



National Democratic Front of the Philippines Negotiating Panel

Press Statement
13 January 2004

NDFP ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESUMPTION OF FORMAL PEACE TALKS WITH THE GRP

The formal talks in the peace negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) will resume within February in a foreign venue.

The resumption of the talks is within the framework of The Hague Joint Declaration of 1992 and subsequent agreements of the GRP and NDFP and in accordance with a joint statement signed by GRP negotiating panel chairman Silvestre Bello III and NDFP negotiating panel chairman Luis Jalandoni.

The joint statement is attached hereto. It contains the following points of agreement:

1. The Hague Joint Declaration and other agreements are reaffirmed as the foundation and framework of the peace negotiations.
2. The outstanding issue of "terrorist" listing shall be resolved by undertaking effective measures in consonance with The Hague Joint Declaration and other agreements.

Full protection shall be afforded by pertinent provisions of said agreements and the Amado V. Hernandez doctrine on political offense.
3. The formation of the Joint Monitoring Committee in accordance with the CARHR/IHL shall be completed.
4. The work of the Reciprocal Working Committees on Social and Economic Reforms shall resume.
5. The GRP proposal for sequential and accelerated work and other related proposals shall be discussed.
6. The GRP shall undertake confidence-building measures, such as the following:
 - 6.1 the release of all prisoners and detainees whose release was recommended by the GRP in 2001 and act on updated list submitted by KARAPATAN and other human rights organizations;
 - 6.2 actions in support of the claims of indemnification of victims of human rights violations of the Marcos dictatorship, including a proposal to Congress to pass a law appropriating at least P 8 billion from the Marcos ill-gotten wealth.

7. The formal talks shall be resumed in February 2004 in a foreign neutral venue in accordance with JASIG and in consultation with the third party facilitator.

The NDFP holds the view that the resumption of formal talks is long overdue and hopes that no further delays would come from the GRP side which has been responsible for paralyzing the formal talks since June 2001.

The NDFP panel chairman Luis Jalandoni is now busy consulting GRP panel chairman Silvestre Bello III and the Norwegian government as third party facilitator concerning arrangements for the holding of the formal talks. #

CONTACT POINTS:

E-mail address: ndf@wanadoo.nl

Telephone: 31-30-2310431

Fax: 31-30-2322989

Mailing address: Amsterdamsestraatweg 50, NL-3513 AG Utrecht, Netherlands

**JOINT STATEMENT TO RESUME FORMAL TALKS
IN THE GRP-NDFP PEACE NEGOTIATIONS**

The Negotiating Panels of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP) hereby agree to resume the formal talks in their peace negotiations.

1. We reaffirm The Hague Joint Declaration, the Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees (JASIG), the Joint Agreement on the Formation, Sequence and Operationalization of the Reciprocal Working Committees (RWC Agreement) and subsequent agreements as the foundation and framework of the GRP-NDFP peace negotiations as affirmed in the 9 March 2001 Utrecht Joint Statement and the Oslo Communique in April 2001.
2. To resolve the outstanding issue of the "terrorist" listing of the CPP/NPA and the NDFP Chief Political Consultant, effective measures shall be undertaken in consonance with The Hague Joint Declaration, the JASIG, the Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CAR-HR/IHL) and other bilateral agreements. The panelists, consultants, staffers and other duly-authorized participants of said negotiations shall thereby be fully protected by the pertinent provisions of The Hague Joint Declaration, the JASIG, and the CAR-HR/IHL as well as the Amado V. Hernandez doctrine on political offense.
3. Upon resumption of the formal talks, we shall complete the formation of the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) and specify its nature and mandate in accordance with the CAR-HR/IHL.
4. The Reciprocal Working Committees on Social and Economic Reforms (RWCs-SER) shall resume their work. Their work shall be facilitated and accelerated by the subcommittees that can continue their work in between the meetings of the RWCs-SER.
5. The GRP proposal for sequential and accelerated work, particularly the formation of subcommittees of the Reciprocal Working Committees on Political and Constitutional Reforms, and other related proposals, shall be discussed in the formal talks.
6. The GRP shall undertake confidence-building measures as follows:
 - 6.1 The GRP shall undertake measures for the release of all the prisoners and detainees whose release was recommended by the GRP in 2001 and shall take appropriate action on the updated list submitted by KARAPATAN and other human rights organizations.
 - 6.2 The GRP shall undertake appropriate legal measures in support of the claims for indemnification of the victims of human rights violations of the Marcos dictatorship, including a proposal to Congress to pass a law

SK

[Signature]

appropriating the minimum amount of at least P8 billion from the approximately \$680 million recovered from the Marcos ill-gotten wealth for the indemnification of the bona fide victims of human rights violations of the Marcos dictatorship. The two Panels shall discuss and agree during the formal talks on specific and effective measures to protect the rights of the successful plaintiffs in the Marcos human rights litigation and expedite payment of compensation to them on a best effort basis.

7. The formal talks shall resume in February 2004 in a foreign neutral venue mutually acceptable to the parties in accordance with the JASIG and in consultation with the third party facilitator.

Done on 13 January 2004.


SILVESTRE H. BELLO III
GRP Panel Chairman


LUIS G. JALANDONI
NDPP Panel Chairman