

Army Vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride



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27 August 2016

Saturday

Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

NEWS HEADLINES

27 AUGUST 2016



Army Core Purpose: Serving the people. Securing the land.

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The Manila Times

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The Manila Times

10 DAY'S WEATHER FORECAST

August 21, 2016, SAT, JRD

TYPHOON "DINDO"
 1025 HPa, EAST-NORTHEAST OF TRINIDAD, JATANES
 SOUTH-EAST MONSOON
 AFFECTING EASTERN SECTION OF LUZON
 (AUGUST 16, 2016, 0600 GMT)

SUNRISE 6:44 AM
SUNSET 6:11 PM
MOONRISE 12:51 AM
MOONSET 1:50 PM
LAST QUARTER AUG 25 11:47 AM
NEW MOON SEP 1 10:00 PM
LOW TIDE 1:35 PM
HIGH TIDE 12:24 AM

Location	Forecast 1	Forecast 2	Forecast 3	Forecast 4	Forecast 5	Forecast 6	Forecast 7	Forecast 8	Forecast 9	Forecast 10
LAOAG CITY	24-31°C									
PUERTO PRINCESA	25-32°C									
DAVAO CITY	25-33°C									
MANILA	26-31°C	27-32°C	26-32°C	16-21°C	16-21°C	16-20°C				
CEBU	26-34°C	25-34°C	25-34°C	25-32°C	24-32°C	20-32°C				
DAVAO	26-34°C	25-35°C	26-34°C	25-33°C	25-33°C	24-33°C				

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER

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Gov't, Reds OK signing of indefinite ceasefire

Gov't panel to 'immediately recommend' amnesty

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE PHILIPPINE government and communist guerrillas have agreed to an indefinite ceasefire extension to facilitate further peace negotiations aimed at ending one of Asia's deadliest and longest-running insurgencies, a joint statement said last night.

At the end of five-day peace talks in Oslo, Norway, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) agreed to extend a unilat-

GOVT / A6

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WINNING MOMENT

Members of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (from left) Fidel Agcaoili, Coni Ledesma, Jose Maria Sison, Luis Jalandoni, Juliet de Lima and Astero Palima raise their fists and hold an NDFP flag to mark the end of the first round of peace talks with the government panel in Oslo, Norway.

DREGALIA/CONTRIBUTOR



From page A1

eral ceasefire indefinitely. The truce, a goodwill gesture to President Duterte's own unilateral ceasefire, was supposed to end today.

"The Communist Party of the Philippines 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 Aug 27, 2016," the statement said.

Both sides agreed to reconcile and develop their separate ceasefire orders into a single unified document within 60 days. A third party monitoring and mediation body will also handle complaints and alleged violations.

The government peace panel was expected to "immediately recommend" to the President the issuance of an amnesty proclamation, subject to Congress concurrence, for the release of prisoners listed by the NDFP.

Both panels agreed to meet again on Oct. 8-12, also in Oslo.

Milestone

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza described the talks as "a milestone" aimed at ending a protracted rebellion that has lasted more than 40 years, claiming more than 37,000 lives and stunting the growth potentials of the country.

Duterte walked the extra mile. He has also taken a step back to give the NDFP space under his democratic and inclusive government," Dureza said.

"We will go home with a promise of a just and lasting peace and our soldiers and the combatants of the NDFP finally coming to terms that the war must end," he added.

The CPP launched its rebellion in 1968. Its armed unit, the NPA, is believed to have fewer than 4,000 fighters, down from a peak of 26,000 in the 1980s when it drew strength from Filipinos fed up with the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos.

Peace talks resumed in Oslo this week, after five years, and

least 21 rebel leaders to act as "consultants" to the negotiations to show the government's sincerity.

The peace process, which has dragged on for decades, broke down in 2001 when the Maoist rebels backed out after the US government—followed by the European Union—placed them on a list of terrorist organizations.

Coalition

The peace effort resumed in 2011 under the sponsorship of Norway, but it had often bogged down as both sides accused each other of insincerity. The rebels had also scored the previous governments for refusing demands by the rebels to re-

President Duterte, who took office on June 30, has made resumption of the talks a top priority. The onetime university student of CPP founder Jose Maria Sison, 77, who once described himself as a socialist, had vowed to bring peace to a country whose economic potentials have often been weighed down by insurgencies.

He has even raised the possibility of forming a coalition government with the rebels, and his young administration said on Monday it hoped to reach a peace accord within a year.

The two sides hope to breathe new life into the process by discussing simultaneously the outstanding issues of social and economic reforms, political and

constitutional changes, and an end to hostilities.

Previous peace talks have dealt with one issue at a time.

The rebels remain particularly active in the countryside, where they are notorious for extortion to fuel their rebellion. They have also regularly attacked police and military forces, sometimes targeting them in urban areas.

The US state department has designated the CPP/NPA a foreign terrorist organization.

Norway welcomes truce

Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende hailed last night's document as "unprecedented" and offered his government's commitment to continue assist-

ing in the talks.

"We further welcome the acceleration of the peace negotiation," he said. "Norway is committed to assist you in your way to peace."

Government chief negotiator and Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III thanked his counterpart and expressed a wish that a final peace deal would soon be sealed.

He said the government was looking toward a final peace agreement with the NDFP to end almost half a century of armed hostilities in the countryside.

Apart from the ceasefire, both sides also agreed to reconstitute a list of rebel leaders protected from arrest under a previously signed agreement on safety and immunity from arrest.

The encrypted list will contain the photos and identities of rebel consultants who are "still underground who will be immune to arrest while the peace process is undergoing."

The government on the other hand would issue documents of acknowledgment for the rebel consultants still in hiding and for the 54 "publicly known NDFP personalities."

"I am sure the Filipino people appreciate the work of the two negotiating panels and that they are elated by the results of the formal talks," Sison said. "These advance their struggle for national and social revolution and for a just and lasting peace." *With reports from Reuters and AFP*

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Gov't, NDF forge deal for indefinite truce

By JOSE RODEL CLAPANO

An indefinite ceasefire between the communist rebels and the government takes effect today after their representatives signed a joint declaration in Norway to stop armed hostilities in preparation for talks to end once and for all the decades-long rebellion.

The declaration of the truce came almost simultaneously with the announcement of the release of three policemen by New People's Army (NPA) rebels.

The truce was contained in a joint declaration committing "to unilateral ceasefires with no time limit," said Norway's foreign ministry, which sponsored the talks.

Norway said the joint declaration marks the resumption of formal negotiations between the Duterte administration and the National Democratic Front.

The latest ceasefire was a continuation of an earlier one called by the government, but which expired today.

Some 150,000 people have died in the conflict that began almost half a century ago.

Both sides said they had made important progress in the talks in Oslo in advancing a peace process that has dragged on for decades.

"The joint statement we are signing manifests the historic significance of what we have achieved," said Jose Maria Sison, founder of the Communist

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Photo from his Facebook page shows Sen. Manny Pacquiao with Chief Inspector Arnold Ongachen, commander of the Governor Generoso police station in Davao Oriental and PO1 Michael Grande of the Banaybanay municipal police station in Davao Oriental after they were released by the New People's Army in Lupon, Davao Oriental yesterday.

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Gov't From Page 1

Party of the Philippines, before the signing of the joint declaration.

Presidential peace adviser Jesus Dureza called the statement a "historic and unprecedented event" and gave credit to President Duterte.

"Not only has President Duterte walked the extra mile. He has also taken a step back to give the NDF space under his democratic and inclusive government," he said.

"We will go home with a promise of a just and lasting peace and our soldiers and the combatants of the NDF finally coming to terms that the war must end," he added. He stressed no acrimonious exchanges happened.

The discussions were jovial even, he said, with off-the-cuff remarks and bawler periodically triggering laughter in the room.

"Yes, there were breaks in between but they were devoted to discussing the fine print of the documents and drafts that were passed and handed out across the table," Dureza said.

They capped their discussions and exchange of notes with a boodle fight dinner Thursday evening.

President Duterte had promised to reopen talks and release all rebel leaders in detention during the election campaign period.

Duterte received two of the three freed policemen at the headquarters of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Eastern Mindanao Command in Davao Oriental.

Pacman with freed cops

The two were Police Chief Inspector Arnold Ongachen of the Governor Generoso Municipal Police, and PO1 Michael Grande of Lupon, both in Davao Oriental.

The two arrived on a helicopter accompanied by Gen. Manny Pacquiao at around 3 p.m. and were kept away from the media pending the arrival of Duterte at the camp for the 19th anniversary celebration of the Eastern Mindanao Command. The third police captive, PO1 Richard Yu, was released in Tandang Yu.

An NDF statement said four more captive policemen are set to be released today in Surigao del Norte province. They are PO2 Caleb Sinaca, PO3 Jayroll Bagayas and non-uniformed personnel Rodrigo Angob of the Mahmono Municipal Police Station and SPO3 Santiago Lamanilao of the Surigao City Police.

According to the NDF press statement, the four were arrested for involvement in illegal drugs and illegal gambling in Mahmono and Surigao City.

In their statement, the two sides reaffirmed previous agreements and were set to discuss the release of detainees and who should get immu-

nity to take part in the talks. Negotiators said they aim to complete the peace talks in nine to 12 months.

Although less numerous and less violent than Muslim separatist rebels in Mindanao, the Maoists have fought and outlived successive Philippine administrations for nearly 50 years, holding out against constant military and police offensives. They draw support from those dissatisfied with economic inequality, especially in the countryside, and the Philippines' alliance with the US.

Norway has had a role as facilitator for the peace process since 2001. Fierce peace talks have been going on since 1986.

Duterte said he wants to end guerrilla wars with both communist and Muslim rebels that have been hampering economic development. The 3,000-strong New People's Army is the armed wing of the CPP-NDF.

"I am happy to announce to our fellow Filipinos that the CPP-NPA-INDF agreed to declare that the unilateral ceasefire it has declared and is about to lapse tomorrow (Saturday) is now indefinite," said Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello in Oslo.

NDF peace panel head Luis Jalandoni lauded Duterte's show of determination to forge peace with the rebels.

Jalandoni said the release of 21 detained NDF consultants would be critical to the progress of the peace nego-

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Luis Jalandoni of the National Democratic Front (right) shakes hands with Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello following the signing of an indefinite ceasefire deal yesterday. Looking on is Norway's Minister of Foreign Affairs Boerge Brende.

tations

The formal session - the first after five years - reaffirmed all previously signed agreements between the Philippine government and the NDF such as The Hague Joint Declaration in 1992, the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) in 1996, and the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect of Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CAHRHIL) in 1998. The documents were signed during the Ramos administration.

At Malacatang, presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella said they are looking forward to the completion of the peace process and the implementation of a comprehensive agreement on socio-economic reforms

(CASER) within six months.

"We're happy that both parties have promised to complete the work," Abella said in yesterday's press briefing in Malacatang. He said Bello considers CASER as the heart and soul of the peace negotiations.

Earlier, the government released several top-rank communist representatives to allow them to join the talks, including couple Benito and Wilma Tiamzon. Benito, chairman of the CPP-NPA, and Wilma, secretary-general, were caught in a military operation in Aloguinsan town in Cebu in March 2014.

Also released were Renante Camara, Titso Alcantara, Adelberto Silva, Concha Araneta-Bocala, Alan Jazmines, Ariel Arbitrario, Eddie Genelsa and Alfredo Mapano

Sadyandi

Meanwhile, *lumad* groups expressed their support for the peace talks, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) said yesterday.

The Sadyandi, a *lumad* term, was joined by eight tribes and *Moro* groups which also voiced support for the peace negotiations.

Social Welfare Secretary Judy Taguiwalo joined thousands of *lumad* and other tribal groups in Korenadal, South Cotabato, as they celebrated on Wednesday their Solidarity Festival through a "Sadyandi," or unity pact.

"Specifically we are working with other government agencies such as the Department of Education to build more schools for *lumad* children and youth, and to ensure that the projects of the DSWD do not go against the welfare and culture of our *lumad* brothers and sisters. We support their struggle to recover and return to their ancestral lands," Taguiwalo said.

"The peace talks between our government and the NDFP aim to bring to the table the substantive agenda for peace based on social justice. It is good that the *lumad* and other IP communities support the peace negotiations and that they themselves are issuing their calls to both parties," she pointed out.

- With Edith Regalado, Ben Serrano, Van Nilles, Pia Lee-Brago, Reuters

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MANILA BULLETIN

THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Army units to support anti-illegal drugs operations

BY JOSEPH JUBELAN
AND MIKE U. CRISTIANO

ISULAN, Sultan Kudarat—Army troops in Central Mindanao have been ordered to provide tactical support to anti-drug operations launched by law enforcement units in the region.

Lt Col. Ricky Bunayog, 33rd Infantry Battalion (33rd IB) commander, said Friday that Army personnel under his command have been directed to provide augmentation and tactical support to the anti-drug operations conducted by the police and Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) within their area of responsibility.

The 33rd IB which is stationed in President Quirino, Sultan Kudarat, has jurisdiction over the bordering towns of Maguindanao and Sultan Kudarat provinces.

Bunayog said his command is actively providing support to police and PDEA personnel who sought their assistance in the conduct of anti-drug operations within their area of responsibility, especially those high-value drug personalities.

He said the higher ups in the Philippine Army had a standing directive to all army units to provide support to the anti-drug campaign of President Rodrigo Duterte.

He said his unit had facilitated the surrender of at least eight drug personalities in Datu Paglas Maguindanao who yielded several high-powered firearms including a .50 caliber Barrett sniper rifle.

"The army has been mandated to provide all-out support to the President's anti-illegal drugs campaign," Bunayog said.

'Oplan Tokhang'

Two suspected drug pushers were killed in two separate anti-drug operations conducted by the police in Butuan City and Agusan del Sur, the regional command of northeastern Mindanao Police Regional Office 13 (PRO 13) reported yesterday.

The suspect, identified as Raul G. Oranza, 42 of Purok 3-B, Barangay Ampayon, Butuan City, who has already surrendered in "Oplan Tokhang" to authorities last July 8, 2016, was killed when he allegedly fired his caliber .38 revolver at the police at 8 a.m. on Thursday.

Police recovered in the crime scene one fired cartridge case of caliber 5.56mm, one fired cartridge case of caliber 9mm, one Smith & Wesson Special revolver caliber 38 containing one fired cartridge case and 4 live ammunition and 1 black pouch (guess) containing 1 big sachet of suspected shabu worth ₱295,000, two pieces elongated sachets heat-sealed transparent sachets containing suspected shabu with Dangerous Drug Board value of ₱4,720 and assorted drug paraphernalia.

<http://dwdd.com.ph/>

PURELY PROPAGANDA | Social Media rant of SOS Network against the 66IB and 67IB

Alvin Santiago



MANILA (DWDD) – The leadership of the 10th Infantry “Agila” Division vehemently denied the accusation of the militant front “Save Our School Network” against troops of the 66th at 67th Infantry Battalion.

In their Facebook post, the SOS Network accused soldiers from the 66th and 67th IB of setting camp within the Salugpungan school in Brgy Pagsabangan in New Bataan and entering a community at Brgy Panansalan in Compostela twon, both in Compostela Valley.



In an interview by DWDD with Capt Rhyar Batchar, Public Affairs officer of the 10th ID, in response to the accusations, the leadership of the 66th at 67th IB sent documents and evidences in defense of their troops.

The 67th IB reiterated that thwey don't have troop presence in the area since this is not part of their Area of Operations.

Meanwhile, the 66th IB admitted that they were in Sitio Bongloy, Brgy Panansalan on August 20, 2016 to rest.

They presented a document, prepared by Purok Secretary Nerisa Gollodo and duly signed by Purok Chairman Rex Basta, that they asked permission and was granted to enter and rest in the area.

Another document was furnished by the 66th IB, prepared by Ms Gollodo, stating that no soldier occupied the Salugpungan school 100 meters away, together wih photos.

Capt Batchar added that they welcome any complaints against any soldier for any wrongdoings, but this should be done through proper forums or venues, and not through media or social media, hopefully together with sufficient evidence.

Most complaints aired by such groups are usually tagged as propaganda and aimed at destroying the credibility of our soldiers, but nowadays, Filipinos are more wiser in relating to such facts. **AES / MCAG**



File Photo
Salugpungan school

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11 Abus killed in Sulu clash following beheading

ZAMBOANGA CITY -- In line with President Duterte's order to "seek and destroy" the Abu Sayyaf government forces engaged the bandits in a firefight yesterday, killing 11 of them in Patikul, Sulu.

Duterte was enraged by the beheading of a Filipino rapist by the bandits in Sulu. Yesterday's firefight left 17 soldiers wounded. Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) commander Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo de la Cruz said most of

By ROEL PAREÑO

the wounded suffered only slight injuries and eagerly went back to the frontlines.

He said the troops were "extremely" motivated knowing the fight against terrorism is "greater than them."

"(President Duterte) gave a specific order. The mission is clear. Seek and destroy the Abu Sayyaf. By all means that's what we are doing and we will not stop until it's done."

Westmincom spokesman Maj. Filmon Tan Jr. said troops from the Joint Task Force Sulu (JTFS) attacked the Abu Sayyaf in Sitio Makaita.

A fierce firefight ensued for 45 minutes that initially left six bandits dead and several others wounded.

"The troops are still on hot pursuit and a running gun battle is continuing as of press time," Tan said.

He said the troops recovered the bodies of the killed militants.

Tan said among those killed was Abu Sayyaf sub-leader Mohammad Said, alias Ama Maas, who is wanted for murder.

Said was also involved in the Samal Island kidnapping in September last year, of which two captive Canadians John Ridsdel and Robert Hall were beheaded earlier this year. The other Samal captive Maritess Flor was released while the bandit group is still holding Norwegian Kjartan Sikkengstad captive.

troops have not spotted Sekkingstad, whom they believed was with the group that figured in the clash with government forces.

"There was no immediate sighting of the victim, but we believed the victim could be with this big group which our ground forces encountered this morning," Tan said.

Tan said there are no indications if Sekkingstad is still healthy since the bandits constantly move him away from pursuing government forces.

"We have no basis yet as to his fate. However, the Abu Sayyaf has not also declared they have executed him," Tan added.

Authorities, meanwhile, recovered the body of another hostage beheaded by the Abu Sayyaf.

The Sulu Provincial Police said the headless cadaver believed to be of James Patrick Almódovar was recovered in a remote village in Patikul town.

Villagers found the headless body late Wednesday, wrapped in a blanket with hands handcuffed.

The Abu Sayyaf kidnapped Almódovar last July 16 just outside his home in Jolo.

The bandits beheaded the 18-year-old after the deadline to pay P1 million ransom lapsed Wednesday afternoon.

President Duterte has given the military full support to run after the Abu Sayyaf, calling on government forces to kill the bandits down "to the last man."

day of reckoning" with the bandit group.

On top of the 5,000 troops already based in Sulu and 2,500 in Basilan, the Armed Forces of the Philippines has pulled out troops from Visayas, Luzon and in other areas of Mindanao and deployed them to the two island provinces with the specific mission to seek and destroy the Abu Sayyaf.

Duterte told the troops in Davao City yesterday of his efforts to forge peace with rebel forces.

"Definitely Abu Sayyaf is out of control. I have lost my respect for you in the light of the beheading of the 18-year-old," Duterte said in referring to Almódovar.

He said he used to respect the Abu Sayyaf when it was still fighting for freedom but now his trust and respect for the group was lost.

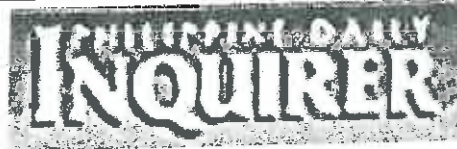
"And here you are slaughtering people as if they are chickens in front of the public. I gave the order for the military to destroy them," he added.

Duterte had warned terror groups like the Abu Sayyaf would remain the biggest threat to the country in the next decade.

The United States and the Philippines have both listed the Abu Sayyaf as a terrorist organization for kidnappings, beheadings and bombings.

The bandit group emerged in the early 1990s as an extremist offshoot of the decades-long separatist rebellion in Mindanao. — With Jaime Laude, Giovanni Nilles,

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Troops kill 11 Abus in Sulu

By Julie Alipala, *Inquirer Mindanao*

ZAMBOANGA CITY—At least 11 Abu Sayyaf bandits, including an influential commander, were killed during a military operation in Patikul, Sulu on Friday.

Government troops killed the bandits in an assault on the extremists' lair following their beheading of a captive whose family was too poor to pay the P1 million ransom, the military said.

Maj. Filemon Tan Jr. said 17 soldiers were wounded when hundreds of Army troops surrounded a vast jungle area in Sulu province's mountainous Patikul town and clashed with scattered groups of about 100 bandits.

Tan is the spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' (AFP) Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) based in Zamboanga City.

Among the dead bandits was Amah Maas, a longtime commander of the group who had severed arms and had been implicated in ransom kidnappings.

In a statement, Tan said Maas was "said to

be involved in the abduction of four people, three of them foreigners, in Samal island in Davao del Norte" on September 21, 2015.

Several other bandits were also wounded when elements of the Joint Task Force Sulu clashed with more or less 100 Abu Sayyaf bandits in Sitio Makaita, Barangay Bunkaong, Patikul town, Sulu province, for about 45 minutes.

After the clash, the soldiers recovered the bodies of six slain bandits.

The deaths of five other bandits had been confirmed by intelligence operatives," said, Tan, adding: "Among those killed was Abu Sayyaf sub-leader Mohammad Said, alias Amah Maas."

He said Maas, who had five standing warrants of arrest for murder, was also involved in the abduction of Canadians

Robert Hall and John Ridsdel, Norwegian Kjaran Selkingsstad and Filipino Marites Flor.

Hall and Ridsdel were beheaded separately. Selkingsstad remains in captivity despite the payment of P50 million in ransom to the Abu Sayyaf, as President Rodrigo Duterte has admitted, while Flor was released on June 24.

Tan said soldiers were continuing the pursuit and clearing operations in Patikul, while seven of the wounded soldiers were now being treated.

"Our troops are extremely motivated. They know that this fight against terrorism is greater than themselves. The 10 soldiers who were slightly wounded (even) wanted to rejoin the operation," Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo dela Cruz, the Westmincom commander, said in the same statement.

Duterte's order

Dela Cruz said the military was determined to fulfill its mission to wipe out the Abu Sayyaf. Mr. Duterte has ordered the military to destroy the bandits following reports that the group had beheaded an 18-year-old hostage.

"(The President) gave a specific order. The mission is clear: seek and destroy the ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) by all means. That's what we are doing and we will not stop until it's done," dela Cruz said.

Duterte ordered the troops to destroy the bandits in their jungle bases after the latter on Wednesday beheaded a Filipino teenager, Patrick James Aldovar, who was abducted near a police camp in Sulu's main Jolo town last month.

Tan said that more than 1,200 troops, including special forces commandos, were involved in the assaults in Patikul and other Sulu hinterlands.

Thousands of reinforcement troops have been flown by C130 cargo planes to Sulu and nearby Basilan island to help in the ongoing offensive, he said.

Many of the troops were freed up from other combat zones in the country after Duterte declared an indefinite ceasefire with communist rebels, who are engaged in peace talks brokered by Norway with the government.

The Abu Sayyaf has been blacklisted as a terrorist organization by the US and the Philippines for deadly bombings, kidnappings and beheadings.

The militants are still holding several foreign and local hostages in their jungle bases, including Selkingsstad, who was kidnapped along with two Canadian men and a Filipino woman from a southern marina in September last year. *With reports from Leila B. Salaverria, AP*

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The Manila Times

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11 Abu Sayyaf killed in clash with soldiers

ELEVEN members of the Abu Sayyaf Group including a sub-leader were killed while 17 soldiers were wounded during a firefight in Patikul, Sulu on Friday, a day after the President ordered the military to crush the terror and kidnapping group for beheading a Filipino hostage.

The clash, said Maj. Felimon Tan, spokesman of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), occurred at 6:12 a.m. Friday.

Members of the Joint Task Group Sulu and the 4th Scout Ranger Battalion were on combat operations when they encountered more than 100 Abu Sayyaf at Sitio Makaita in the village of Bunkaong in Patikul town.

The firefight, which lasted for 45 minutes, resulted in the killing of 10

PHILIPPINES

KILLED FROM A1

Abu Sayyaf

Abu Sayyaf members who were not identified, and their sub-leader Mohammad Said who has five warrants of arrest for murder.

Scores of Abu Sayyaf members were also wounded, said Tan.

The wounded soldiers, the official said, were evacuated from the encounter site. As of Friday-afternoon, government forces were pursuing the bandits.

There were no reports on the group's Malaysian, Indonesian and Filipino hostages, as well as Norwegian national Kjartan Sekkingstad.

The intense firefight happened two days after the Abu Sayyaf beheaded 18-year-old Patrick Almodovar, one of its Filipino hostages, after his family failed to meet the August 24 deadline set by the group to pay ransom.

The Abu Sayyaf, which is still holding more than a dozen hostages, demanded P1 million.

Almodovar's severed head, wrapped in a plastic bag, was recovered in the village of Kadjatan also in Indanan town, but his body was missing.

President Rodrigo Duterte, in a news conference in Davao City early on Thursday, vowed to be "harsh" in going after the terrorist group.

"My orders to the police and to the Armed Forces against all enemies of the state, seek them out in their lairs, whatever, and destroy them," the President said.

The Abu Sayyaf is a loose network of a few hundred Islamic militants formed in the 1990s with seed money from Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network, and has earned millions of dollars from kidnappings-for-ransom.

Its leaders have pledged allegiance to the Islamic State group but analysts

say they are mainly focused on lucrative kidnappings.

No-ransom policy

Malacañang on Friday stood by the government's no-ransom policy following Duterte's revelation that ransom had been paid to the Abu Sayyaf for the freedom of the Norwegian hostage Sekkingstad.

Speaking to reporters, presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said the P50-million ransom paid to the terrorist group was not from the government.

"I'm not privy to that. But it was, I think, it was also raised by third parties, not from the government," Abella said.

Duterte accidentally revealed on Thursday that P50 million had been paid to the Abu Sayyaf group for the freedom of Sekkingstad.

But Abella maintained that the gov-

ernment did not want to encourage others to pay ransom money.

"We don't encourage. If they [engage in negotiation] that is their negotiation," Abella said, adding that government forces were "working quietly" for the release of the Norwegian hostage.

The Abu Sayyaf earlier beheaded two Canadians—John Ridsdel, 68, in April and Robert Hall, 50, in June.

The group kidnapped the two Canadians, Sekkingstad and Filipina Marites Flor from a high-end resort on Samal Island in Davao del Norte in September last year.

Flor was released by the group in June following a successful negotiation led by former Sulu Governor Sakur Tan and Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza, who were tapped by Duterte to secure the woman.

**FERNAN MARASIGAN,
AL JACINTO, CATHERINE S.
VALENTE AND AFP**

27 August 2016

MANILA BULLETIN
THE NATION'S LEADING NEWSPAPER

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Indefinite ceasefire signed

BY AGENCY
FRANCE PRESSE
AND
PHILIPPINE
NEWS AGENCY

Gov't, communist rebels agree
to implement unilateral truces,
speed up peace process

OSLO (AFP) - The Philippine government and communist guerrillas on Friday signed an indefinite ceasefire deal to facilitate peace talks aimed at ending one of Asia's longest-running insurgencies.

"This is a historic and unprecedented event... (but) there

is still a lot of work to be done ahead," President Rodrigo Duterte's peace adviser Jesus Dureza, said at a signing ceremony in Norway, which is mediating the talks.

Both sides agreed to implement unilateral ceasefires which are unlimited in time, something that has never ►6

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been achieved before in the peace process.

Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende described the agreement as a major breakthrough.

The two parties have been meeting in Oslo since Monday, wrapping up with the signing ceremony on Friday.

As a prelude to the talks, each side had agreed to a ceasefire, but the true commitment by the communist side was due to end on Saturday.

The two parties also agreed during their negotiations to "speed up the peace process, and aim to reach the first substantial agreement on economic and social reforms within six months," a statement from the

Norwegian foreign ministry said.

"They plan to follow this up with an agreement on political and constitutional reforms, before a final agreement on ending the armed conflict can be signed."

The two delegations agreed to meet again in Oslo October 8-12.

NDF frees hostages

As a gesture of goodwill for the ongoing peace talks, the NDF released three prisoners of war (POWs).

Two of the POWs – Chief inspector Arnold Ongachen, chief of police of Gov. Generoso Police Station, and Police Officer 1 Michael Grande of

the Banaybanay Police Station, both in Davao Oriental – were released to Sen. Manny Pacquiao.

Non-government organization Exodus for Justice and Peace released a photo of Sen. Pacquiao, flanked by the two freed policemen.

The two police officers were released the same afternoon that President Duterte was scheduled to speak as a guest of honor at the 10th anniversary celebration of the Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom).

Another POW was released in Tandag, Surigao del Sur, yesterday. Details were not immediately available.

The President was expected to meet the freed POWs later.

The Communist Party of the Philippines launched a rebellion in 1968 that has so far claimed the lives of

30,000 people, according to official estimates.

Its armed faction, the New People's Army (NPA), is now believed to have fewer than 4,000 gunmen, down from a peak of 26,000 in the 1980s, when a bloodless revolt ended the 20-year rule of late President Ferdinand Marcos.

Palace pleased with talks

"We are happy with the ongoing peace talks in Oslo, where both parties have promised to complete the work on the comprehensive agreement on socioeconomic reforms within six months," Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said in a press briefing at the Palace Friday.

Abella said GPH chairman and Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III

considers the Comprehensive Agreement on Socio-Economic Reforms (CASER) the "heart and soul" of the peace negotiations.

The CASER, according to Abella, would tackle issues such as agrarian reform, national industrialization, and foreign policy.

The accelerated timetable was agreed upon and submitted to the GPH and NDF panels by their respective working committee and groups, which held simultaneous discussions in the ongoing peace talks in Oslo, Norway.

Bello commended the Reciprocal Working Committee (RWC) and Reciprocal Working Groups (RWG) of both panels "for working hand-in-hand and agreeing on a fixed timetable for the substantive agenda in record time." (With a report from Yas D. Ocampo)

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DUREZA HAILS INDEFINITE CEASEFIRE WITH COMMUNISTS AS 'HISTORIC, UNPRECEDENTED'

Bello: Govt, Reds on 'highway to peace'

O SLO, Norway: The Philippine government and Communist rebels on Friday signed an indefinite ceasefire deal to facilitate peace talks aimed at ending one of Asia's longest-running insurgencies.

"This is a historic and unprecedented event [but] there is still a lot of work to be done ahead," President Rodrigo Duterte's peace adviser, Jesus Dureza, said at a signing ceremony in Norway, which is mediating the talks.

Both sides agreed to implement unilateral, indefinite ceasefires—something that has never been achieved before in the peace process.

Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende described the agreement as a "major breakthrough."

"We are on the highway to peace and we are talking of a timeline of maximum 12 months," Silvestre Bello 3rd, the Philippine government delegation's head of negotiations, told AFP.

The two parties have been meeting in Oslo since Monday, wrapping up their talks with the signing ceremony on Friday.

OFFICE OF THE ARMY CHIEF PUBLIC AFFAIRS – Email add: oacpa.army2012@gmail.com – Tel no. (02) 845-9555 Local: 5285, 5295

➤PeaceA2

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■ PEACE FROM A1

Govt, Reds on 'highway to peace'

As a prelude to the negotiations, both sides had agreed to a cease-fire, but the truce commitment by the Communist side, represented by the National Democratic Front, was due to end on Saturday.

The two parties also agreed to "speed up the peace process, and aim to reach the first substantial agreement on economic and social reforms within six months," a statement from the Norwegian foreign ministry said.

"They plan to follow this up with an agreement on political and constitutional reforms, before a final agreement on ending the armed conflict can be signed."

The two delegations agreed to meet again in Oslo on October 8-12.

'Good atmosphere'

The head of the NDF panel, Luis Jalandoni, was optimistic about the potential for achieving a lasting peace deal.

"We think that the peace talks now can move forward with a good atmosphere and try to move on with the [negotiations on] social and economic reforms, which are vital for addressing the roots of the armed conflict," he told AFP.

The government and the rebels also renewed an agreement that ensures immunity and security for key representatives of the NDF, so that they can take part in the negotiations.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) launched a rebellion in 1968 that has so far claimed the lives of 30,000 people, according to official estimates.

Its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), is now believed to have fewer than 4,000 gunmen, down from a peak of 26,000 in the 1980s, when a bloodless revolt ended the 20-year dictatorship of late president Ferdinand Marcos.

They remain particularly active in rural areas, where they are notorious for extorting money from local businesses. They also regularly attack police and military forces, sometimes targeting them in urban areas.

In 2002, the US State Department designated the CPP and the NPA as terrorist organizations.

Forging peace with the rebels has been the elusive goal of Philippine presidents since a 1986 revolution that toppled dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The force behind the current talks

is Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who took office on June 30 after a landslide election victory.

Hopes for peace deal

On Monday, the Duterte government said it hoped to reach a peace accord within a year.

Duterte, who calls himself a Socialist, hails from Mindanao, the impoverished southern third of the Philippines where two rebellions—Communist and Muslim—have been most active.

He says ending both insurgencies is vital to his plan to curb poverty. He has even sketched the possibility of forming a coalition government with the rebels.

Duterte reputedly has close links to the Communists and is a former university student of Jose Maria Sison, now aged 77, who established the CPP.

The two sides hope to breathe new life into the process by discussing the outstanding issues of social and economic reforms, political and constitutional changes, and an end to hostilities.

Previous peace talks have addressed one issue at a time.

AFP

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Duterte on peace talks with Reds: We're in the best position now

By **Germelina Lacorte**
and **Allan Nawal**
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—President Duterte on Friday said he was ready to talk peace with the communist rebels.

"I have been always ready to talk to the communists. We are in the best position now. There's a window. It is not really very big. But there's a window now for us to take stock of everything," Mr. Duterte said.

The President said his administration was not fighting the communists now, as "they have declared a truce."

"In return, I also ordered a ceasefire," he said.

Mr. Duterte pointed out that he was the first to order a truce with the New People's Army (NPA) "to show my good faith, that I heartily wanted to talk peace [with them]."

But he said a problem cropped up because even if he had declared a ceasefire, the NPA con-

tinued to attack and maim soldiers, and even civilians.

"That was why I lifted the ceasefire and told them to just fight if that was what they wanted to do," he said.

Tired of fighting

But Mr. Duterte said he sensed that the rebels were also tired of fighting.

He said this was also the case with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

"If we can give the MILF the

territory it wanted, which I am inclined to give so that there will be no more trouble. Anyway, it's a definite territory also for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. It stretches a little bit, [but] fine. We still have enough land in the entire Republic of the Philippines to make everybody happy," he said.

Let Nur move around

Mr. Duterte said he still did not know what the MNLF wanted because he had yet to talk with Nur Misuari.

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FACE ON THE TABLE Representatives of the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines issue a joint statement at the close of the first round of peace talks in Oslo, Norway, on Friday. The peace panels are expected to discuss the end of hostilities between the military forces and the New People's Army. EDRE OLALLA/CONTRIBUTOR

He asked the police and the military to allow Misuari to move around "if [he] comes out of his hiding place in Jolo."

"My advice to the Army and the police is let him be. He is old and he would not run away," he said.

Mr. Duterte said it was not advisable to arrest Misuari because if something happened to him in government custody, "we can kiss goodbye peace in that area."

He said Misuari still had influence over the Moro people

and the Tausugs.

As for the Abu Sayyaf, the President made it clear that it was pointless to talk peace with the bandit group.

He admitted, though, that he once admired the Abu Sayyaf when it was still "fighting for freedom."

"You in the Abu Sayyaf I saluted you before, but when you began to slaughter people in front of the camera and now you killed an innocent boy, you lost my respect," Mr. Duterte said.

That is why, he said, he has

ordered the military and the police to "destroy" the bandit group.

"There's a segment of society, the Tausug, the Yakan, who want peace and here you are slaughtering people like chickens," he added, citing the beheading of 18-year-old Patrick Almodovar on Tuesday.

Can finish Abu in 1 week

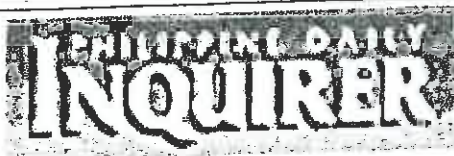
He said now that the Abu Sayyaf had lost his admiration and trust, he had ordered the military and the police to "destroy them because they are criminals."

Mr. Duterte said it was pointless to talk with the Abu Sayyaf because "we will never have peace in that area even if you give them autonomy."

"Kill them, destroy them," he said, referring to his order to the military and the police.

The President said the government had all the resources to annihilate the Abu Sayyaf and finish the group in one week.

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NPA rebels release 3 police captives

TANDAG CITY—Communist New People's Army (NPA) guerrillas in Mindanao separately freed on Friday three of their seven captives, and pledged to release four more remaining captives at the weekend.

Police Officer 1 Richard Yu of the Carmen, Surigao del Sur police station walked to his freedom in a remote village here after 52 days as a prisoner. He was seized in July for his alleged involvement in the illegal drug trade, but was later cleared by the rebels.

"I was never worried when they took me because I knew I was not involved in illegal drugs," said a teary-eyed Yu, whose release,

came as rebel and government negotiators wrapped up peace talks in Oslo, Norway.

Yu's wife, their 9-month-old baby girl, his father, brother and other family members attended the turnover ceremony held in a village outside the city center.

Ka Sandara Sidlakan, spokesperson for the NPA Front 30, said an investigation they had carried out cleared Yu of drug charges.

Yu said while the rebels did not hurt him, he was in handcuffs most of the time, even when he was sleeping.

Also freed on Friday were Chief Insp. Arnold Ongachen, the chief of police of Gov. Generoso, Davao Oriental; and PO1

Michael Grande of the Banaybanay, Davao Oriental police.

Ongachen was taken on May 29 and was accused of involvement in the illegal drug trade in his town, while Grande was abducted in Lupon, Davao Oriental, on June 19.

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines said the other captives, PO2 Caleb Sinaca, PCS Jayroll Bagayas and civilian police employee Rodrigo Angub of the Malimono police station in Surigao del Norte, and SPO3 Sanuago Lamanilao of the Surigao City police, were also set to be freed on Saturday. *Chris Panganiban and Allan Nawal, Inquirer Mindanao*

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A WHOLE LOT OF PEACE—Members of the Philippine government and National Democratic Front panels, their staff and supporters gather for a photo after signing an agreement for an indefinite ceasefire, an 'unprecedented' development in the negotiations between the two sides in Oslo, Norway, on Friday. (Rocky Nazareno)

27 August 2016

The Manila Times

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TRUCE Secretary Silvestre Bello 3rd (left), the government's chief negotiator in peace talks with communist rebels, and National Democratic Front panel chief Luis Jalandoni (right), shake hands in front of Norwegian Foreign Minister Boerge Brende in Oslo on Friday. Bello and Jalandoni signed joint declaration in which the government and the NDF agreed to a unilateral ceasefire without time constraints. APP/NTS 5: anpix/BERIT ROALD

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DEFINING THE NEWS

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6 BODY BAGS. Soldiers arrange bags containing the bodies of members of Abu Sayyaf after their armed encounter at the village of Bongkaong, Patikul town, Sulu in Mindanao on Aug. 26, 2016. Security forces killed six members of Abu Sayyaf including one involved in the kidnapping of two Canadians who were beheaded in the troubled south, the military said. AFP.

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FIREFIGHT Soldiers arrange bags containing the bodies of members of the terrorist Abu Sayyaf group after an armed encounter in Patikul, Sulu on Friday. The military killed six Abu Sayyaf including one involved in the kidnapping of two Canadians who were beheaded in the troubled south.
AFP/STRINGER

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Abu Sayyaf rebel in body bag Philippine soldiers carry a body bag containing the body of a member of militant group Abu Sayyaf after their armed encounter at the village of Bongkaung, Patikul town, Sulu province on the southern island of Mindanao yesterday. Philippine security officials killed six members of militant group Abu Sayyaf including those involved in the kidnapping of two Canadians who were beheaded in the troubled south, the military said.

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11 Abu Sayyaf bandits killed, 17 troopers wounded in Sulu clash

By: Priam F. Nepomuceno and Teofilo P. Garcia Jr., Philippines News Agency
August 26, 2016 6:49 PM



File photo of Abu Sayyaf bandits TV5 SCREENSHOT

CAMP NAVARRO, Zamboanga City -- (UPDATE 8:34 PM) Eleven members of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), including sub-leader Mohammad Said who was allegedly involved in the Samal Island raid, were killed during focused military operations in Patikul town, Sulu province Friday morning.

Initial reports from the military said six ASG members were killed but the pursuing troops have received intelligence information that five more bandits have died.

Seventeen troopers were also injured in the fighting.

The 45-minute clash took place at 6:12 a.m. in Sitio Makaita, Barangay Bunkaong, of the said locality, said Western Mindanao Command (WMC) spokesperson Major Filemon Tan.

Tan said the five who died were among the wounded Abu Sayyaf bandits dragged by their comrades following nearly one hour firefight.

Joint Task Group Sulu troops were conducting operations in the area when they encountered an estimated 100 ASG bandits, triggering a heavy firefight, which killed Said and five other bandits and wounded an undetermined number.

Tan said the remains of the slain bandits were recovered by government troops.

Said, who is also known as "Ama Maas", has five standing warrants of arrest for murder.

"Subject is involved in the abduction of the Samal kidnap victims where two Canadians were beheaded. Along with that group, Maritess Flor was released and Norwegian Kjartan Sikkengstad is still with the ASG," he added.

The intensified offensive against the terrorist group follows President Rodrigo Duterte's order on Wednesday to the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to seek out the lairs of the ASG and "destroy them".

Lt. Gen. Mayoralgo Dela Cruz said some of the soldiers who were wounded in action are currently undergoing medical treatment in Sulu and will later be transported to Zamboanga City for further medication.

Dela Cruz said the others who were slightly wounded opted to stay and continue the pursuit operations.

"Our troops are extremely motivated. They know that this fight against terrorism is greater than themselves. Sa totoo lang, 17 ang sugatan natin pero 10 dun ay slightly wounded lang. Nagpaiwan sila para sumama uli sa operation at ipagpatuloy ang laban," Dela Cruz said.

"Ganyan katindi ang pagtingin namin sa misyon na ito lalo na sa utos ng ating Commander-in-Chief. He gave a specific order. The mission is clear. Seek and destroy the ASG. By all means that's what we are doing and we will not stop until it's done," Dela Cruz added.

President Rodrigo Duterte has ordered the military and police to relentlessly pursue the ASG after the bandits beheaded on Wednesday an 18-year-old boy they seized in July this year in Jolo, Sulu.

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NPA rebels free 3 hostages in Mindanao, vow to release 4 others

TANDAG CITY, Philippines—Communist guerrillas in Mindanao separately freed three of their seven captives on Friday while pledging to release the other four remaining captives on Saturday.

Released were Police Officer 1 Richard Yu of the Carmen, Surigao del Sur police station; Chief Insp. Arnold Ongachen, the chief of police of Gov. Generoso, Davao Oriental; and PO1 Michael Grande of the Banaybanay, Davao Oriental police.

Yu, who was the among first New People's Army (NPA) captives freed in Mindanao as the negotiations resumed in Oslo, Norway, was abducted on July 5 for alleged involvement in the illegal drug trade. The rebels released him to his family in a remote village here.

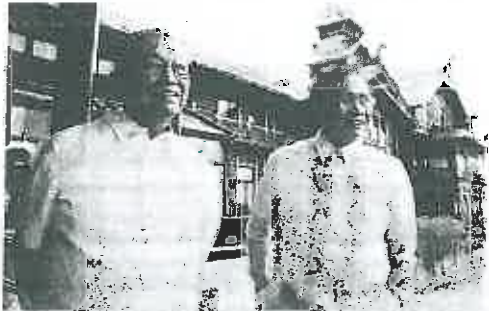
Ongachen and Grande were received by Senator Emmanuel "Manny" Pacquiao and other officials from Sarangani and Davao City in an undisclosed area.

Ongachen was taken captive during an NPA raid at the Gov. Generoso police station on May 29, while Grande was abducted by communist rebels in Lupon, Davao Oriental on June 19. **RAM/rga**

<http://www.philstar.com/>

Communist rebels agree to indefinite cease-fire

By David Keyton (Associated Press) | Updated August 26, 2016 - 6:20pm



At the start of Philippine peace negotiations hosted by Norway government Monday Aug. 22, 2016 in Oslo, Norway, with Jose Maria Sison of the National Democratic Front of the Philippines left and Philippine peace minister Jesus Dureza, as government officials and rebels participate in the peace negotiations. Berit Roald / NTB scanpix via AP

OSLO, Norway (UPDATED 7:63 p.m.) — Philippine communist rebels announced an indefinite cease-fire Friday in peace talks aimed at ending one of Asia's longest-running insurgencies.

The Maoist rebels announced their agreement to put down their arms in a joint statement with Philippine government officials at the end of weeklong talks in Norway.

The government announced its own cease-fire earlier.

Some 150,000 people have died in the conflict that began almost half a century ago.



Representative of the Philippine government, Jesus Dureza, left, Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs Boerge Brende and representative of the communist movement the National Democratic Front of the Philippines Luis Jalandoni, after the signing of a joint declaration in which both parties undertake cease-fires without time constraints. Berit Roald/NTB via AP

Both sides said they had made important progress in the talks in Oslo in advancing a peace process that has dragged on for decades.

"The joint statement we are signing manifests the historic significance of what we have achieved," said Jose Maria Sison, founder of the Philippines Communist Party.

Philippines presidential peace adviser Jesus Dureza called the statement a "historic and unprecedented event" and gave credit to President Rodrigo Duterte.

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Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

In the statement, the two sides reaffirmed previous agreements and agreed to discuss the release of detainees and who should get immunity to take part in the talks. Negotiators said they aim to complete the peace talks in nine to 12 months.

Although less numerous and less violent than Muslim separatist rebels in the country's south, the Maoists have fought and outlived successive Philippine administrations for nearly 50 years, holding out against constant military and police offensives. They draw support from those dissatisfied with economic inequality, especially in the countryside, and the Philippines' alliance with the U.S.

<http://www.inquirer.net/>

PH gov't, NDF sign joint statement; end of talks eyed in 1 year

Kristine Angeli Sabillo

The Philippine government and the National Democratic Front (NDF) on Friday signed a joint statement to mark the culmination of the first round of formal peace talks and their commitment to continue the ceasefire. The peace panels of the two parties signed the joint statement during a press conference in Oslo, Norway, where the negotiations were held.

Norwegian facilitator Elizabeth Slatum read the summary of the statement, which enumerated the issues agreed upon by the government and the NDF.

The updates mentioned were already shared with the media previously. These include the reaffirmation of previously signed agreements, the reconstitution of the list of people protected by the Joint Agreement for Security and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG), the acceleration of the peace process, the promise to release imprisoned NDF consultants and the issuance of an amnesty proclamation for the release of political prisoners. The statement said the Communist Party of the Philippines and its political arm, the NDF, will also "declare and issue an indefinite unilateral ceasefire order" to the New People's Army.

CPP founder and NDF chief political consultant Jose Maria "Joma" Sison said the current unilateral ceasefire will give way to a unilateral interim ceasefire.

The ceasefire orders of both parties will later be reconciled during a bilateral talk, he said.

The two panels will meet again for the next round of talks on October 8 to 12.

Labor Secretary Silvestre Bello III said that there was a huge possibility that the negotiations would be concluded "within the period of 9 to 12 months."

Presidential Peace Adviser Jesus Dureza called the event "unprecedented."

"There's still a lot of work to be done ahead... Let us all stay the course together no matter what," he said.

Sison said among the key factors that resulted in the success of the first round of talks was the "political will and determination" of President Rodrigo Duterte and the NDF leadership.

In earlier interviews with [INQUIRER.net](http://www.inquirer.net/), Sison said working groups will simultaneously hold meetings for the drafting of the three remaining agreements on socioeconomic reforms, political and economic reforms, and end of hostilities and disposition of forces. He said the drafts would likely be available in six months.

Of the four agreements to be finalized by the two parties, only the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (Carhrihl) has been approved in the past. **RAM/rga**

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www.retiredanalyst.blogspot.com

Govt, reds agree on indefinite truce

From InterAksyon (Aug 26)

OSLO, Norway - The Philippine government and Communist guerrillas have agreed an indefinite extension to a ceasefire to facilitate talks on a peace deal, Norway, which is playing the role of intermediary, announced Friday.

Representatives of the government peace panel and the Communist Party of the Philippines' National Democratic Front on Friday signed the indefinite cease fire agreement as the first round of the revived formal peace talks came to a close.

"This is a historic and unprecedented event ... (but) there is still a lot of work to be done ahead," President Rodrigo Duterte's peace adviser, Jesus Dureza, said at a signing ceremony in Norway, which is mediating the talks.

Both sides agreed to implement unilateral cease fires which are unlimited in time, something that has never been achieved before in the peace process.

Norwegian Foreign Minister Borge Brende described the agreement as a "major breakthrough."

The two panels meet again for the next round of negotiations this October.

As a prelude, the two sides had each agreed to a ceasefire, but the truce commitment by the Communist side was due to end on Saturday.

At stake is the aim of ending one of Asia's longest-running insurgencies.

The Communist Party of the Philippines launched a rebellion in 1968 that has so far claimed the lives of 30,000 people, according to official estimates.

Its armed faction, the New People's Army (NPA), is now believed to have fewer than 4,000 gunmen, down from a peak of 26,000 in the 1980s, when a bloodless revolt ended the 20-year dictatorship of late president Ferdinand Marcos.

They remain particularly active in rural areas, where they are notorious for extorting money from local businesses. They also regularly attack police and military forces, sometimes targeting them in urban areas.

In 2002, the US State Department designated the Communist Party and the NPA foreign terrorist organisations.

Elusive peace

Forging peace with the rebels has been the elusive goal of Philippine presidents since the 1986 "People Power" revolution that toppled dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The force behind the current talks is Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who took office on June 30 after a landslide election victory.

On Monday, his government said it hoped to reach a peace accord within a year.

Duterte, who calls himself a Socialist, hails from Mindanao, the impoverished southern third of the Philippines

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Army vision: By 2028, a world-class Army that is a source of national pride.

where two rebellions -- Communist and Muslim -- have been most active.

He says ending both insurgencies is vital to his plan to curb poverty. He has even sketched the possibility of forming a coalition government with the rebels.

Duterte reputedly has close links to the Communists and is a former university student of Jose Maria Sison, now aged 77, who established the party.

The two sides hope to breathe new life into the process by discussing simultaneously the outstanding issues of social and economic reforms, political and constitutional changes, and an end to hostilities.

Previous peace talks have addressed one issue at a time.

Among the issues are the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law or CARHRIHL, following the conclusion of the first of the talks' four substantive agenda, and what has turned out to be the most problematic, the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees, or JASIG, which protects negotiators, their consultants and staff from arrest and prosecution for the duration of the negotiations.

JASIG is actually an important agreement since it would allow negotiators and consultants of both parties to visit their constituencies even in contentious areas to solicit their inputs on the peace process.

Ironically, these major agreements were negotiated and signed under the presidency of Fidel Ramos, the former soldier who helped implement the 14-year Marcos dictatorship until he and then Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile broke away and helped spark the 1986 People Power uprising.

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<http://dwdd.com.ph/>

SOLIDARITY | DSWD Hails Lumad Groups for support of Gov't's Peace Talks

Alvin Santiago



Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Judy M. Taguiwalo joins the leaders of the Lumad and Moro groups as they express their unity pact in pursuit of peace and development in their ancestral homes during the celebration of the Solidarity Festival in Koronadal, South Cotabato.

MANILA (DWDD) – Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Secretary Judy Taguiwalo joined thousands of Lumad and other tribal groups in Koronadal, South Cotabato, as they celebrated on Wednesday, August 24, their Solidarity Festival through a "Sadyandi," or unity pact.

The Sadyandi, a Lumad term, was participated in by eight tribes and Moro groups who expressed their support for the on-going peace talks between the government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP).

In her message to the Lumad and other IPs, Sec. Taguiwalo expressed solidarity with them and their struggle against destructive mining and logging activities that have resulted in the mass displacement of many Lumad and farmers' communities. She also expressed her support for their campaigns in defense of their human rights, including their efforts to reclaim and return to their ancestral lands that are being taken over by mining companies, corporate plantations, and logging companies.

In the meantime, Sec. Taguiwalo also explained that the DSWD wants to improve the services and assistance it can provide to Lumad communities. "Specifically we are working with other government agencies such as the Department of Education to build more schools for Lumad children and youth, and to ensure that the projects of the DSWD do not go against the welfare and culture of our Lumad brothers and sisters. We support their struggle to recover and return to their ancestral lands," she said.

Sec. Taguiwalo explained that the DSWD aims to provide services to all marginalized sectors and their communities. The department's new slogan is "Maagap, Mapagkalinga at May Malasakit na Serbisyo sa publiko (efficient, caring and compassionate service)."

She also assured them of President Duterte's support for their plight. She shared that the President has specifically mentioned that he does not want the Kidapawan clash to be repeated.

"The peace talks between our government and the NDFP aim to bring to the table the substantive agenda for peace based on social justice. It is good that the Lumad and other IP communities support the peace negotiations and that they themselves are issuing their calls to both parties. We all want peace, and we all want genuine change in the Philippines," she said.

In her first day as DSWD head, Sec. Taguiwalo said that under her leadership, the Department will exert full efforts to address and remedy the impact of military operations on the livelihood, safety, security, schools and welfare of farmers and Lumad; and most importantly help displaced Lumad return to their ancestral lands. SMS / MCA

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Dutertespeak: Tsuk-tsak, shabulize, talkalese

By Alexis Romero (The Philippine Star) | Updated August 26, 2016 - 9:02am



President Rodrigo Duterte talks to the media at the Magsaysay Fruit Vendors Association Stalls in Davao City on Aug. 24, 2016. PPD/Robinson Nifal

MANILA, Philippines — If you've gone buang because you have been shabulized, don't try to meet with him because no amount of talkalese would soften his stance.

If you understand the sentence above, chances are you have been regularly listening to President Duterte's speeches.

Duterte chose simple, colloquial words that even the uneducated can easily understand.

Presidential spokesman Ernesto Abella said Duterte uses simpler and popular words because that is what he is — a common man.

Duterte can pose a challenge for non-Bisayan speaking journalists or academics who monitor government affairs.

Some Bisayan words have gone mainstream or at least are gaining exposure because of Duterte.

During a visit to a military hospital, Duterte asked about a soldier's *utin* or genitals.

He frequently calls his critics *buang* or crazy.

In a speech at the Armed Forces Medical Center in Quezon City last Aug. 2, Duterte used a Bisayan expression to criticize corruption in procurement.

"I asked the doctor what's the best (equipment)?" he said. "Those who said GOA (Commission on Audit) favors the lowest bid. Ah lo-lo mo. You make noise and yet your net product is substandard."

Lo-lo mo literally means to jack off, but it really depends on how it was used. The expression, however, is usually delivered by exasperated persons and can be an equivalent of "tell it to the Marines" or the Tagalog "gago (stupid)."

During a camp visit in Cotabato City last Aug. 18, Duterte lamented that the pipes of a military hospital were broken and that the *tubol* or feces resurfaced.

While known for his macho image, Duterte has no qualms about using gay lingo.

When he talked about the alleged romantic affairs of his nemesis, Sen. Lella de Lima, he uttered the word "tsuk-tsak," which means sex.

"They call it tsuk-tsak," he said last Wednesday. "What is there to say? Do I have to explain it (using a) dictionary?"

But Duterte not only uses colorful language. He also invents words.

During a meeting with editors and reporters of The STAR last Aug. 3, he said former president Fidel Ramos would do "talkalese" as special envoy to China.

While there is no such word in the dictionary, it was clear that Duterte was referring to Ramos' role as icebreaker on the West Philippine Sea dispute.

Duterte also described Iloilo as the most "shabulized" province in the country last Aug. 7.

He was talking about the supposed rampant sale and distribution of illegal drugs in the Western Visayas province.

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