



Joint Statement
On "Mindanaons' Aspiration for Peace"
Theme of the 2015 Mindanao Week of Peace
26 November – 2 December 2015

From 29 November 1996, the foundation day of the Bishops-Ulama Conference, we have not ceased articulating our people's aspiration for lasting peace as taught and commanded by our Christian and Islamic faiths. We have gone beyond written words by supporting different initiatives for peace of our peace partners in government and in civil society.

The present project of government supposedly in behalf of our Muslim brothers and sisters towards the establishment of a new autonomous territory has muddled the essence of the aspired peace. This has resulted in serious misunderstanding and disunity not only between Christians and Muslims but also within and among bishops, ulama and pastors themselves. This internal problem has caused difficulty in Interreligious dialogue for our Conference.

Inspired by the statement of the Mindanao Catholic bishops last July that they are neither for or against the BBL but for social justice for all Muslims, the Board of Directors of the Bishops-Ulama Conference decided last September 16, 2015 to shift temporarily to Intra-faith Dialogue in order to promote internal reconciliation and unity within their respective faith communities. This will take place on 10 December 2015 during the 43rd BUC General Assembly in SEARSOLIN, Cagayan de Oro City. The process that will begin here will be hopefully carried out on different levels from leadership down to the grassroots.

Inter-religious dialogue for peace is larger than any peace project like the BBL. It must continue its role in support of the Mindanaoans' aspirations for peace. This is possible only if there is harmony and unity within the Conference and within our respective sectoral constituencies. We believe this can be done by Intra-faith dialogue.

Davao City, 20 October 2015.

Signed:

ARCHBP. FERNANDO R. CAPALLA
Co-convenor

JUDGE ABU ALI CALI
Co-convenor

BISHOP HILARIO A. GOMEZ
Co-convenor