

(This paper was presented during the SEACSN Conference 2004: "Issues and Challenges for Peace and Conflict Resolution in Southeast Asia", at Shangri-La Hotel, Penang, Malaysia on 12-15 January 2004)

Muslim Minority in the Philippines

By Abhoud Syed M. Lingga
Executive Director, Institute of Bangsamoro Studies

How the Muslims as a minority situate themselves within the Philippine national community is the subject of discussion in this paper. A look into their views on their relations with the national community is helpful in understanding the conflict in Mindanao for this is the impetus in their assertion for their right to self-determination.

Minority Communities

We find minority communities within the borders of many countries today. These minority communities can be classified broadly into three major categories (Che Man 1990:1).

The **minority migrant populations** are in the first category. During the colonial period, workers were recruited from other colonies to work in plantations, mining and other industries. In recent years, migration of peoples who are induced by pull factors like economic opportunities and liberal policies of countries of destination and the push factors in their own countries like violent conflicts, lack of economic opportunities and repressive government policies are observable. The migrant populations have no attachment to any portion of the territory of the host country. Their concerns are the acceptability by and equal rights with the dominant majority, and equal access to social services and economic opportunities.

The second category is the **indigenous peoples** who became minority in their homelands as the result of colonial settlements. There are around 300 million of them in more than seventy countries. These peoples have retained their social, cultural, economic and political way of life but face the threat of being assimilated with the majority populations. The aspirations of the indigenous peoples are to '*exercise control over their own institutions, ways of life and economic development and to maintain and develop their identities, languages and religions, within the framework of the States in which they live*' (International Labor Organization 1989).

Peoples who were incorporated into the new nation-states after the departure of the colonial powers are under the third category. Before colonization these peoples had their political institutions, administrative system, and trade and international relations with other countries. Colonial intrusions in their territories were not welcomed and often met with resistance. When the colonial powers granted independence to their colonies the territories of these peoples were incorporated into the new nation-states. In some cases, their territories became parts of more than one country. With their history of political independence and distinct way of life, these peoples claim they belong to different nations from the majority. Their identities are always link to their traditional homeland. They feel uncomfortable living within the borders of the new nation-states, which they perceived as successor-in-interest of the colonial powers, and relish the memory of their long history of political independence that they want to revive in order to establish system of life in accordance with their world view, culture, religion and social norms.

Identity and Homeland

The Muslims in the Philippines consist of thirteen ethno-linguistics groups: Iranun, Magindanaon, Maranao, Tao-Sug, Sama, Yakan, Jama Mapun, Ka'agan, Kalibugan, Sangil, Molbog, Palawani and Badjao. There are also Muslims among the other indigenous peoples of Mindanao like the Teduray, Manobo, Bla-an, Higaonon, Subanen, T'boli, and others. In recent years, significant number of people from Luzon and Visayas and migrant communities in Mindanao converted to Islam.

The Muslims who traditionally inhabited Mindanao, the islands of Basilan and Palawan, and the Sulu and Tawi-Tawi archipelago in the south of the Philippines identify themselves as Bangsamoro. The name Moro was given by the Spanish colonizers to the Muslims in Mindanao whom they found to have the same religion and way of life with the Muslims of North Africa who ruled the Iberian Peninsula for centuries. The Malay word *bangsa*, which means nation, was prefixed to suggest distinct nationhood. The term has find place in official documents of the Organization of Islamic Conference (2001) and agreements between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).¹

The homeland of the Bangsamoro people consisted of the territories under the jurisdiction of their governments before the emergence of the Philippine state. At the height of its power, the Sulu Sultanate exercised sovereignty over the present day provinces of Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Palawan, Basilan and the Malaysian state of Sabah (North Borneo). The territory of the Magindanaw Sultanate included Maguindanao province, the coastal areas of the provinces of Sultan Kudarat, South Cotabato, Sarangani, parts of Lanao provinces, Davao del Sur and Davao Oriental, and the eastern part of Zamboanga del Sur. The Datu Dakula of Sibugay, who ruled the Sibugay autonomous region under the

Magindanaw Sultanate, exercised jurisdiction over Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga City and the western part of Zamboanga del Sur. The Rajah of Buayan ruled North Cotabato, the upper valley of Maguindanao and the interior areas of Sultan Kudarat and South Cotabato and some parts of Bukidnon. The *Pat a Pangampong ko Ranao* (confederation of the four lake-based emirates) ruled the interior parts of Lanao del Sur, Lanao del Norte, and parts of Bukidnon, Agusan, and eastern and western Misamis provinces. The small sultanate of Kabuntalan separates the domains of Magindanaw and Buayan.

As the result of the colonial policy of the Philippine government to reduce the Bangsamoro into minority by encouraging Filipino settlers from the north to settle in their traditional homeland, the Bangsamoro are now confined in the provinces of Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Basilan, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao, and some municipalities of Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga del Norte, Lanao del Norte, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, South Cotabato, Sarangani, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, Davao del Norte, Compostela Valley and Palawan. Although their territory was significantly reduced but the Bangsamoro people continuously assert their right over their homeland, which gain implied recognition by the government.²

Ties with the Muslim World

From the formation of the Muslim community in Mindanao and Sulu up to the middle of the twentieth century the ties of the Muslims in the Philippines with the Muslim world was through the Muslims in Southeast Asian. This was because of the important role played by some members of the ruling families in the region in the expansion of Islam in the Philippines. The fact that the Bangsamoro homeland and people are parts of *dunia Melayu*, and they have common religion and shared many cultural practices with the Muslims in the region explains this close ties. The geographic location of Mindanao and Sulu, which are strategically located along the trade route, facilitated contact and communication with other Muslim principalities in the region. In fact, Jolo was a bustling trading center before the Spanish colonizers founded Manila. Their contacts with Arab, Persian and Indian Muslims were limited to traders and missionaries who came for visits, although some stayed after marrying local women.

The coming of Islam to the Philippines according to Majul (1999: 39-84) was an instance of the Islamization of the Malay world in Southeast Asia. By the end of thirteenth century there was already a settlement or colony of foreign Muslims in Sulu who were composed probably of the families of Muslim traders and missionaries who married local women and few converts (Majul 1999: 68). When Islam actually arrived in Mindanao and Sulu is quite difficult to determine at this time, but its expansion happened after members of ruling families in Sumatra and Johore arrived and founded political institutions that facilitated

conversion of large population. The first Sultan of Sulu with the regal title of Paduka Mahasari Maulana al-Sultan Sharif ul-Hashim, whose reign was estimated between 1450 and 1480, was reported in Sulu *tarsilas* to have come from Sumatra. He married the daughter of Rajah Baguinda who arrived earlier in Sulu from Menangkabaw. Sharif ul-Hashim established in Sulu the political institution of sultanate. In Mindanao, Sharif Muhammad Kabungsuwan, who founded the Magindanaw sultanate, arrived on the shores of Mindanao around 1515. According to Magindanaw *tarsilas* he was the son of Sharif 'Ali Zein ul-'Abidin from Arabia and his mother belonged to the royal family of Johore.

Tracing descent from the ruling families in the region facilitated marriage alliances that provided another connection. Sources both in Sulu and Brunei show that Sulu seventh sultan Muhammad ul-Halim was related to the Brunei royal family. The mother of Sultan Badar ud-Din I was a Tirun from the northeast coast of Borneo. If intermarriages happened among royal families who were traditionally protective of their bloodline to maintain their legitimacy to rule, we can assume that there were intermarriages also among those in the middle and lower classes of society. These intermarriages cemented political alliances. When Spanish governor Corcuera attacked Sulu in 1638 Rajah Bongsu, the Sulu Sultan, was helped by Makassar warriors. The Ternatans often assisted Sultan Buisan of Magindanaw in his war against colonial intrusion.

In state formation, the political institutions in neighboring principalities heavily influenced the sultanates. Nomenclatures of positions were similar with most Malay states. Aside from the sultan the other positions in the Sulu sultanate were the *Datu Bendahara*, *Datu Maharajah-Iela*, *Datu Juhan Pahlawan*, *Datu Muluk Bandarasa*, *Datu Sebalmal*, *Datu Tumanggung*, *Datu Mamamsha*, *Datu Amir Bahar*, *Munnabil 'Alam* and *Datu Sawajahan* (Majul 1999: 390-91). The sultan exercised the executive functions together with the abovementioned office holders who composed the cabinet. The *Ruma Bichara* performed functions of a legislative body. The *qadi* (locally known as *datu kali*) headed the justice department. Workable political and administrative systems in Sulu, Magindanaw, Buayan and even in the confederation of the lake-based principalities of the Maranaos were in place which were important factors in the sultanates movement towards centralization of powers and in the resistance against Spanish colonization.

Although the claims of descent from Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the ruling families in the region, which were prominently featured in all *tarsilas*, was primarily to establish legitimacy of rule, it showed, at least on the level of the ruling families, awareness that the Bangsamoro people belonging to the global Ummah. This consciousness manifested also in traditional *khutbah*, read during Friday and 'id congregational prayers, that included not only prayers for the reigning sultans but also for the Caliph of the Ummah. This suggested that the sultanates in Mindanao and Sulu recognized the Caliph's leadership and they were parts of the Muslim world.

Before the popularization of the Arabic language, religious books in Mindanao and Sulu were mostly in Malay language written in *jawi* scripts. This explains the fact that religious practices at that time were greatly influenced by religious practices in other parts of the Malay world. Only the few learned were literate in Arabic language so Malay religious literatures were more accessible to many.

After the Philippines got its independence in 1946 and Mindanao and Sulu were made part of the new nation-state, link with the Muslim world gradually shifted to the Middle East. This started with admission of students from Mindanao to Al Azhar University in Cairo. The Arab petrodollars provided scholarships to many students studying in Middle East universities, who after finishing their studies came home as paid missionaries of religious institutions, and established *madaris* and Qur'anic schools that teach what they learned of Islam. The curricula of these *madaris* are usually patterned after the curricula of the institutions where the founder graduated. Graduates of Islamic universities are often looked up to in their communities as religious leaders and opinion makers.

Consequently, religious thoughts in the Middle East gradually influence religious practices in Mindanao and Sulu. Active *da'wah* programs of religious institutions in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Arab countries reinforced this trend. With the generous support from charitable institutions and philanthropic individuals more mosques and *madaris* were built.

Even Islamic reform movements in the Middle East and the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent have influence on Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu. Syed Qutb of the Muslim Brotherhood and Syed Abul A'la Maududi of Jamaat Islamie for example had profound influence on the political thought of Salamat Hashim, founder and head of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front until his death in July 2003, which seeks separate state for the Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu (Lingga 1995: 26). These two reform movements excelled in their education programs and expectedly their ideas are transmitted to many parts of the world.

The strong ties with the Ummah work in favor of the Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu. After reports of massacres and other atrocities committed against Muslims reached the media in early seventies, Libya reacted immediately and led the move to bring the case to the attention of the OIC, which expressed during the Third Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers '*serious concern over the plight of Muslims living in the Philippines*' (1972). Libya, aside from being the host, played significant role in the signing of the 1976 Tripoli agreement between the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Philippine government. Indonesia played active role in the concluded negotiations between the government and the MNLF and Malaysia is mediating in the on-going peace talks between the government and the MILF.

Contrasting Views

After independence was granted to the Philippines by the United States, the Muslim territories in Mindanao and Sulu became part of the Philippines. Accordingly, the government considers them Filipino citizens, including those fighting the government. Reflective of this policy is President Ferdinand E. Marcos' (1977) statement in his report to the Batasang Bayan that the government '*consider(s) the MNLF citizens of the Republic even if they are in rebellion.*' As such, he emphasized that agreements with the liberation movements are agreements between the Philippine Government and its own nationals.

They have equal rights and obligations with other Filipinos. Their communities are subdivided into local units just like other parts of the country. Muslims are elected to positions in local governments in areas where they are in majority and appointed to manage local bureaucracy. There were few who were elected in the Senate before and representation in the House of Representatives is always assured because congressmen are elected by district although they are not many. There are also Muslims who are appointed to positions in the national bureaucracy and in the judiciary.

There is no government policy that clearly discriminate Muslims, but policies are formulated in response to popular demand. And since majority of the populations are Christians, policies can be biased in favor of the majority. There are also policies and programs that are meant to reinforce the position of government but they work against the interest of the Muslims. For example, in the name of development Christians from the north were encouraged to settle in Mindanao resulting to the minoritization of the Muslims in many parts of their traditional homeland

On the other hand, the Muslims view their situation in different way. Muhammad al-Hasan (Quoted by Gowing 1978: 78) articulates this view in these words:

We [Moros and Filipinos] are two different peoples adhering to different ideologies, having different cultures, and nurtured by different historical experiences.

We have contradistinct conceptions of sovereignty. The Filipinos believe that sovereignty resides in them, but we believe that sovereignty belongs to God alone. The political, social, economic and judicial institutions they inherited from the colonizers, organized on the basis of the separation of spiritual and mundane aspects of life, are incongruous with ours which are established on the postulates that life is a unity, God is the Sovereign and man is His vicegerent.

Our culture, imbued with Islamic beliefs, tenets and principles, is diametrically in contrast with what is known today as Filipino culture which is the amalgamation of the residues of the colonizers' cultures. Our art, architecture, literature and music have retained their Asian character [which] is not true [of] theirs.

The Muslims claim they belong to a separate nation by virtue of their distinct identity and long history of political independence. Arguing in line with the nationalist theory of secession, they also claim that they have '*a right to self-determination, including the right to a state*', at least in areas where they are in majority (Buendia 2002: 9). Their experience in state formation and resistance against colonial rule are often cited as bases of their claim for separate nation and state. The Spanish colonial government attempted to conquer the sultanates to subjugate their political existence and to add their territory to the Spanish colonies in the Philippine Islands but there was no significant success. The sultanates with their organized maritime and infantry forces succeeded in defending the Muslim territories during what Majul (1999: 121-372) called Moro wars, thus preserving the continuity of their independence.

The Muslims' resistance against attempts to subjugate their independence continued even when US forces occupied some areas in Mindanao and Sulu. At this time the resistance of the Muslim governments was not as fierce as during the Moro-Spanish wars but group-organized guerrilla attacks against American forces and installations reinforced what remained of the sultanates' military power. Even individual Muslim showed defiance against American occupation of their homeland by attacking American forces in operations called *prang sabil* (martyrdom operation).

When the U.S. Government promised independence to the Filipinos, the Muslim leaders registered their strong objection to be part of the Republic of the Philippines. In the petition to the U.S. President, the people of Sulu archipelago said that they would prefer being part of the U.S. rather than to be included in an independent Philippine nation (Jubair 1999: 293-7).

In their Declaration of Rights and Purposes, the Muslim leaders meeting in Zamboanga on February 1, 1924, proposed that the 'Islands of Mindanao and Sulu, and the Island of Palawan be made an unorganized territory of the United States of America' (Jubair 1999:298-03), in anticipation that in the event the U.S. would decolonize its colonies and other non-self governing territories the Bangsamoro homeland would be granted separate independence. Had it happened, the Muslims would have regained by now their independence under the UN declaration on decolonization. Their other proposal was that if independence had to be granted including the Muslim territories, fifty years after Philippine independence a plebiscite be held in Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan to decide by vote whether the territory would be incorporated in the government of the Islands of Luzon and Visayas, remain a territory of the United States, or become independent. The fifty-year period ended in 1996, the same year the

MNLF and the Philippine government signed the Final Agreement on the Implementation of the Tripoli Agreement. The leaders warned that if no provision of retention under the United States were made, they would declare an independent constitutional sultanate to be known as Moro Nation.

Even after their territories were made part of the Philippine republic in 1946, the Muslims continue to assert their right to independence. They consider the annexation of their homeland as illegal and immoral since it was done without their plebiscitary consent. Their assertions manifest in many forms.

The armed resistance of Kamlon, Jikiri and Tawan-Tawan were signs of protests for being part of the Philippine republic. Those who joined the Philippine government used the new political system they were in to pursue the vision of regaining independence. Congressman Ombra Amilbansa, for example, filed House Bill No. 5682 during the fourth session of the Fourth Congress that sought the granting and recognition of the independence of Sulu (Jubair 1999: 304-05). As expected, the bill found its way to the archive of Congress since there were few Muslim members of Congress. Then on May 1, 1968, the then provincial governor of Cotabato, Datu Udtog Matalam, made a dramatic move by issuing the Mindanao Independence Movement manifesto calling for the independence of Mindanao and Sulu to be known and referred to as the Republic of Mindanao and Sulu (Jubair 1999: 306-07).

Independence Movement

Buendia (2002: 11) observes that the *'Muslims in the Philippines, at first, took the peaceful track in carving the nation-state.'* When it became evident to them that it would not be possible to regain independence within the framework of the Philippine legal system, the MNLF was organized to lead the armed struggle. The MNLF objective then was for separate state but upon the prodding of the Organization of Islamic Conference it signed the Tripoli Agreement on December 23, 1976 that binds it to accept autonomy within the framework of Philippine territory. Nur Misuari's acceptance of autonomy triggered debate within the MNLF that ultimately led to the separation of a faction known later on as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. The MILF vowed to pursue the original objective of the MNLF for separate state but this time only in areas where the Muslims are in majority. If we look at the population distribution in Mindanao, this will include the provinces of Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Basilan, Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao, the cities of Marawi, Cotabato and Isabela. In addition, there are towns in other provinces where the Muslims are in majority. Some are contiguous with the five provinces others are not.

The clamor for separate state is not only among the liberation fronts but includes the Muslim civil society. While armed struggle remains one of the options of the liberation fronts the civil society movement advocates peaceful and democratic approach through a United Nations supervised referendum. The

Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly met twice, in 1996 and 2001. The first assembly, reportedly attended by more than one million people, came out with a statement calling for reestablishment of the Bangsamoro state and government (Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly 1996: 5-10). The declaration of the second assembly, attended by around two and a half million participants according to reports, states *'the only just, meaningful, and permanent solution to the Mindanao Problem is the complete independence of the Bangsamoro people and the territories they now actually occupy from the Republic of the Philippines'* (Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly 2001: 5).

The manifesto (1999) issued by hundreds of thousands of Bangsamoro who participated in the Rally for Peace and Justice in Cotabato City and Davao City on October 23, 1999, in Marawi City on October 24, 1999 and in Isabela, Basilan on December 7, 1999 clearly states their position.

*'... we believe that the **only just, viable and lasting solution to the problem of our turbulent relationship with the Philippine government is the restoration of our freedom, liberty and independence** which were illegally and immorally usurped from us, and that we be given a chance to establish a government in accordance with our political culture, religious beliefs and social norms'*.

The traditional leaders had also expressed their strong desire for self-determination. The Declaration of Intent and Manifestation of Direct Political Act (2001) released by the *datus* headed by Magindanaw Sultan Abdul Aziz Guiwan Mastura Kudarat IV calls for United Nations supervised referendum to determine whether the Bangsamoro people want independence or not.

Government Response

To deflect the issue on the rights of the Bangsamoro to self-determination, the Philippine government admitted neglect. The government is insistent that the problem is the absence of economic development. That is why within the span of the administration of five presidents government efforts are always focused on development of Mindanao.

The Philippine government initiated negotiations with the MNLF in 1975 and with the active involvement of Libya the framework on how to solve the problem was reached in 1976. But it took more than two decades to negotiate the implementing details of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement. In 1996 with the active mediation of Indonesia the final agreement between the government and the MNLF was initialed in Jakarta and signed in Manila. Following the end of the negotiations with the MNLF, the government started talking to the MILF. After informal contacts, negotiations started on January 7, 1997. The MILF pulled out

from the negotiations in 2000 following the government all-out war in Mindanao, but when President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo assumed the presidency in 2001 she asked the assistance of Indonesia and Malaysia to convince the MILF to resume the stalled talks. From then on Malaysia has been hosting the talks between the government and the MILF. So far two significant agreements were inked, agreements on cessation of hostilities and agreement on rehabilitation of refugees and development of war-affected areas. The on-going talks have yet to tackle the issue on ancestral domain and the political status of the Bangsamoro people.

Before the final agreement with the MNLF was reached, the government organized an autonomous region as its own way of complying with the provisions of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement. The 1987 constitution provides for the establishment of autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and the Cordillera. With this constitutional mandate Congress passed Republic Act 6734, the law governing the creation and operations of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). In a plebiscite conducted on November 19, 1989, four provinces out of the thirteen provinces mentioned in the 1976 Tripoli Agreement voted to constitute the autonomous region. Later, amendments were introduced in the ARMM Organic Act to accommodate provisions of the final agreement and one province joined the autonomous region.

As transitory mechanism from the signing of the final agreement on September 2, 1996 to the amendments of the 1986 Organic Act of the autonomous region, the Special Zone of Peace and Development (SPCPD) was created to provide basic services, adequate infrastructure facilities, entrepreneurial support, capability-building assistance to local government units, and to promote investment and trade in the areas covered in the 1976 Tripoli Agreement. Both the ARMM and the SPCPD were placed under the control of the MNLF.

Even before the MNLF rebellion, there were government programs designed to address the problems of the Muslims as understood by political leaders and bureaucrats in Manila. In 1957, the Commission on National Integration (CNI) was created for the purpose of integrating the Muslims and other cultural minorities into the body politic. The CNI was abolished and the Office on Muslim Affairs was created in its place.

To promote government program of education to accelerate the integration of the Muslims into the body politic, the Mindanao State University was established in Marawi City. The university serves as instrument of the government in the development of the southern region. The Mindanao Development Authority (its name was later changed to Southern Philippines Development Authority and abolished last year) was created in 1961 to hasten the economic development of Mindanao.

To appeal to the religious sense of the Muslims, the Code of Muslim Personal Laws of the Philippines was decreed into law in 1977. These laws were extracted from Islamic jurisprudence on person and family. Shariah courts were subsequently organized in Muslim communities and Shariah judges were appointed to adjudicate cases involving marriage and inheritance. The Philippine Amanah Bank, with mandate to operate in accordance with Islamic banking principles, was also established.

At the same time that new policies and programs were introduced to appease the Muslims, the government invoking its sovereign right to maintain its territorial integrity unleashed its military might against the Muslims. Carolyn O. Arguillas (2003) provides a vivid picture of the cost of the military campaign.

In a privilege speech in July 1996, then Rep. Eduardo Ermita, now Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process ... citing data from the Armed Forces of the Philippines, showed how over a period of 26 years since 1970, more than 100,000 persons had been killed in the conflict in Mindanao, 30 per cent of that government casualties, 50 per cent rebels and 20 per cent civilians.

Ermita said 55,000 persons were injured, not counting those from the rebel side. From 1970 to 1976 alone, he said, an average of 18 people were slain everyday.

All in all, Ermita said, the AFP spent P73 billion in the 26-year period, or an average of 40 per cent of its annual budget.

In the year 2000 when government troops attacked the MILF camps, around 932,000 civilians were displaced from their homes. The World Bank (2003:12-13) report shows that "Majority of people who were displaced as a result of the conflict in Mindanao that erupted in 2000 were Muslims." Around 390,000 people were again displaced when government troops attacked MILF enclaves in Pikit and Pagalungan in February 2003.

Concluding Observations

Within the borders of the Philippines we find Muslim minorities who identify themselves as Bangsamoro. They can be classified under the third category of minority communities. Their experience in state formation predates the formation of the Philippines as a state. They continue to occupy what remain of their traditional homeland

Their problematic relations with the national community, which oftentimes resulted to violent confrontations, should be understood in the context of the principle of self-determination. The feeling among the Bangsamoro people is strong that the best guarantee for their security and the only opportunity that they

can organize their political life according to their values and way of life is when they possess the medium of sovereign power. Issues of poverty, underdevelopment, neglect and other social and economic inequities certainly need attention but the core issue of the problem is their assertion for their right to self-determination.

The Bangsamoro have never live in isolation from their brothers and sisters either in Southeast Asia or in the Middle East. They always relate themselves with the Muslim world and their ties with global Ummah will always remain, whether they differ or not in their understanding and practice of Islam. In their quest for the assertion of their rights to freedom and self-determination the Muslims in Mindanao and Sulu will always find sympathetic ears to listen to their aspirations at least from the masses in the Ummah, if not from governments and organizations.

NOTES

¹The Agreement on Peace Between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, otherwise known as the Tripoli Agreement on Peace of 2001, signed on June 22, 2001 in Tripoli, Libya, unambiguously recognizes that identity. Examples are these provisions of the agreement:

"Recognizing that peace negotiations between the GRP and the MILF is for the advancement of the general interest of the Bangsamoro people..."

"On the aspect of ancestral domain, the Parties, in order to address the humanitarian and economic needs of the Bangsamoro people and preserve their social and cultural heritage and inherent right over their ancestral domain, ..."

"The observance of international humanitarian law and respect for internationally recognized human rights instruments and the protection of evacuees and displaced persons in the conduct of their relations reinforce the Bangsamoro people's fundamental right to determine their own future and political status."

²In the preamble of the Agreement on Peace Between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, otherwise known as the Tripoli Agreement on Peace of 2001, signed on June 22, 2001 in Tripoli, Libya, states that the GRP and the MILF are "Determined to establish a peaceful environment and normal condition of life in the Bangsamoro homeland".

BIBLIOGRAPHY

"Agreement on Peace Between the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front", Tripoli, Libya, 22 June 22, 2001.

Arguillas, Carolyn O. (2003) "The Cost of War. Part 1: Economic cost of 'never ending conflict' is P30-M daily" *MindaNews*, posted March 26. <http://www.mindanews.com/2003/03/26pep-cost1.html>

Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly (1996) *Summary of Proceedings*, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, December 3-5.

Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly (2001) *Declaration of the Second Bangsamoro People's Consultative Assembly*, Cotabato City.

Buendia, Rizal G. (2002) "A Re-examination of Ethnicity and Secessionist Movements in the Philippines and Indonesia: The Moros and Acehnese", *Philippine Political Science Journal* 46: 3-48.

Che Man, W. K. (1990) *Muslim Separatism: The Moros of Southern Philippines and the Malays of Southern Thailand*, Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

"Declaration of Intent and Manifestation of Direct Political Act", Cotabato City, 28 January 2001.

Diaz, Patricio P. (1998) *What Ails Muslim Autonomy?*, General Santos City: n.p.

Gowing, Peter G. (1978) "Of Different Minds: Christian and Muslim Ways of Looking at Their Relations in the Philippines", *International Review of Missions* 265: 74-85.

International Labor Organization (1989), "Convention No. 169 Concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries", adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organisation at its seventy-sixth session.

Jubair, Salah (1999) *Bngsamoro: A Nation Under Endless Tyranny*, Kuala Lumpur: IQ Marin SDN BHD.

Lingga, Abhoud Syed Mansur (1995) "The Political Thought of Salamat Hashim", M.A. thesis, Institute of Islamic Studies, University of the Philippines.

Majul, Cesar Adib (1999) *Muslims in the Philippines*, Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.

"Manifesto", adopted during the Rally for Peace and Justice held in Cotabato City and Davao City on October 23, 1999, in Marawi City on October 24, 1999 and in Isabela, Basilan on December 7, 1999.

Marcos, Ferdinand E. (1977) "The President's Report on Southern Philippines", during the Special Session of the Batasang Bayan, May 3.

MindaNews (2002) "Poverty incidence in ARMM still high but ...", *Mindanao Crescent*, 15 November.

Organization of Islamic Conference (1972) "Third Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers Resolution No. 12/3."

Organization of Islamic Conference (2001) "Twenty-Eight Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers Resolution No. 58/28-P".

Paunlagui, Merlyne M and Adriano, Adriano S. (n.d.) *Mindanao 2000 Development Framework Plan: Social Reform Agenda*, Agricultural Policy research and Advocacy Assistance Program, Office of the President for Mindanao and DMJM International, Inc.

World Bank (2003) *Social Assessment of Conflict-Affected Areas in Mindanao, Summary*. Pasig City: World Bank Office, Manila.