

**JOINT STATEMENT
ON THE RESUMPTION OF THE FORMAL TALKS
IN THE PEACE NEGOTIATIONS
BETWEEN THE GRP AND NDFP**

We, the Negotiating Panels of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) successfully resumed the formal talks in the peace negotiations from 22 to 26 August 2016 in Oslo, Norway facilitated by the Royal Norwegian Government (RNG), thereby ending almost half a decade of impasse in the formal talks in the peace negotiations.

At the opening ceremonies, RNG Special Envoy to the Philippine Peace Process Amb. Elisabeth Slattum welcomed the two delegations and introduced Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende who gave the opening speech. He reiterated the firm commitment of the RNG to support the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations.

Sec. Jesus G. Dureza, GRP Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (PAPP), and Prof. Jose Maria C. Sison, Chief Political Consultant of the NDFP, expressed the commitment of the two Parties to resume the formal talks in the peace negotiations in order to resolve the armed conflict by addressing its root causes.

The Chairpersons of the GRP and NDFP Negotiating Panels, Sec. Silvestre H. Bello III and Luis G. Jalandoni, delivered their opening statements and introduced their respective Panel members.

On the side of the GRP: Panel Chairperson Sec. Silvestre H. Bello III and Panel members, Hernani A. Braganza, Atty. Rene V. Sarmiento, Atty. Angela L. Trinidad, and Atty. Antonio B. Arellano.

On the side of the NDFP: Panel Chairperson Luis G. Jalandoni and Panel members Fidel V. Agcaoili, Julieta S. de Lima, Coni K. Ledesma and Asterio B. Palima.

Both sides also brought along members of their respective Reciprocal Working Committees-Social and Economic Reforms (RWCs-SER), Reciprocal Working Groups-Political and Constitutional Reforms (RWGs-PCR), Reciprocal Working Groups-End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces (RWGs-EHDF), consultants, cooperators, experts and technical personnel.

The two Panels agreed on the following:

1. Reaffirmation of Previous Agreements

The GRP and NDFP Negotiating Panels (henceforth, the Parties) reaffirmed the previously signed agreements since The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992 and resolved to conduct formal talks and consultations in accordance with said agreements.

We hereby resume the formal talks in the peace negotiations of the GRP and NDFP. We reaffirm all the previous bilateral and binding agreements made in these negotiations, starting with The Hague Joint Declaration of September 1, 1992, and including the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) of February 24, 1995; the Joint Agreement on the Formation, Sequence and Operationalization of the Reciprocal Working Committees (RWC) of the GRP and NDFP Negotiating Panels of June 26, 1995; and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) of March 16, 1998.

The affirmed documents shall be subject to further developments and enhancements as may be mutually agreed upon.

2. Reconstitution of the JASIG List

The NDFP Negotiating Panel presented the Reconstituted List of holders of the NDFP document of identification who are protected by the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG). The GRP Negotiating Panel acknowledged receipt of the said list. Both Parties agreed on the procedure and persons responsible for the documentation of the NDFP holders of identification, safekeeping of documents and verification of the holders of identification in accordance with the JASIG.

3. Acceleration of the Peace Negotiations

The Parties agreed to accelerate the peace process and set the timeline for the completion of the remaining substantive agenda for the talks: socio-economic reforms; political and constitutional reforms; and end of hostilities and disposition of forces. The meetings of the aforementioned shall be held in one venue to enable the Panels to supervise their work. The RWCs-SER will endeavor to complete their work within a period of six months.

Meetings of RWCs, RWGs and JMC

The Panels convened the Joint Meeting of their RWCs-SER and their Reciprocal Working Groups on Political and Constitutional Reforms (RWGs-PCR) and on End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces (RWGs-EHDF) to discuss the agenda, mechanics and timeline of their work, and the meeting of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) and their Chairpersons. The RWCs-SER, RWGs-PCR, RWGs-EHDF and JMC agreed on the following which were approved by the panels:

a. RWCs-SER

On the methods of work, the RWCs agreed to have an exchange of proposed drafts on the CASER framework and outline on or before September 15, 2016. The exchange of drafts can be done through email.

Thereafter, the RWCs shall submit their respective comments on the proposed drafts on the CASER framework and outline on or before September 30, 2016. They may also submit further clarification or response to the comments on the proposed drafts on or before October 10, 2016.

After the exchange of drafts on the CASER framework and outline and comments and further clarification, the RWCs agreed to meet between October 19 and 30, 2016 to discuss and finalize the framework and outline of the CASER, their work schedule and methods of work and other matters.

b. RWGs-PCR

The Reciprocal Working Groups of the GRP and NDFP on Political and Constitutional Reforms agreed to hold their first and further meetings in Oslo, Norway in synchronization with the meetings of the RWCs on Socio Economic Reforms.

The schedule of the meetings and the respective tasks will be as follows:

- September 2016 – both RWGs will exchange drafts of their respective outlines through e-mail.

- October 2016 – the RWGs will meet in Oslo, Norway for the purpose of arriving at a common draft of the outline.
- November 2016 – the RWGs will proceed to respectively en flesh the agreed common draft of the outline.
- December 2016 – the one week drafting of the common draft of the CAPCR by the RWGs will be held in Oslo, Norway.
- Both RWGs will allow for consultations with Principals and researches thereafter.
- January 2017 – a one week drafting to complete the CAPCR in Oslo, Norway will continue until the full text of a DRAFT CAPCR is finally completed possibly by the end of January 2017 for submission to the respective Panels.

c. RWGs-EHDF

The Reciprocal Working Groups on End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces (RWGs-EHDF) of the GRP and NDFP agreed to hold their first and further meetings in Oslo, Norway in synchronization with the meetings of the RWCs on SER and RWGs on PCR.

The RWGs on EHDF agreed to present their respective draft outlines for the Comprehensive Agreement on EHDF on October 24, 2016 or on the next scheduled Panel meeting, whichever comes first. The meetings shall also include:

- The formulation of a common outline for the CAEHDF
- Date of exchange of first drafts.
- Plan for the date of the first meeting to discuss the first draft.
- Schedule for further exchange of succeeding drafts.
- Plan and timeline for further meetings.

d. Joint Monitoring Committee

The JMC Chairpersons agreed to discuss the following agenda items when it meets on September 20-21, 2016 at 10:00 am at the RNG Embassy in Taguig City or at a neutral venue to be identified by the RNG: (a) Formal revitalization of the JMC, (b) Draft Common Supplemental Guidelines for the Operationalization of the JMC; (c) Issues and Concerns regarding the Joint Secretariat; (d) Proposed Joint Activities; and (e) Schedule of Next Meeting. To facilitate discussion for its next meeting, the GRP MC and NDFP MC Chairpersons will exchange Notes in the next three weeks: (a) the GRP MC will submit its

comments on the Draft Common Supplemental Guidelines which were initialed by the JMC in April 2011 at the RNG Embassy in Makati City; (b) the NDFP MC will submit a paper regarding issues and concerns relative to the Joint Secretariat; and (c) the GRP MC and NDFP MC will submit their respective proposals on joint activities of the Joint Secretariat.

4. Releases

The NDFP expresses appreciation for, and the GRP acknowledges, the efforts of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte to fulfill his promise to order the release of the NDFP consultants in pursuit of peace and with due consideration to JASIG, as recommended by the GRP Panel. Thus, the aforesaid consultants are enabled to participate in the peace negotiations.

The NDFP thanks the GRP under President Duterte for committing to cause the early release of prisoners (as listed by the NDFP) who are sick, elderly, overly long detained and women based on humanitarian grounds.

5. Amnesty Proclamation

The Parties agree that the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) Panel will immediately recommend to President Rodrigo Roa Duterte the issuance of an Amnesty Proclamation, subject to concurrence of Congress, for the release of prisoners who are listed by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) and who have been arrested, imprisoned, charged, and/or convicted for alleged acts or omissions within the ambit of the Revised Penal Code or special laws in connection with alleged crimes in pursuit of one's political beliefs. The Parties will discuss the content and language of the prospective Amnesty Proclamation.

6. Ceasefire

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) shall declare and issue an indefinite unilateral ceasefire order to the New People's Army (NPA) and the people's militia, upon the end of their current ceasefire order on August 27, 2016. The aforesaid unilateral ceasefire shall be in response to President Duterte's unilateral ceasefire which was effective indefinitely from August 21, 2016.

The Negotiating Panels agreed to work through their respective ceasefire committees to reconcile and develop their separate unilateral ceasefire orders into a single unified bilateral document within 60 days from the date of this Joint Statement. Said document shall be subject to the approval of their respective Principals.

The Parties also discussed the prospective adoption of annexes to the bilateral ceasefire agreement and the prospective role of a third party in ceasefire monitoring and mediation in relation to the implementation of the ceasefire, and the handling of complaints and alleged violations. The ceasefire agreement shall be deemed interim in relation to the outcomes of negotiations leading to a Comprehensive Agreement on End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces.

7. Next Meeting

The Panels agreed to meet again on October 8-12, 2016 in Oslo, Norway.

Expression of Gratitude to the RNG

Both Panels expressed their appreciation and gratitude to the Royal Norwegian Government for its able facilitation, hospitality and continuing support for the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations. In particular, the Panels wish to acknowledge the following: Minister of Foreign Affairs Borge Brende, State Secretary Tore Hattrem, Special Envoy to the Philippine Peace Process Elisabeth Slattum, Senior Advisor Marianne W. Hille, Senior Advisor Arne Jan Flolo, Advisor Mirjan Ehl, Foreign Service Trainee Ida Marstein and Senior Advisor Marco Mezzera.

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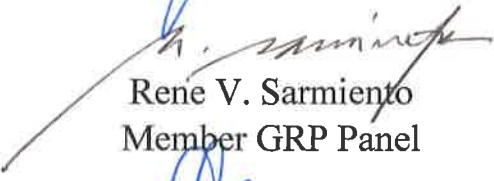
Signed in Oslo, Norway on 26 August 2016.



Sec. Silvestre H. Bello III
Chairperson of the GRP Panel



Hernani A. Braganza
Member GRP Panel



Rene V. Sarmiento
Member GRP Panel



Angela L. Trinidad
Member GRP Panel




Antonio B. Arellano
Member GRP Panel



Luis G. Jalandoni
Chairperson of the NDFP Panel



Fidel V. Agcaoili
Member NDFP Panel



Julieta S. de Lima
Member NDFP Panel

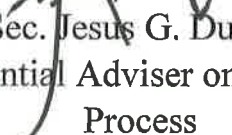


Coni K. Ledesma
Member NDFP Panel



Asterio B. Palima
Member NDFP Panel


WITNESSES:



Sec. Jesus G. Dureza
Presidential Adviser on the Peace
Process



Prof. Jose Maria Sison
NDFP Chief Political Consultant



Elisabeth Slattum
Third Party Facilitator
For the Royal Norwegian Government

The GRP Delegation was headed by Secretary Jesus G. Dureza, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process. Included in the Delegation are: Panel Chairperson Secretary Silvestre H. Bello III, Panel Members Mr. Hernani A. Braganza, Atty. Rene V. Sarmiento, Atty. Angela L. Trinidad, and Atty. Antonio B. Arellano; Undersecretary Diosita T. Andot, Assistant Secretary Dickson P. Hermoso, Consultants Milo S. Ibrado, Jr. and Jose Christopher Fornier II; Communications Group Head Patricia Melizza B. Ruivivar; Panel Advisers Mayors Herbert M. Bautista and Edgardo D. Pamintuan; Working Group Heads Atty. Efren C. Moncupa (*RWC-SER Chair and Concurrent GRP-MC Chair*), Roberto M. Ador (*Alternate RWC-SER Chair*), Dean Sedfrey M. Candelaria (*RWG-PCR*), Dr. Francisco J. Lara, Jr. (*RWG-Ceasefire*), and Atty. Vincent Paul L. Montejo (*RWG-JASIG/Releases*); Panel Technical Committee Head Danilo L. Encinas and Members Teodoro Cirilo T. Torralba III, Atty. Berlin SM Berba, Col. Francisco Ariel A. Felicidadario III, and Police Chief Supt. Agrimero A. Cruz Jr.; and Panel Secretariat Head Maria Carla Munsayac Villarta. Secretariat Staff Oscar B. Bathan and Fe O. Doromal; Support Staff for Communications Edwin G. Espejo and Ruben Manahan; and Technical Staff of Panel Members Rhoda I. Espino and Dr. Jesus Cruz. Also present was Cong. Victor A. Yap as Observer.

The NDFP Delegation was composed of Panel Chairperson Luis G. Jalandoni and Panel Members Fidel V. Agcaoili, Julieta S. de Lima-Sison, Coni K. Ledesma, Asterio B. Palima, members; NDFP Chief Political Consultant Prof. Jose Maria Sison; Political Consultants Benito Tiamzon, Vicente Ladlad, Rey Claro Casambre, Danilo Borjal; Legal Consultants Edre U. Olalia, Rachel Pastores, Carlos Montemayor Jr.; Legal Resource Person Marie Yuvienco; *RWC-SER* Members Alan Jazmines, Rafael Baylosis, Randall Echanis, Adelberto Silva; *RWC-SER* Consultants Gabriel Kennedy Bangibang, Ruben Saluta, Jaime Soledad; *RWG-PCR* Members Renante Gamara, Alfredo Mapano, Ernesto Lorenzo; *RWG-PCR* Consultant Felix Randy Malayao Jr.; *RWG-PCR* Cooperators Carol P. Araullo, Satur Ocampo; *RWG-EHDF* Chairperson Wilma Tiamzon and *RWG-EHDF* Members Pedro Codaste, Porferio Tuna; *RWG-EHDF* Consultants Tirso Alcantara, Ariel Arbitrario, Eduardo Genelza; *JMC* Member Concha Araneta-Bocala; Secretariat Head Marissa P. Dumanjug-Palo.