

STATEMENT FOR PEACE

Peace Conference on the Bangsamoro Question: Bridging Unity on the History and Future of the Peace Talks to Resolve the Bangsamoro Issues in Mindanao March 23, 2011

We, the organizers of the Peace Conference on the “Bangsamoro Question: Bridging Unity on the History and Future of the Peace Talks to Resolve the Bangsamoro Issues in Mindanao”; along with more than 150 representatives of at least 50 civil society organizations (CSOs), academe, communities, interfaith, and other groups, representing memberships and constituencies from all over the country, hereby state:

Having been enlightened by the exploratory talks and initiatives of the Government of the Philippines (GPH) for a negotiated political settlement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF); as well as with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) with respect to the review of the ARMM law; and with the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP);

Having listened likewise to the MILF position including a proposed revised comprehensive peace compact as a final political settlement, and the prospects and challenges that lie ahead;

Informed of the concerns and issues raised not only by the Panel of Reactors and Discussion Speakers but also reactions and questions from the conference participants including, among others, on how a comprehensive peace agreement is to be achieved through more confidence-building measures; reconciling the divergent tracks being pursued by the GPH with the MILF and MNLF; the need for greater transparency and less confidentiality to ensure citizens’ participation in the peace process; the perceived discrepancies between government’s peace process and its national internal security program; the need to address human rights violations while peace talks are ongoing; in making sure that any peace agreement arrived at is followed by the parties including security agencies of the GPH; making the peace process more participative that is reflective of the sentiments and aspirations of the various sectors especially women and the indigenous peoples (IPs) not only in Mindanao but throughout the Philippines;

Now declare:

1. That we fully support the peace talks between the GPH and MILF founded on the overarching need for addressing comprehensively the roots of the struggle for self-determination and armed conflict in the Moroland toward a just and lasting peace;
2. That we fully support the need for a more participatory peace process which engages the role as peace partners of non-state peace advocates, NGOs, and communities particularly those affected by the armed conflict not just in form but in substance;



UP-Institute of Islamic Studies



CenPEG
Center for People Empowerment in Governance

with



NCCA National Commission for Culture and the Arts

and



in cooperation with the



Office of the UPresident

- To call on various sectors and stakeholders of the country to play an active role in the peace process which includes promoting specific agenda and proposals, pushing for the representation of the democratic aspirations especially of the women and IPs, toward a just and lasting peace, and in making sure that their voices are heeded and reflected in the peace talks.

Signed this 23rd of March, 2011 at the University Hotel, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.

Center for People Empowerment Studies (IIS)
Governance (CenPEG)

Institute of Islamic
UP Diliman, Quezon City

Pilgrims for Peace

InPeace Mindanao

National Council for Churches in the Philippines (NCCP)