

JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

THE GRP AND MILF SUB-COMMITTEE ON CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES CONVENED AT THE NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY IN COTABATO CITY ON SEPTEMBER 2, 1997 TO RESUME THE PEACE NEGOTIATION PURSUANT TO THE AGREEMENT ON THE GENERAL CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES SIGNED BY THE GRP AND MILF PEACE PANELS ON JULY 18, 1997 IN CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY.

RECOGNIZING THE NEED TO FURTHER GIVE MEANING AND SUBSTANCE TO THE GENERAL CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES BY HASTENING THE RETURN OF THE EVACUEES IN PIKIT, NORTH COTABATO AND PAGALUNGAN, MAGUINDANAO, THE GRP-MILF SUB-COMMITTEES ON CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING:

1. THE GRP WILL GRADUALLY REPOSITION ITS FORCES IN RAJAMUDA AND ITS ENVIRONS TO THEIR ORIGINAL POSITIONS BEFORE JUNE 18, 1997 AND WILL CONTINUE TO SECURE THE COTABATO CITY- DAVAO CITY HIGHWAY TO INSURE THE SAFETY OF TRAVELERS. THE GRADUAL REPOSITIONING OF THE GRP FORCES SHALL BE COMPLETED WITHIN FIFTEEN (15) DAYS AFTER THE SIGNING OF THIS AGREEMENT;

2. THE GRP AND MILF SHALL ENCOURAGE THE RETURN OF EVACUEES TO THEIR RESPECTIVE RESIDENCES. MILF ELEMENTS WHO ARE RESIDENTS OF THE AREA SHALL BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO THEIR HOMES IMMEDIATELY, HOWEVER, THEY WILL NOT ESTABLISH MILITARY OUTPOSTS/POSITIONS NOR DISPLAY FIREARMS.

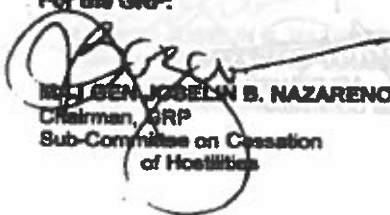
3. LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE AFOREMENTIONED AREAS SHALL BE PRIMARILY UNDERTAKEN BY THE GRP AUTHORITIES, PROVIDED, HOWEVER, THAT BEFORE THE CONDUCT THEREOF, PWGR COORDINATION/CONSULTATION SHALL BE MADE WITH THE NEAREST MILF DESIGNATED LIAISON IN THE AREA.

THIS AGREEMENT SHALL TAKE EFFECT ON THE 4th DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1997.


THE DETAILS OF THE AGREEMENT WHICH SHALL DEFINE THE IMPLEMENTING GROUND RULES WERE FURTHER DISCUSSED BY BOTH PANELS DURING THE MEETING. THE GROUND RULES SHALL BE FINALIZED DURING THE SCHEDULED MEETING ON A LATER DATE.

DONE ON 02 SEPTEMBER 1997 AT NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY, COTABATO CITY.

For the GRP:


BENJO BELIN B. NAZARENO, AFP
Chairman, GRP
Sub-Committee on Cessation
of Hostilities

For the MILF:


ATTY. OMAR S. USMAN
MILF Legal Counsel and
Acting Chairman, MILF
Sub-Committee on Cessation
of Hostilities