

JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

A Joint meeting of the Sub-Committees on Cessation of Hostilities of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) was held at the Da'wah Center, Crossing Simuay, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao on March 23-25, 1997.

In this joint meeting, the two Sub-Committees have agreed to convene the Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (ICMC) as previously agreed in the second meeting of the Technical Committee of the GRP and the MILF on February 25-27, 1997.

It was agreed by both Sub-Committees that the composition of the Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee shall be as follows:

1. Representative of Notre Dame University (NDU)
2. Representative of Maguindanao Professionals and Employees Association (MAPEA), Inc.
3. Representative of Protestant Lawyers League of the Philippines (PLLIP)
4. Representative of Cotabato City Media Multi-Purpose Cooperative (COMMPC).

Letters of invitation will be served to the above-mentioned organizations/institutions for their availability and acceptance.

It was agreed further that the NDU representative shall act as Chairman of the Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee, with the MAPEA representative as Vice Chairman.

The Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee shall function under the following terms:

a) Conduct fact-finding inquiries on matters referred to it by the GRP and MILF Sub-Committees on Cessation of Hostilities pertaining to alleged violations/infractions of the provisions of the Interim Ceasefire Agreement entered into by both Sub-Committees on January 27, 1997. Referrals shall be made after the other party is duly informed of the matter submitted for inquiry, and the same is not resolved by the Sub-Committees thereof.

b) Issue appropriate letters of invitation to persons whose declarations/statements may shed light on matters under consideration by the Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee.

c) Coordinate with other offices and/or organizations as may be necessary in the exercise of its functions/tasks.

d) Prepare and submit reports duly supported by appropriate evidence on matters which may be referred to it by the GRP and the MILF Sub-Committees on Cessation of Hostilities.

e) Conduct its inquiries and submit reports to the GRP and the MILF Sub-Committees of Cessation of Hostilities with utmost dispatch.

f) All reports and proceedings of the Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee shall be considered classified. No part of it nor information thereof maybe divulged to anyone, except by the authorized official spokespersons of the GRP and the MILF as provided for in the Administrative Procedures in the Conduct of GRP-MILF Technical Committee Meetings adopted on February 26, 1997.

g) Additional membership to the Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee maybe made upon joint approval by the GRP and the MILF Sub-Committee on Cessation of Hostilities.

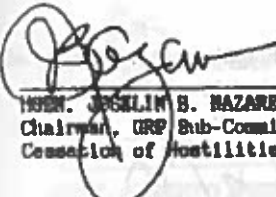
h) The Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee shall adopt such internal procedures as maybe appropriate to enable it to expeditiously perform its tasks and submit the same to the GRP and MILF Sub-Committee on Cessation of Hostilities for its joint notation and approval.

1) The Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee may employ the expertise of certain disinterested persons or organizations in the pursuance of its assigned tasks.

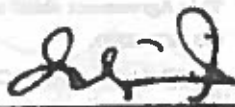
2) Perform such other acts as maybe jointly determined to be necessary by the GRP and the MILF Sub-Committee on Cessation of Hostilities for the accomplishment of its tasks/functions.

The GRP and the MILF shall, within its capabilities, provide administrative support to the Interim Ceasefire Monitoring Committee in the performance of its functions.

The two Sub-Committees on Cessation of Hostilities shall submit the points of agreement in this joint meeting for final confirmation and approval to the Third Meeting of the Technical Committee of the GRP and the MILF on April 9-10, 1997 at the Notre Dame University in Cotabato City.



HON. JOCELIN B. NAZARENO AFP
Chairman, GRP Sub-Committee on
Cessation of Hostilities



PROF. HONOR H. SULAIMID
Chairman, MILF Technical
Committee