

A CRY FOR PEACE IN MINDANAO

We are Muslim and Christian leaders and representatives of civil society from Mindanao, gathered with the Community of Sant'Egidio at the presence of Cardinal Orlando Quevedo, OMI, and Chairman Al Hajj Murad Ebrahim who attended the international meeting "Paths of Peace" convened by Sant'Egidio in Germany

Our hearts cry for peace. We felt the sufferings of the displaced people of Marawi and the whole region, particularly the ongoing ordeal of innocent hostages inside the city. We experienced helplessness as well as righteous indignation while the weapons of destruction daily increase the death toll of combatants and civilians.

Marawi dramatizes for us three interconnected challenges to peace in Mindanao: violent extremism and terrorism; the uncertainties of the implementation of the political peace process; the crucial role of religious leaders and communities in the re-building and development of Marawi.

In this light, we make the following declarations :

1. The conflict in Marawi is not a religious war; it is a war against terrorism and violent extremism. The many stories of mutual assistance between Muslims and Christians attest the rejection of this evil. These stories of solidarity likewise witness the Filipinos' sense of sharing a common humanity with any one in need, regardless of creed or community.
2. We call for inclusion of peace education at all levels in our schools, madaris and communities. We need to build a Culture of Peace based on personal integrity, respect for human rights, , inter-cultural dialogue, care for the environment, peaceful coexistence and eradication of poverty. Islam and Christianity are religions of peace. We recall the words of Andrea Riccardi, founder of Sant'Egidio, that "war is the mother of all poverty."
3. Inter-faith and intra-faith dialogue should be promoted as a means of understanding and appreciating other cultures and religions and enhancing cooperation. This dialogue must move from the highest level to the grassroots levels of society. Dialogue starts with self-examination to remove biases and prejudices.
4. We welcome current efforts at writing a more inclusive history of Mindanao that explore the root causes of conflict and depicts significant events and personalities from Muslim and indigenous people communities.

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We commit ourselves to reach out to our youth, who will be the future leaders of our Mindanao communities. They have so much to contribute towards building our communities with a renewed vision of Mindanao as our shared homeland.

We appeal to our legislators and government officials to prioritize and expedite the passage of the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL). This has been delayed since the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) in March 2014. An approved BBL shall provide a positive alternative to violent extremism.

We fully endorse the call of Duyog Marawi (“accompany Marawi”), spearheaded by the Prelature of St. Mary in Marawi together with local government units and civil society organizations. The united efforts of volunteers of different faiths are the best example of working and living together in peace and solidarity.

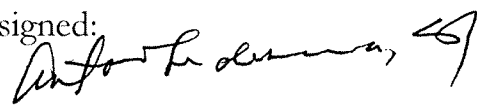
As religious leaders and representatives of civil society we commit ourselves to this declaration.

We express our profound gratitude to the community of Sant’Egidio for initiating this informal dialogue on the peace process in Mindanao and we ask the same Community to carry on this conversation with all those who seek peace.

May the Compassion and Mercy of Almighty God, that we are asked to share with others, be our light and hope in these moments of crisis.

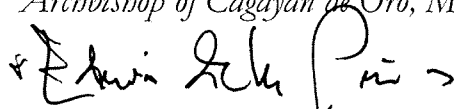
Rome, Sant’Egidio, 15th September 2017

Have signed:

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H.E. Msgr. Anthony Ledesma

Archbishop of Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao, Philippines

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H.E. Msgr. Edwin de la Peña

Bishop of Marawi, Lanao del Sur, Mindanao, Philippines



Ms. Mona Liza Pangan

Witness from Marawi, Lanao de Sur, Mindanao, Philippines

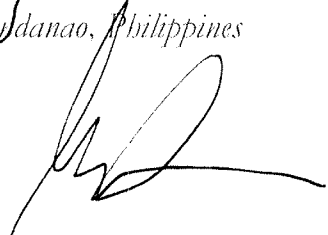
H.E. Dr. Said Zamahsari Salendab
Secretary General of the Hayatul Ulama in Mindanao, Philippines



Dr. Ustadz Abdulmuhmin Mujahid
Executive Director of the Regional Darul Ifta-ARMM, Mindanao, Philippines



Dr. Mauro Garofalo
Head of International Relations, Community of Sant'Egidio



Prof. Alberto Quattrucci
Secretary General of Peoples and Religions, Community of Sant'Egidio

