

JOINT STATEMENT

The GRP and MILF Peace Panels, with the Malaysian third-party facilitation, opened the formal peace negotiations and reaffirmed their shared commitment to building a just, enduring and comprehensive peace in Mindanao.

With the formal resumption of the Talks, the Parties agree to begin in earnest the negotiations on a Comprehensive Compact.

As the Parties continue the path of peace, they also agreed to continue creating and enabling a secure environment for the negotiations by renewing the Terms of Reference for the International Monitoring Team (IMT) to monitor ceasefire, humanitarian, rehabilitation, development and civilian protection agreements. Pursuant to this, the Parties will invite as IMT members Malaysia, Japan, Brunei and Libya and non-governmental organizations, namely the International Committee on the Red Cross (ICRC), the Mindanao Peoples Caucus (MPC) and the Non-Violent Peace Force (NVPF).

The Parties also renewed their commitment to continue efforts in coordinating the interdiction and isolation of criminal and lawless elements by reviving the Ad Hoc Joint Action Group (AHJAG).

The GRP took serious note of the MILF concerns of continued arrests of its elements by the government authorities and to take steps to address this issue.

Also, the MILF sought clarification on the implication of the declaration of martial law in the Province of Maguindanao to which point the GRP stated that it would not affect the peace process.

In a show of support, the members of the newly-constituted International Contact Group (ICG) attended and addressed the opening and closing sessions of the two-day formal resumption of the Talks. The ICG was represented by Japanese Ambassador to Malaysia Masahiko Horie, British High Commissioner to Malaysia Boyd Mc Cleary, Turkish Chargé d'Affaires Yasin Temizkan, Steven Rood and Heribert Hart of The Asia Foundation, Cynthia Petrich and Kristian Horbolzheimer of Conciliation Resources, David Cormann of the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, and Prof. Dr. Din Syamsuddin and Dr. Sudibyo Muklis of Muhammadiyah.

The Parties expressed their gratitude to Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for her desire and commitment to peace and development in Mindanao, and to His Excellency Prime Minister Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak for his generous and steadfast support to the GRP-MILF peace process.

Done this 9th day of December 2009 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

FOR THE GRP

RAFAEL E. SEGURA
Chairman

FOR THE MILF

MOHAAGER IQBAL
MILF Panel Chairman

SIGNED IN THE PRESENCE OF:

DATUK OTTHMAN BIN ABDI I. RAZAK
Malaysian Government Facilitator