

Oslo Joint Communiqué

We, the Negotiating Panels of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), are pleased to announce that we have successfully resumed the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations and conducted working sessions in Oslo, Norway from 27 to 30 April 2001.

We have exchanged the pertinent documents on the reinstatement of the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG) and the approval by our respective principals of the 09 March 2001 Joint Statement that affirms the validity and binding character of the ten bilateral agreements entered into between the GRP and the NDFP from 1 September 1992 to 7 August 1998.

We are determined to pursue the implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHRIHL) as far as practicable to promote the peace negotiations.

Following our frank exchange of information and views, we have agreed to work for the accelerated release of prisoners and detainees contained in the list provided by human rights organizations, repeal of repressive decrees, return of internally displaced families and communities to their homes and land and other measures. The panels have also discussed goodwill and confidence-building measures.

Our respective Reciprocal Working Committees on Social and Economic Reforms (RWC-SER) have exchanged their updated drafts and have discussed their work schedules.

We have agreed to exert best efforts to complete the peace negotiations in eighteen months and forge the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms in six months. Subcommittees composed of Filipino experts and sectoral representatives shall assist their respective RWC-SERs.

We are grateful to the Royal Government of Norway, particularly its Foreign Ministry for hosting the resumption of the peace negotiations in Oslo. We thank the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Raymond Johansen for gracing the opening ceremonies, Director General Tor Christian Hildan for welcoming our delegations, Special Advisors Erik Solheim and Arne Aasheim for sharing the experiences of the Norwegian government in peace negotiations and Secretary General of Foreign Affairs Bjame Lindstrom for listening to our assessment of the round of talks.

We have agreed to propose to the Royal Government of Norway to have Oslo, Norway as the venue for the next round of talks in June 2001.

The GRP Negotiating Panel was headed by Atty. Silvestre H. Bello III as chairperson, with Agrarian Reform Secretary Hemani A. Braganza, Atty. Rene V. Samiento, Ms. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel, and Mr. Jose Luis Gascon as members.

The GRP RWC-SER was headed by Agrarian Reform Secretary Hemani A. Braganza and Ms. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel as co-chairpersons, with Ms. Karen




Tañada and Atty. Sedfrey M. Candelaria as members. The GRP-SER was assisted by a Technical Working Group for SER: Assistant Secretary Danilo L. Encinas from the Office of the President, as Head; with the following as members: Assistant Secretary Augusto Quijano from the Department of Agrarian Reform, Assistant Secretary Cerge M. Remonde from the Office of Press Secretary and Assistant-Director General Nestor R. Mijares from the National Economic and Development Authority. Ms. Ma. Caria Munsayac-Villarta served as Head of the GRP Panel Secretariat, with staff support from Ferdinand G. Jovita and Gloria S. Ocampo.

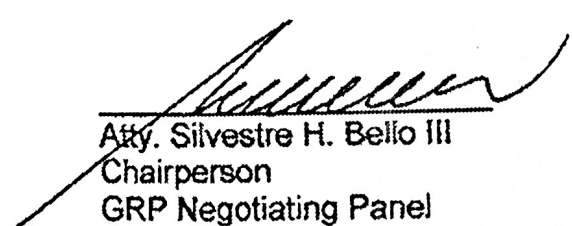
The NDFP Negotiating Panel was headed by Mr. Luis G. Jalandoni as chairperson, with Mr. Fidel V. Agcaoili, Ms. Coni Ledesma and Mr. Asterio Palima as members.

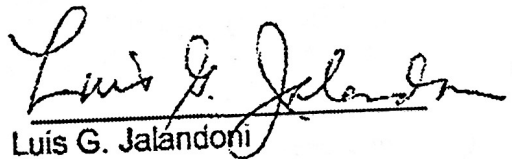
The NDFP RWC-SER was headed by Ms. Julieta de Lima as chairperson, with Messrs. Rafael Baylasis and Sotero Llamas as members-consultants. Also acting as consultant and legal consultant were Prof. Edberto Villegas and Atty. Marie Yuvienco, respectively.

The NDFP Panel and RWC-SER were also assisted by Chief Political Consultant Prof. Jose Ma. Sison and consultant Mr. Danilo F. Borjal. Atty. Romeo T. Capulong acted as General Counsel with Attys. Edre Olalia and Rommel-Voltaire Quizon as legal consultants.

There were eleven resource persons (experts and sectoral representatives) and two volunteer staff members, who are all covered by Article IV of the Joint Agreement on the Ground Rules of the Formal Meetings, which allows each negotiating panel to avail itself of experts as consultants, irrespective of their political affiliation, to assist the Panel.

Oslo, Norway: 30 April 2001.


Atty. Silvestre H. Bello III
Chairperson
GRP Negotiating Panel


Luis G. Jalandoni
Chairperson
NDFP Negotiating Panel