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Press Release

Launch of EU co-funded project on the rights of the Indigenous Peoples

The Philippines Office of Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung in Manila is pleased to announce the launch of a new EU co-funded project titled 'Recognition of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao for their Empowerment and Sustainable Development' in February 2012.

Together with its project partners *Institute for Autonomy and Governance* (IAG) and *Development Consultants, Inc.* (DEVCON), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung will carry out this project in the five provinces of Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and Lanao del Norte. Within a period of three years, the project team will work towards the protection and promotion of rights of Indigenous Peoples (IP) in the ARMM.

The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) introduced in 1997 granted fundamental rights such as ancestral domains, cultural integrity, self-governance and empowerment, as well as social justice and human rights to the IP population in the Philippines. However, in the ARMM marginalized ethnic groups have not been able to fully enjoy and exercise these fundamental rights as the IPRA does not apply in the ARMM. It is these discriminating politico-administrative structures that leave about half a million IP (comprising up to 20 per cent of the ARMM constituency) at a disadvantage and unequal before the law. We seek the formulation and the implementation of an Ancestral Domain Sustainable Development and Protection Plan (ADSDPP), as an instrument of empowerment that should then be integrated into local development plans.

With a cross-cutting approach, the project shall specifically address the absence of an enabling law in the ARMM that recognizes the IP's rights and social justice as embodied in the IPRA law, the 1987 Philippine Constitution and other existing international law for IP's. Our activities will focus on capacity building for the empowerment and strengthening of IP self-governance as well as advocacy for socio-legal and administrative reforms in the ARMM. The overall objective of this project is the development of IP communities in the ARMM that recognize and practice the rights of minorities at all levels and the improvement of living conditions of the most marginalized population.

For further information please contact Miriam Fischer (contact details below).



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Institute for
Autonomy and
Governance



Development
Consultants Inc.
DEVCON

'Recognition of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao for the Empowerment and Sustainable Development' (IPDEV) is a project implemented by the consortium: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V., Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG) and DEVCON Development Consultants Inc.