  
 d. Education—school facilities and equipment  
 e. Transportation—roads and bridges

- B. Yes. I think the failure of Phase I in providing the basic needs of the people contributed to the continuing hostilities in Mindanao. Because the people remain poor, they might be losing trust in the government. Maybe they are thinking that the government is incapable of solving their problems and what they have are only promises. Hostilities continue in Mindanao because the people are demanding from the government the fulfillment of its promises.

No. I don't think the failure of Phase I in providing the basic services to the people contributed to the continuing hostilities in Mindanao. The cause of the conflict is more than the implementation of the agreement. The government signed an agreement with only one group. There are other rebel groups in Mindanao that the government should also settle with. Each rebel groups have different ideologies and demands making it more difficult for the government to settle and attain peace in Mindanao. In these conditions, indeed, peace is so difficult to achieve.

*Let's See What You Have Learned (pages 44–45)*



- B. The maze tells us that it is not easy to attain peace. It takes on a long and winding road with many hurdles and challenges to face at every corner.



- C. The barriers in attaining peace are: differences in religion and culture, poverty, lack of infrastructures, rebellion — MILF, MNLF, NPA and Abu Sayyaf.
- D. Sample Essay

#### Peace Remains Elusive in Mindanao

The violent clashes between the rebels and the military forces, burned houses, bombed churches, hungry people, suffering orphans, dislocated communities and overcrowded evacuation centers present a scenario about the absence of peace in Mindanao. Various efforts have been undertaken but peace remains bleak.

As was said in the previous answers, attaining peace is a long, complex and a tedious process. Just like the maze, the process is often confusing and prone to mistakes and failures. The Peace Agreement was an important one because it proved that the government and the rebel group MNLF was ready and can settle their disputes peacefully. But their agreement does not mean that there will be peace throughout Mindanao immediately after the signing of the agreement. What is more important is that there exists an agreement, to be implemented properly and cautious actions should be taken so that grievous mistakes could be avoided in the implementation process.

Peace is like a maze, you go to the wrong direction and you will reach a dead end, but there is always a chance to go back from where you think you committed a mistake and take better route instead.

#### **E. What Have You Learned?** (*pages 46–47*)

- 1. The possible causes of conflict in Mindanao are:
  - a. Cultural Differences

Mindanao is composed of different cultural groups that have different religious beliefs and ways of life. These differences contribute to the continuing conflict in Mindanao because they cannot settle their differences. Prejudice and bias make it difficult for them to coexist harmoniously. These prejudice and bias date back to the Spanish regime when most of the Filipinos in Luzon and Visayas were Christianized. The Spaniards failed to convert the Islamized Filipinos who were living in Mindanao. Because of this, biases and prejudices emerged between the Filipino Christians and Muslims in Mindanao that persisted up to the present.

b. Land Ownership

During the American regime, land registration and land titling system were implemented. The Filipinos have to register their land, including the people who were living in Mindanao. Unregistered lands automatically became open for those people who wanted to buy and own lands. Many indigenous people in Mindanao were not able to register their lands. Thus many of them lost ownership of their ancestral lands. Their failure to follow the registration procedures was because many of them were illiterate and uneducated. Many rich Filipinos and foreigners began owning lands that once belong to the indigenous people.

When the government started a migration program in 1950s, many rural poor from Luzon and Visayas — who were predominantly Christians — migrated to Mindanao. This had caused competition for land ownership between the migrant settlers and the indigenous people. The migration program worsened the situation of the indigenous people in Mindanao since most of them had been continuously dislocated from their lands.

c. Government Neglect

It has been said more than a couple of times that Mindanao is a very beautiful and rich place. However, one can find the poorest provinces of the country in Mindanao. The place remains underdeveloped. Many communities, especially the Muslim communities, lack basic services such as efficient roads, schools and hospitals. Many Muslims are poor, and because of this, many of them join the rebellion. They think that it is the only way that would solve their problems and improve their lives.

d. Lack of Implementation of Peace Agreements

Two peace agreements between the government and the Muslim rebel group, MNLF, have been signed. But the lack of implementation of these agreements made it more difficult to bring peace in Mindanao.

2. Each administration, starting from Marcos, had undertaken different peace initiatives that would bring peace in Mindanao. These peace initiatives are the:

a. Tripoli Agreement

This was the agreement signed by the Marcos administration and the MNLF in 1976. The agreement was signed through the mediation of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Under this agreement, Palawan, 13 of the 22 provinces of Mindanao, and nine cities located therein would be granted autonomy. They would be under a government separate from the central government in Manila. This autonomous government would have a separate executive, legislative and judicial powers from that of the central government. It would have their own regional security force separate from the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

However, this agreement, up to now, remains unimplemented. This is because its implementation depended on the interpretation of Marcos and the presidents that came after him.

b. Establishment of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)

President Corazon Aquino aimed to resolve the conflict in Mindanao by establishing an autonomous government, thus the creation of the ARMM. She called for a plebiscite, on which only four provinces voted for inclusion. The MNLF rejected the idea of the ARMM and did not cooperate with its establishment. It insisted from the government the full implementation of the Tripoli Agreement instead.

c. Final Peace Agreement

The Final Peace Agreement was signed on September 2, 1996. It was an attempt of the government to implement the Tripoli Agreement. An autonomous government was to be established after a plebiscite. Provinces that would vote for inclusion would be included in this new autonomous government.

It is important to note that the new autonomous government is different from the ARMM. The Ramos administration drafted a plan on how they would implement the Tripoli Agreement. The Final Peace Agreement's implementation was divided into two phases. Phase I was a transition period, wherein the government poured in developmental projects to the area covered by SZOPAD. By doing so, the government intended to win over the confidence of the people. The Phase II of the implementation would take place three years after Phase I was implemented. This should have taken place in September 1999 (three years after the agreement was signed).

The Phase II would be the establishment of the new autonomous government. A plebiscite would be held and those areas covered by the SZOPAD that voted for inclusion will be included.

If the Phase I of the agreement was successful, there would be a big possibility that all the areas covered by the SZOPAD (Palawan and the 13 Muslim provinces that were included in the Tripoli Agreement) would vote for autonomy.

3. Sample Answer:

The problem in Mindanao remains unresolved because:

First, the government failed to implement entirely the Final Peace Agreement. The change of administration (President Ramos was replaced by President Estrada) could be one of the reasons. The condition of Mindanao remains the same. The people are still poor and the place remains underdeveloped.

Second, the Ramos government settled with only one group, the MNLF. It is important to note that there are other rebel groups in Mindanao that have different aims.



## Glossary

**Ancestral land** Native lands

**Autonomous government** A separate and independent government from the central government

**Autonomy** Independence; separation

**Bangsamoro** Moro or Muslim nation

**Christian** A person whose religion is Christianity

**Cultural minority** A small group in a community or nation that differs in culture, religion, etc., from other bigger groups

**Culture** The customs, arts, literature, beliefs of a particular group or nation

**Deprivation** The state of not having the benefits most people have, such as home, enough food and money

**Diverse** Varied; of different kinds

**Diversity** Variety

**Ethnolinguistic groups** Cultural groups that share the same language (*See sociocultural groups*)

**Geography** The arrangement of the features of a place, such as mountains, plains, valleys, etc.

**Havoc** Widespread damage; destruction; disorder

**Hostilities** Fighting

**Indigenous** Native

**Islam** The religion of the Muslims

**Lumads** Indigenous cultural groups in Mindanao that are neither Muslim nor Christian

**Migration** Moving from one place to another to live or work

**Moro** The term used to refer to the people in Mindanao regardless of their culture and religion

**Muslim** A person whose religion is Islam

**National treasury** National budget

**Nationalism** A strong feeling of love and pride in one's own nation or country; a desire for political independence

**Oil embargo** The blockade of oil importation by oil exporting countries

**Phase** A stage or a process of change or development

**Plebiscite** A direct vote by the people of a country on a matter of national importance

**Prejudice** Dislike or distrust of a person, group, custom, etc., that is based on fear or false information, thus affecting one's attitude and behavior towards them

**Secessionist** Separatist

**Self-assertion** To express one's views and demands confidently

**Self-determination** The right of a nation or state to decide what form of government it will have or whether it will be independent of another country or not

**Sociocultural groups** Groups that belong to a society or community of people that share the same culture



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