



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Republic of the Philippines

**United Bangsamoro Justice Party**

*A principled and genuine political party*



**Office of the Vice President and for Central Mindanao**

#### **UBJP STATEMENT**

August 31, 2025

#### **UBJP SUPPORTS COMELEC en banc DECISION TO ELECT 73 MEMBERS OF THE PARLIAMENT**

The United Bangsamoro Justice Party (UBJP) fully supports the recent decision by the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) en banc to proceed with the election of 73 Members of Parliament this coming October 13, 2025. This decision is a necessary and pragmatic response to the Bangsamoro Parliament's belated enactment of Bangsamoro Autonomy Act (BAA) No. 77, which reconstituted parliamentary districts just 44 days before the election.

The Comelec cannot be forced to adopt BAA No. 77 as it could endanger the integrity of the upcoming election. Moreover, it may also unwittingly serve desperate attempts to postpone the election which will not only disenfranchise over two million voters in the BARMM but also derail the successful implementation of the peace process.

As early as May 2025 COMELEC Chairman George Erwin Garcia had already urged the Bangsamoro Parliament to expedite the reallocation of the 32 parliamentary district seats, but unfortunately, the Parliament failed to act in a timely manner.

On July 15, 2025, the COMELEC issued a statement announcing that it will proceed with the conduct of the October 13, 2025 BARMM Parliamentary Elections with only 73 seats to be voted. This was primarily issued to remind the Parliament to pass the redistricting law with utmost urgency. COMELEC Chairman George Erwin Garcia made it clear that the passage of this law is a time-sensitive matter, with a direct impact on the election timeline. A new districting law would necessitate new filing of candidacies and the reprinting of ballots which will be a logistical impossibility with the current schedule. Regrettably, the month of July had passed without the Bangsamoro Parliament passing this critical legislation.

On August 19, 2025, a mere nine days before the start of the campaign period, the Bangsamoro Parliament finally acted. In a last-minute move, they passed Parliament Bill No. 351, which amended Bangsamoro Autonomy Act No. 58 to re-apportion the seven parliamentary district seats originally allocated for Sulu. It took the Interim Chief Minister another nine days on August 28, 2025, 44 days from the scheduled election to sign Bangsamoro Autonomy Act No. 77.

This eleventh-hour legislation forced the COMELEC to immediately suspend the printing of ballots. The new law requires a complete redesign and re-allocation of ballots, a monumental task that now looms over the election with the campaign period just around the corner.

With all due respect to the Bangsamoro Parliament, it cannot demand for the immediate adoption of this new law when they are the very architects of the delay. One who seeks equity must come with clean hands.

To the Philippine Government and the international community, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) stands resolute in its commitment under the historic Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro. Through the UBJP we declare our unwavering readiness to submit to the will of the Bangsamoro people in a clean, peaceful, and credible election.

We call upon our fellow Bangsamoro leaders to rise to this historic moment. Cease any attempts to undermine the democratic process. Allow the COMELEC to exercise its solemn constitutional mandate and administer the first-ever Parliamentary election on October 13, 2025, as scheduled.

Our commitment to peace is not conditional on victory. The MILF's duty is to honor our solemn obligation to implement the peace agreement. We are committed to uphold the rule of law and democracy.

In the supreme interest of peace, let the Bangsamoro people—and only the Bangsamoro people—decide their political future. Let them finally exercise their right to self-determination. Let us not fail them now.