

Press Statement
September 7, 2011

Sincerity or Unselfishness is the real Path to Peace

The **Moro Women Development and Cultural Center, Inc.** (MWDECC) is expressing its great dismay in the results of the recent talks between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Being one of the primary victims of war, women sector has always been supportive of the peace process because they know that only the 'negotiated political settlement' can put into an end to this long-standing political conflict in Mindanao.

The failure of August 22-23 talks to come up with a reconcilable draft proposals seems to be a source of new predicament to take place wherein the Bangsamoro people and other native inhabitants of Mindanao will mainly be at the receiving end. The almost decade-old negotiation of the two parties is a waste of energy, money, and time. It is a long period of putting too much expectation on people that a solution can be made but, at end of day, people realized that the truth of the matter is 'it is a long period of fooling people around.'

One of the reasons of the failure of recent talks was that government proposal seemed to have disregarded all previously signed documents which were painstakingly come up in the previous administrations. What made us wondered is that the GPH peace panel Chairman Marvic Leonen preferred to have their proposal entirely different from that of the MILF's believing that it is the way in which common ground is found. This government attitude is but a manifestation of insincerity, selfishness and irrationality as far as dealing with Moros is concerned.

Many regimes had passed and many people used to chair the government peace panel but nothing has been achieved as far as addressing the Bangsamoro legitimate political grievance and aspiration are concerned. Constitutionality or unconstitutionality of one thing has always been invoked by the government which is becoming an alibi to veer away whenever the talk reaches its peak.

The peace spoilers like Manny Pinol, Mayor Lobregat, both grabbed Moro and indigenous Peoples' ancestral domain, and Mar Roxas, among others, have been insisting the idea of transparency through consultation with the settlers in Mindanao but they never insist to conduct consultation with the Bangsamoro people when it comes to the government move for oil and gas exploration in the Bangsamoro ancestral domain and the privatization of Agus and Pulangi Hydropower Complex.

The GPH's '3 in 1' proposal is indeed unacceptable for the entire Bangsamoro people. This is certainly different with a '3 in 1' coffee as it is completely refined. This government '3 in 1' approach is bitterly distasteful. It was designed to spread the smoke of confusion among the observing local and international communities as the government has been imputing the failure to come up with an agreement to the rejection of the MILF on its proposal as widely spread or used by Marvic Leonen.

Should the government and the entire Filipino people know the real political and historical rights of the Moros, they would come to realize that even sub-state is not enough.

If it happens that this government is wise enough and has the heart over its suffering people, and its interest is for the entire nation to live in peace and progress, it should have seized this golden moment that the MILF has already reduced its position by accepting this asymmetrical state-substate relationship. We are sure that next generation of Moro leaders will be more radical than the present.

Does this government think that Bangsamoro people can be pacified by just giving them this massive economic development as contained in the 3 for 1 formula, and be contented by 4Ps program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), which have only caused disagreements and corruption in the barangays?

The Bangsamoro is not against development but poverty is never a root cause of their problem at which economic development is used to be a solution. Poverty is only a result of the oppression and serious injustice happening in the Bangsamoro homeland, and these will only be capped if there is a given space for the Bangsamoro self governance and Right to Self-Determination.