

## JOINT STATEMENT

The Philippine Government Panel for the Exploratory Talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) met with the representatives of the MILF Peace Panel on March 27-28, 2003 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and agreed on the following:

1. Both parties reiterate their commitment to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement of the conflict in Mindanao and resolve to undertake appropriate steps to pave the way for the resumption of the formal GRP-MILF peace negotiations;
2. Both parties reaffirm to implement effectively on the ground all past and existing GRP-MILF agreements. Details of implementation shall be discussed by the Panels;
3. Both parties agree to exercise mutual restraint to minimize, if not put an end to, violence in Mindanao;
4. To normalize the situation and facilitate the early return of evacuees to their places of origin and allow rehabilitation to proceed, a new arrangement on the ground will be forged by both parties;
5. The Philippine Government takes note of the activation of the Bangsamoro Development Agency;
6. Both parties agree to direct their respective Technical Committees to work on the Implementing Guidelines of the Joint Communique signed on May 6, 2002 to ensure that the peace process is not adversely affected by the presence of criminal groups in Mindanao. The Technical Committees will meet within two (2) weeks from today;
7. The parties agree to improve the existing mechanism or monitoring of the cessation of hostilities including the composition of an observer/monitoring group as provided for in the Implementing Guidelines on the Security Aspect of the Tripoli Agreement on Peace of 2001;
8. The parties reaffirm the provision on the grant of Safety and Security Guarantees to MILF leaders and members who are directly and principally involved in the GRP-MILF peace talks; and

9. Both parties express their gratitude for the gracious hospitality of the Government of Malaysia in hosting and facilitating the exploratory talks and for continuing its support to the peace process

Done in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia this 28<sup>th</sup> day of March 2003

For the GRP:

  
PA JESUS G. DUREZA

Members of Delegation:

SEC. NORBERTO D. GONZALES

SEC. CORAZON JULIANO-SOLIMAN

USEC. ANTONIO C. SANTOS

EDIR. DIOSITA T. ANDOT

For the MILF:

  
ATTY. JANANG S. ALI

Members of Delegation:

ATTY. MIGUEL O. MASTURA

ATTY. MUSIB M. BUAT

MOHAJIRIN T. ALI