

PRESS RELEASE

June 29, 2011

ARMM stakeholders present roadmap to region's recovery

“In the short period of a transition government, it is important to work on restoring the dignity of the people in ARMM, through the restitution of the rule of law, transparency and good governance.”

Usec. Dimasangkay Pundato, Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, underscores the ideal mindset of the regional government for the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, as he speaks to the different stakeholders of the beleaguered Mindanao area during the forum entitled “The ARMM in the next 21 Months and Beyond” in Diliman, Quezon City, yesterday.

The forum, sponsored by the Centrist Democracy Political Institute (CDPI), Centrist Democratic Movement (CDM), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), People's Action Against Corruption (PAAC), and Kaya Natin (Movement for Good Governance and Leadership), discussed the results of years of studies and consultations with the peoples of the ARMM.

“Once and for all we need to sit down as one and solve our own problem that we ourselves created; that is what autonomy is all about,” Pundato added.

ARMM stands to get a new lease on life as President Benigno “PNoy” Aquino III is poised to sign the postponement of the ARMM elections in August and synchronizing it with the 2013 mid-term national elections.

Meanwhile, Mussolini Lidasan, CDM Vice President and People's Action Against Corruption stalwart, said, “ARMM has already reached rock bottom with the kind of governance it has seen in the past. The Muslim peoples of the region, who were denied of their God-given right for a dignified life by the insecurities of self-serving politicians, have already spoken through the results of consultations we present to you today.”

Basic needs such as food, education and security were heavily neglected by past officials, who ruled with might, terror and money to stay in power in order to live a life in luxury.

“The collective yearning of the citizens and their families and their evident basic needs offer a roadmap for the region's progress. We offer, to whoever sits as ARMM Governor, this roadmap to set the tone for ARMM's next 21 months and beyond,” he continued.

Moreover, CDPI Program Manager, Dino Badilla said, “The President has a choice among the pool of leaders, who can best serve ARMM. Bloodshed has always been connected to the ARMM elections; but now he stands in the threshold of Philippine history to change the course of that story.”

“We believe that PNoy's choice should be someone who has lived and struggled for the rights of the people in ARMM. The fate of the ARMM people; their deliverance from all their past hardships, lies on PNoy's hands, as he sets in ink the postponement of the ARMM elections and appoint a well-meaning, God-fearing, and working governor,” he added. (end)