

JOINT STATEMENT

The Peace Panels of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) wrapped up the 3-day 12th Round of GRP-MILF Exploratory Talks in Kuala Lumpur today by declaring substantive gains in the Ancestral Domain agenda while acknowledging that more work had to be done on the strand of territory, particularly in the determination and delimitation of areas to be placed under a prospective Bangsamoro Juridical Entity (BJE).

The Panels achieved significant progress in defining the concept, sharing the resources and establishing governance in the BJE but were held back from reaching full consensus by the highly technical nature of discussions on the delineation and demarcation of territory. For this purpose, they agreed to conduct further ground validation and collection of additional data to guide them in the resolution of remaining items.

The talks were held under an atmosphere of frankness, cordiality, goodwill marking the commitment of both sides to uphold and advance the gains already achieved in the ancestral domain agenda.

The Panels expressed deep satisfaction over the contribution of the International Monitoring Team (IMT) in working with the ceasefire committees of both sides to sustain the highly successful ceasefire, and agreed to request Malaysia, Brunei and Libya to extend the mandate of their respective contingents to the IMT. Both sides likewise agreed to expand the composition of the IMT to include the participation of other nations in monitoring the rehabilitation and development work related to the peace process.

The Panels decided to extend the mandate of the AHJAG Interim Guidelines for a period of one (1) year once its mandate ends on June 21, 2006.

The Panels committed to move forward the establishment of the Bangsamoro Leadership and Management Institute (BLMI), which is envisioned as an agent of change in the social and political environment of the Bangsamoro people. Both Panels decided to continue availing of the training programs organized by the Malaysian Government under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Program (MTCP). In this regard, they will also seek the assistance of the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP) to compliment the current Malaysian capacity-building efforts.

The Panels reached a consensus to immediately activate a joint advocacy team in order to formulate and undertake a program of public information aimed at raising broad awareness of, and support for, the peace process.

The Panels welcomed the entry of the United Nations World Food Program and other organizations in Mindanao in support of the peace process prior to the signing of the comprehensive agreement. The Panels agreed that such mission should be done in coordination with the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA).

The Panels expressed their gratitude to Malaysian Prime Minister Dato' Seri Abdullah Bin Haji Ahmad Badawi and to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, for their unstinting support for the Mindanao peace process.

Signed on May 04, 2006 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

FOR THE GRP:


SILVERIO C. AFABLE, JR.
GRP Panel Chair

FOR THE MILF:


MOHAGHER M. IQBAL
MILF Panel Chair