

<b>Country/entity</b>	Philippines Mindanao
<b>Region</b>	Asia and Pacific
<b>Agreement name</b>	Joint Press Statement
<b>Date</b>	2 Sep 1997
<b>Agreement status</b>	Multiparty signed/agreed
<b>Interim arrangement</b>	Yes

**Agreement/conflict level** Intrastate/intrastate conflict

### **Philippine Insurgencies (1968 - )**

The Maoist Insurgencies (1968 - )

Philippines-NDF

The Philippines have been defined by a series of center-periphery and often ideologically Maoist, separatist insurgencies. The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), began its war against the central Philippine government in 1968 through their armed wing – the New People’s Army (NPA). Further legitimacy was gained through the establishment of the National Democratic Front (NDF) in 1973. Grievances were predominantly opposed to the corruption and repression under the authoritarian Marcos regime.

Philippines-Cordillera

With the overthrow of Marcos’ regime in 1986, the CPP factionalized further to take on more localized characteristics. The Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army (CPLA) broke away from the NDF in 1986 to focus on the protection of the Cordilleran people and land in northern Luzon. Hostilities were formally ended in July 2011, with an agreement signed between the central government, the CPLA and the Cordillera Bodong Administration (CBA) that allowed for the absorption of CPLA fighters into the Philippine Army and the re-working of the CBA-CPLA into a socio-development organisation.

Philippines-RPM-P

Meanwhile, purge among the CPP in the early 1990s, encouraged the formation of a parallel party, the Revolutionary Workers Party (RPM-P). Their armed wing, the Alex Boncayao Brigade (ABB) which had carried out a number of assassinations during the 1980s at the bequest of the CPP, followed suit and allied themselves with the RPM-P in 1997 forming the (RPM-P-RPA-ABB). Severely weakened by the split with the CPP and with the arrest of several key figures, the RPM-P-RPA-ABB signed a peace agreement in December 2000, which encouraged the RPM-P’s branch in Mindanao to break away in 2001.

The CPP-NPA has only participated in intermittent talks with the government. Talks halted in 2004 when Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo’s administration sought closer ties with the U.S. in the war on terror and added the CPP-NPA to the list of terrorist organisations, renewing violence. Following the launch of a counter-insurgency by the Philippine government, negotiations have been further delayed due to suspected internal differences between the CPP ‘old guard’ and younger members.

The Moro Insurgency (1968 - )

Philippines-Mindanao

The Moro Insurgency began in 1968, in Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago after the killing of Moro Commandos, the so-called Jabidah Massacre, by the Philippine Army following a plot to invade Sabah province in Malaysia. The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) captured a swath of territory in the mid-1970s. In an attempt to stem the violence, the constitution was reformed and Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was created 1990 granting a devolution of power to the provinces of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. Following the establishment of the ARMM, the MNLF splintered into a range of smaller groups including Islamic factions such as the

<b>Stage</b>	Pre-negotiation/process
<b>Conflict nature</b>	Government/territory
<b>Peace process</b>	Philippines - Mindanao process
<b>Parties</b>	Maj. Gen. Joselin B. Nazareno, AFP, GRP Sub-Committee on Cessation of Hostilities Chairman; Atty. Omar B. Umpar, MILF Sub-Committee on Cessation of Hostilities Acting Chairman and MILF Legal Counsel
<b>Third parties</b>	-
<b>Description</b>	Joint Press Statement to inform on the meeting held by the GRP and MILF Sub-Committee on Cessation of Hostilities on September 2, 1997, in which the Sub-Committee recognized the need to encourage and hasten the return of evacuees, thus provided for repositioning of GRP forces and reassuring that MILF elements in the areas may return, so long as they do not establish military outposts nor display firearms.

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**Agreement document**      [PH\\_970902\\_Joint Press Statement.pdf \(opens in new tab\)](#) | [Download PDF](#)

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## Groups

<b>Children/youth</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Disabled persons</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Elderly/age</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Migrant workers</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Racial/ethnic/ national group</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Religious groups</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Indigenous people</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Other groups</b>	No specific mention.

<b>Refugees/displaced persons</b>	<p>Groups→Refugees/displaced persons→Rhetorical</p> <p>Preamble, Page 1</p> <p>[...] Recognizing the need to further give meaning and substance to the General Cessation of Hostilities by hastening the return of the evacuees in Pikit, North Cotabato and Pagalungan, Maguindanao, the GRP-MILF Sub-Committees on Cessation of Hostilities agreed on the following:</p> <p>Groups→Refugees/displaced persons→Substantive</p> <p>Page 1, 1. The GRP will gradually reposition its forces in Rajamuda and its environs to their original positions before June 16, 1997 and will continue to secure the Cotabato City -Davao City Highway to ensure the safety of travelers. The gradual repositioning of the GRP forces shall be completed within fifteen (15) days after the signing of this Agreement;</p> <p>2. The GRP and MILF shall encourage the return of evacuees to their respective residences. MILF elements who are residents of the are shall be allowed to return to their homes immediately, however, they will not establish military outposts/positions nor display firearms.</p>
<b>Social class</b>	No specific mention.

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## Gender

<b>Women, girls and gender</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Men and boys</b>	No specific mention.
<b>LGBTI</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Family</b>	No specific mention.

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## State definition

<b>Nature of state (general)</b>	No specific mention.
<b>State configuration</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Self determination</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Referendum</b>	No specific mention.
<b>State symbols</b>	No specific mention.

**Independence/  
secession** No specific mention.

**Accession/  
unification** No specific mention.

**Border delimitation** No specific mention.

**Cross-border  
provision** No specific mention.

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## **Governance**

**Political  
institutions (new or  
reformed)** No specific mention.

**Elections** No specific mention.

**Electoral  
commission** No specific mention.

**Political parties  
reform** No specific mention.

**Civil society** No specific mention.

**Traditional/  
religious leaders** No specific mention.

**Public  
administration** No specific mention.

**Constitution** No specific mention.

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## **Power sharing**

**Political power sharing** No specific mention.

**Territorial power sharing** No specific mention.

**Economic power sharing** No specific mention.

**Military power sharing** No specific mention.

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## **Human rights and equality**

**Human rights/RoL general** No specific mention.

**Bill of rights/similar** No specific mention.

**Treaty incorporation** No specific mention.

**Civil and political rights** No specific mention.

**Socio-economic rights** No specific mention.

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## **Rights related issues**

<b>Citizenship</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Democracy</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Detention procedures</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Media and communication</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Mobility/access</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Protection measures</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Other</b>	No specific mention.

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## **Rights institutions**

<b>NHRI</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Regional or international human rights institutions</b>	No specific mention.

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## **Justice sector reform**

<b>Criminal justice and emergency law</b>	No specific mention.
<b>State of emergency provisions</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Judiciary and courts</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Prisons and detention</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Traditional Laws</b>	No specific mention.

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## **Socio-economic reconstruction**

**Development or socio-economic reconstruction** No specific mention.

**National economic plan** No specific mention.

**Natural resources** No specific mention.

**International funds** No specific mention.

**Business** No specific mention.

**Taxation** No specific mention.

**Banks** No specific mention.

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## **Land, property and environment**

**Land reform/rights** No specific mention.

**Pastoralist/nomadism rights** No specific mention.

**Cultural heritage** No specific mention.

**Environment** No specific mention.

**Water or riparian rights or access** No specific mention.

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## **Security sector**

**Security Guarantees** No specific mention.

**Ceasefire** Security sector→Ceasefire→Ceasefire provision  
The GRP and MILF Sub-Committee on Cessation of Hostilities convened at the Notre Dame University in Cotabato City on September 2, 1997 to resume the peace negotiation pursuant to the Agreement on the General Cessation of Hostilities signed by the GRP and MILF Peace Panels on July 18, 1997 in Cagayan De Oro City.

Recognizing the need to further give meaning and substance to the General Cessation of Hostilities by hastening the return of the evacuees in Pikit, North Cotabato and Pagalungan, Maguindanao, the GRP-MILF Sub-Committees on Cessation of Hostilities agreed on the following:

1. The GRP will gradually reposition its forces in Rajamuda and its environs to their original positions before June 16, 1997 and will continue to secure the Cotabato City - Davao City Highway to ensure the safety of travelers. The gradual repositioning of the GRP forces shall be completed within fifteen (15) days after the signing of this Agreement;

**Police** 3. Law enforcement in the aforementioned areas shall be primarily undertaken by the GRP authorities, provided, however, that before the conduct thereof, prior coordination/consultation shall be made with the nearest MILF designated liaison in the area.

**Armed forces** No specific mention.

**DDR** Security sector→DDR→Demilitarisation provisions  
2. The GRP and MILF shall encourage the return of evacuees to their respective residences. MILF elements who are residents of the area shall be allowed to return to their homes immediately, however, they will not establish military outposts/positions nor display firearms.

**Intelligence services** No specific mention.

**Parastatal/rebel and opposition group forces** 2. The GRP and MILF shall encourage the return of evacuees to their respective residences. MILF elements who are residents of the area shall be allowed to return to their homes immediately, however, they will not establish military outposts/positions nor display firearms.

**Withdrawal of foreign forces** No specific mention.

**Corruption** No specific mention.

**Crime/organised crime** No specific mention.

**Drugs** No specific mention.

**Terrorism** No specific mention.

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## **Transitional justice**

**Transitional justice general** No specific mention.

**Amnesty/pardon** No specific mention.

**Courts** No specific mention.

**Mechanism** No specific mention.

**Prisoner release** No specific mention.

**Vetting** No specific mention.

**Victims** No specific mention.

**Missing persons** No specific mention.

**Reparations** No specific mention.

**Reconciliation** No specific mention.

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## **Implementation**

**UN signatory** No specific mention.

**Other international signatory** No specific mention.

**Referendum for agreement** No specific mention.

**International mission/force/similar** No specific mention.

<b>Enforcement mechanism</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Related cases</b>	No specific mention.
<b>Source</b>	GRP-MILF Peace Process: Compilation of Signed Agreements & other related Documents (1997-2010); (MILF Peace Panel/Asia Foundation, 2010), p. 20.

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