

Mindanao Summit on DRR and Geo-Hazard Awareness
February 18-19, 2012
Cagayan de Oro City

Mindanao Declaration on Disaster Risk Reduction Priorities

In the aftermath of the devastation brought about by tropical storm *Sendong* (International Name Washi), we, the leaders and citizens, of all faiths and ethnicities, from all regions of the great island of Mindanao, upon invitation of Senators Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III and Teofisto "TG" Guingona III, have gathered here in Cagayan de Oro from February 18 to 19, 2012 for the Mindanao Summit on Disaster Risk Reduction and Geo-Hazard Awareness,.

We declare our unity, commitment, and resolve to reduce the risks of disasters in our island, finding strength in the diversity of our backgrounds as we come from different institutions such as the Philippine Senate, the House of Representatives, the National Government, the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), local governments at all levels (barangays, municipalities, cities, and provinces), the business sector, civil society, academe, media, and grassroots communities.

We recognize that disasters can be natural and human-induced and, in Mindanao, include earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, landslides, extreme weather events such as droughts, typhoons, and excessive rainfall, sea level rise and storm surges, flooding, flash floods, human-induced environmental disasters, forest and other fires, and armed conflict.

We are aware of the threat of climate change and that our island will be severely affected by its impacts unless integrated adaptation-mitigation programs are implemented at the soonest time possible.

We acknowledge that geo-hazards naturally exist in our ecosystems and environment and human actions or inaction can aggravate, accelerate, or mitigate the risk of disasters arising from these geo-hazards.

We are concerned particularly that logging, mining, unsustainable agriculture, and other similar land use activities increase the vulnerability of many ecosystems and communities in our island.

We support the peace process and urge the national government and revolutionary organizations like the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the CPP/NPA to enter into permanent peace settlements that would make widespread dislocation and displacement of large populations a thing of the past.

We recognize that disasters and calamities inevitably impact on citizens, communities, properties and infrastructure, and as a result, threaten not only Mindanao's but the entire country's sustainable development;

We note that the vulnerability of communities and localities to disasters and calamities can be addressed with proper management of the sources of risk, level of exposure, and buildup of adaptive capacity.

We are conscious that some sectors such as the poor, children, elderly, women, indigenous peoples, and people with disabilities are more vulnerable to disasters than others.

We are also conscious that disasters affect all sectors and all economic classes, and special programs to address the needs of the middle-class and business sector are also necessary.

We observe that mitigation and adaptation measures by all sectors and levels of government have been inadequately implemented and weakly coordinated resulting in inefficient use of resources and lack of accountability.

We observe also that most communities are resilient and respond to disasters on their own, through self-help measures and reliance on their own capacities, which however are inadequate in the face of major disasters.

We believe that disasters can be mitigated, if not entirely prevented, with the right measures in place at all levels, but especially community-centered initiatives, and implemented by all sectors, including equipping communities with the capability to manage the disasters when they occur.

We also believe that the most cost-effective way of reducing risks to disasters is by integrating Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and implementing such programs at the local level based on good, accurate, and timely scientific information and analysis.

We agree to work together to implement at all levels the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Act of 2010, the Climate Change Act of 2009, the Philippine Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Action Plan, and the National Climate Change Action Plan.

We call on our development partners to support local, regional, and island-wide initiatives to reduce risks to disaster in the spirit of and in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), Children's Charter on DRR, and other regional and international resolutions and agreements.

We commit to collaborate more closely and effectively with each other to coordinate our efforts on capacity building for disaster risk reduction, preparedness, relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and resettlement.

Based on the foregoing, we state and declare that the following are the priorities for disaster risk reduction in Mindanao:

1. **Knowledge:** Addressing through scientific research, training, and information, education, and communication (IEC) interventions, using up-to-date technology and community-based approaches, the lack of knowledge and/or inadequate communication of existing knowledge on disaster hazards, vulnerability, exposure, and risks and adaptation and response measures necessary, including flood and other hazard maps. This includes integration of DRR and geo-hazard awareness in the educational

curriculum as well as in religious institutions and production of child-friendly IEC materials. Information should also be based on local best practices, be indigenized and translated into the vernacular.

2. Emergency preparedness and response: Addressing the needs of vulnerable and exposed communities, including building adequate and permanent evacuation centers, so that public schools, buildings, and grounds are not regularly disrupted as a result of disasters; relocating communities in danger zones to safe and accessible places; providing emergency kits for individuals and families; conducting regular drills to prepare for disasters; simplifying disaster response protocols; and organizing effective psycho-social interventions to help affected persons and families to cope and adapt.

3. DRRM Plans: The adoption and implementation of disaster risk reduction and management plans at the regional, provincial, city, municipal, and barangay levels, based on good and updated, location-specific scientific knowledge and analysis, including risk assessment and consciousness of adaptive capacity, and aiming at zero-casualty and minimal economic damage.

4. Enforcement of Laws: Strict implementation and immediate enforcement by the national government and local governments of environmental, natural resources, land-use laws, including prohibiting mining and logging in disaster-prone/vulnerable areas. Local legislation on DRR is also essential, including stricter zoning laws. Recognizing that communities could be impacted economically where economic activities are restricted, alternative livelihood programs should be put in place.

5. Ecosystem-based Approach: Where appropriate, a river basin management shall be implemented in managing areas from ridge to reef, including in implementing DRR plans and programs. Massive reforestation, including of mangrove forests, through planting of native species to promote biodiversity and sustainability, should also be done.

6. National Legislation: Passage of pending bills such as the People's Survival Fund, People's Solidarity Fund, the Land Use Act, and laws that will establish a permanent, independent disaster management and risk reduction agency and promote inter-local government cooperation in DRR-CCA.

7. Institutional Mechanisms: Setting up the appropriate institutional mechanisms for DRR implementation, including institutionalizing incident command systems at all levels, an LGU rating system for disaster response and accountability, adequate early warning systems at all levels using appropriate local indigenous and modern communication systems and technology (including 3-digit phone numbers with back-up systems), regional DRR summits including ARMM, and modifying budgetary rules to allow staffing the DRRMO in all local governments.

8. Implementation: Designing and implementing innovative capacity building, resource mobilization strategies and mechanisms, including monitoring progress, to implement these DRR priorities.

Adopted by consensus this 19th day of February 2012 in Cagayan de Oro City, Mindanao, Philippines.