

# **A Journey to the Mediterranean and Mystique Sahara: the First Formal MILF-GRP Resumption of Peace Talks in Tripoli, Libya (June 2001)\***

**Ben J. Kadil**

**T**his account is a twenty-day travelogue on the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front (-GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) First Formal Peace Talk, as recorded by this writer in his travel as a member of the MILF delegation to Tripoli, Libya, and return to the Mindanao homeland, from June 10 to 29, 2001.

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Dr. Kadil, MSU professor, is Member of the MILF Technical Panel. MILF Peace Panel, that met with the GRP in Libya and Malaysia. This edition of the paper abridged from the original. [The author gave a day-to day account of his trip from Mindanao (Cagayan de Oro) to Cebu and then to Metro Manila, June 10-12].

All the previous agreements entered into between the GRP and MILF had been shattered by the “all-out war” (that commenced in March 2000) against the MILF, thus, there was a need to resume the truce. Sometime in the last week of March 2001, the GRP initiated the move by requesting concerned officials in Malaysia, which is an OIC-member country, to serve as mediator.

For its part and traditional role, the Libyan government offered to participate and host the first formal peace talk in Tripoli, for which this writer journeyed part of the Mediterranean coast up to the heartland of the Sahara.

The four-day formal peace talk (June 20-23, 2001) was concluded with a Peace Agreement signed on June 22, 2001, by both parties (MILF-GRP), as witnessed by Libya, with several African-based OIC countries present.

*(The author gave a day-to-day account of his trip from Mindanao [Cagayan de Oro City] to Cebu and then to Metro Manila, June 10-12.)*

[At the Persian Restaurant, Makati, from 9:00-10:20 PM:]

It was on that same evening... that we were physically “back to back,” merely partitioned by curtain walls and hearing our voices audibly, with (ARMM Governor) Nur Misuari and his group in the adjacent function room talking about “projects.” We did not dare to greet or anything to each other, though we actually noticed each other’s presence across the slit of the curtain wall, because of the prevailing rift within their own MNLF ranks and the personal gap already developed with most of our members in the MILF panel. We left ahead (courteously greeting some men in uniform, probably bodyguards, downstairs who spoke in the vernacular), returning to the Apartelle...

In the later part of the evening, we also met other members. They were Iqbal, Nasser, Lanang, etc., all belonging to our group. After this meeting, we went to bed at 11:30 PM in the same Apartelle (excepting

Iqbal and Nasser who later left).

**June 14, 2001**

**Meeting with the Libyan Ambassador**

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At the embassy, we all met with Ambassador Salem Adem, who spoke to us about "Libya's concern to resolve peacefully the armed conflict." However, the MNLF, MILF must come together. The government must be sincere about resolving the issue once and for all, by implementing SOMO/SOMA together (Misuari was the only problem in the unity talk. To resolve it, he must be ousted). Many guests and observers (from Indonesia, Malaysia, GRP, MNLF) would be invited, as a show of unity. The Abu Sayyaf problem would be over once the MNLF and MILF come together. Delegations from MILF and GRP would meet together for the peace talk. The Organization of African Unity (OAU), comprising the 53 countries would be invited to witness (as they did). Adem promised to meet us at Libya upon our arrival there, because he could leave ahead. After this meeting, which lasted not over an hour, we hurried back to the Apartelle....

**Departure From Manila to Kuala Lumpur (June 14, 2001)**

Our departure time from Manila was at 4:25 PM. We arrived in Kuala Lumpur at 7:45 PM (actually 8:00 PM, Philippine local time). In Kuala Lumpur at 10:00 PM; checked in at the Hotel De First Inn.

**June 15, 2001**

**First MILF Peace Panel Meeting at the Grand Hotel Central, KL.**

Woke up early for the Subuh prayer, with Dr. Jun Alonto, at the nearest Kampung Baru Mosque... 5:00-6:00... AM, then returned to hotel (De First Inn) for breakfast. At 10:00 AM, an MILF meeting was held at the nearby Hotel Grand Central, in Kuala Lumpur. In attendance were the 15-member delegates, with Al Haj Murad presiding. There would be a meeting of the technical staff to set the agenda. The meeting agreed, partially, on the agenda; other items could be added later and refined in Tripoli, Libya....

## Highlights of the First Meeting

The MILF peace panel meeting at the Grand Central Hotel, in downtown Kuala Lumpur, was presided over by Al Haj Murad. First, he invoked Bismillah. He then informed the members on what transpired in an earlier meeting of the GRP-MILF delegation (last March 2001). When a delegation of Mahathir approached Ustadz for a meeting with Mahathir, Ustadz could not make it, in spite of the former's insistence. In his place, instead, Ustadz delegated Al Haj Murad, Lanang, Edward, Abdel Azis, Abu Hurairah to meet with their counterparts in Malaysia.

The party in charge of arranging the affair was the Research Department of Datu Zakaria Abdul Hamid, in the Prime Minister's Office, an intelligence department (like the CIA) involved in the Moro Affairs since late 1960's, 1970's and instrumental in the training of trainees.

He briefed the body further about policy, the present situation and efforts (towards achieving peace in the region). In general, the (Malaysian officials) informed the MILF delegation that the Philippine government had invited Mahathir, and that Gloria had written (formally), to Mahathir "to return to the negotiating table." In the course of discussion, one could read between the lines that there was a commitment and compromise between Malaysia and the administration of GMA. This effort to return to the negotiating table was apparently, related to the problem of Sabah. It appeared that, there was an understanding to work out the final withdrawal by GRP (note: in spite of the legal and moral issue by the Moro people against the GRP's right of claim over Sabah, noting that only the Sulu sultanate has the historic and legitimate right, not GRP) in exchange of resolving the (peace and order) problem. In summary, Malaysia has inherent national interest in this affair (but seems out of context by sweeping aside the Sulu and the Bangsamoro people problem?)

What if Sulu and the Bangsamoro people were given the choice (through referendum) to be part of the enlarged Malaysian Federation? After all, they used to be a Malay - speaking people but lost it because

of their assimilation to the hispanized and westernized Filipino society which, apparently, endangered their culture and identity as a people. Our sultans and ulama (panditas) were once all learned people (readers and speakers) of the Malay language (Melayu), the language of culture and civilization in the Malay world since the 7th century up to the present. After all, the Bangsamoro people shared the sultanate system with the rest of Malaysia. Above all, the Bangsamoro people (from Iliana to Sulu) are blood-related with those in Malaysia, especially Sabah. With all these elements, we are confident that the Bangsamoro people must be part and parcel of a greater Malay federation in the future. The bottom line, therefore, is that Malaysia must be responsive to the political realities of the Bangsamoro people just on their doorstep.

They (Malaysian hosts) emphasized and made it clear that the Government of Malaysia and the OIC (Organization of Islamic Conference) will not support an independence move and advised not to mention secession or independence in the talk with the GRP. As a matter of policy, however, the MILF side will never renounce the bid for independence. "We will stick to this position," but for the meantime, "don't talk about independence." If the government is not sincere in implementing the agreement then this (independence) will be used as a bargaining position. (On the other hand), the GRP should not talk about sovereignty. The research group of the Malaysian government understood this well. It must be transparent; if it could help, then let it help.

There was a meeting with the Prime Minister of Malaysia, who first emphasized on Misuari (for about 20 minutes) and was critical in his words. ("Misuari has an imbalanced mind"). He emphasized that Malaysia was willing to help the MILF, "not to achieve Independence but economic development" and in terms of technical and financial help (but not much). In summary, the idea of the Malaysian government was to help in the strategy to develop economically, citing Malay and Malaysia - their line of thinking is to achieve economic development.

For its part Libya, has the line of thinking that is similar to and is highly coordinated with Malaysia. The Foreign Minister of Malaysia and the Research Department Staff (Prime Minister's Office) would attend

the opening in Tripoli, Libya (as they really did). The (national and diplomatic) interest of Libya was more on image build-up in the international community. Libya felt the Bangsamoro problem and has been a main force in creating the MNLF-MILF. This was started and will be finished by them - this has been the role played by Libya! In the same line of thinking with Malaysia, Libya will not support the bid for Independence and try to exert its influence (upon the MILF) to tow this line. Generally, members of the OIC are adopting one strategy, that is, to drop the independence bid and, rather, concentrate on economic development.

There is only one strategy for the MILF: to push for membership with OIC. It cannot go beyond its (the latter's) policy. The ultimate objective is to become an OIC member by talking with Datu Zakaria, telling him that the MNLF does not have any more a viable leader (neither Hatimil nor Muslimeen Sema, etc., for some reasons), though they are eyeing Dr. Farouk Hussein. In just a matter of time, Malaysia indicated a preference to dislodge Misuari. The 15-man council, actually initiated by Malaysia, is coordinating with the Philippine government (through Norberto Gonzalez, who is close to GMA and Presidential Adviser on Special Concerns)....

With the aforesaid, we had to adopt a strategy to push the MILF forward but not to let the MNLF be used against us. After meeting in Tripoli, Libya, the plan of Malaysia was to push through unity talks with MNLF, to be convened in Kuala Lumpur minus Misuari. Malaysia is trying to convince the MILF that the only way to be recognized is to recognize the government sponsored by the OIC. The Jakarta Agreement (Final Agreement of 1996) was not perfect, and can be renegotiated, accordingly. Frankly, the MILF can never accept said Agreement because it would not solve the problem. In an informal talk with the Research Department Group, Norberto Gonzales tried to convince the MILF with the proposal for a joint-experiment: MNLF-MILF can work together (to extend the holding of plebiscite for another 11 months/almost a year, which it did not do) until Misuari's term shall have expired. As far as the MILF was concerned, the 'structure cannot be repaired, and there is no way to repair or remove (Misuari)."

Malaysia was insistent that the forthcoming talks be held in Kuala Lumpur; Libya was equally insistent (as it was on the opening of the formal talk in June 2001, followed by the second formal peace talk in Malaysia last July-August 2001). The MILF is comfortable in Malaysia, but gave way to Libya (as a matter of tradition).

There would be the formation of the technical group to discuss in detail the implementation of the previous agreements; rehabilitation/economic development and ancestral domain. We would have all the technical committees worked out in Kuala Lumpur.

There was a reaction from the group member “not to abandon the original demand” and an emphasis on ancestral domain. There was a framework (home rule) with reference to the Basque example (in the Spanish peninsula) or Quebec (in Canada); representation must be Moro in Muslim countries “Two-systems, one-nation” may apply.

The matter of ancestral domain would be finalized at Tripoli. This would be refined by the technical group. On the matter of economic development there was a proposal that it be not handled by the government but by the NGO/People’s Organization or a formal corporation to be manned by MNLF/MILF (following the Malaysian example).

In the meantime, it was raised by the group members that discussions must be simplified just to guide the technical panel; no strenuous matter would be discussed that would be still premature on what to do.

There was the question by the group members as to “what is normalization?” Our objective was clear but there were “conditions” by the sponsoring countries that tied our hands.

The agreement in Tripoli would be more in “generalities” but we must be “armed” with the reading of our guidelines/reminder, according to the Chairman.

There would be a technical group to meet on the agenda setting,

before the group would finally meet with counterparts to prepare draft on whatever possible agreement. We were to prepare for anything possible and try to review all agreement/references.

What were to happen in Libya were: to agree on the mechanics; opening ceremony; what should be taken up; and statement of general principles to guide the peace talk. Draft agreement would be signed by the parties. There were to be the mechanics, principles of talks and draft agreement (content). The matter of the right to self-determination would be asserted (later).

The SOMO/SOMA (Suspension of Military Operation/Suspension of Military Action) will be monitored by OIC, Malaysia and Libya. There will be also monitoring of old and new agreements. There must be emphasis also on the previous agreements. If we talk of the problem, then we also talk of the solution.

The return of evacuees and their rehabilitation would not be made in place, unless government forces withdrew; no military on Mindanao means no encounter, because there would be nobody to fight, according to the Chairman.

The future agreement must be acceptable to the Bangsamoro people, that authorized the MILF to negotiate.

We are willing to maintain peace and order, for civil/public safety/ security, to police lawless elements (drawing the Abu Sayyaf elements), the Chairman said.

There was a massive build-up of the military for a full-blown war. There must be reparation, for damages and war crimes should be investigated, with the participation of NGO/PO's and the entire Bangsamoro people, according to the Chairman.

A draft on Home Rules (in the conduct of negotiation) was initially worked out by the technical committee members. The draft proposal could be presented next meeting, the following day. There would be a

secretariat to assist the technical committee in preparing the opening program.

Low-level negotiations would be discussed by the technical panel subject to approval by the main panel.

There would be also other committees, like the Preparatory Committee (Protocol); Press Release; Documents.

A group member also expressed the sentiments of the Bangsamoro people which were declared during the latter's assembly/consultation (held in Cotabato) and the forthcoming rallies to be staged in the primate capital or center (Manila).

The group strongly suggested to solve the Moro problem through referendum/popular consultation.

This group meeting was adjourned at 1:15 PM.

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**June 16, 2001**

**MILF Technical Committee to Draft House Rules  
Second MILF Peace Panel Meeting at the Hotel Grand Central,  
K.L.**

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There was a meeting of the Technical Committee to draft House Rules, 9:00 AM, at the reception lobby. This writer was a member of this committee.

There was an MILF group meeting, again, at the Hotel Grand Central,... 10:00 AM-2:00 PM. Al Haj Murad was presiding. At this meeting, the draft proposal on House Rules was presented and discussed. It was approved, with some revisions/amendments.

Break for lunch (same Malay restaurant). Returned to the hotel De First Inn, resting.

Back to the meeting... 5:00-8:00 PM (at Grand Hotel Central). After the meeting, we were invited to a dinner tendered by a Bruneian Kuala Lumpur-based MILF supporter, Mahmud Muhsia to Wangsa Maju, within the outskirt of Kuala Lumpur.

**June 17, 2001**

**“Draft Proposal of General Framework for the Resumption of Peace Talks”**

**Third MILF Peace Panel Meeting at the Hotel Grand Central, K.L.**

Working session at the Hotel Grand Central, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM. The main highlight of the meeting was to finalize the “Draft Proposal of General Framework for the Resumption of Peace Talks.” This meeting was presided over by Al Haj Murad. Said Draft Proposal was penned and presented before the panel by Atty. Michael Mastura, recorded by Ben Kadil, and encoded by Mr. Amor Pendaliday. This draft was submitted to Al Haj Murad and faxed by him to Camp Abubakar, in the Bangsamoro homeland.

Same Draft Proposal would be submitted to the GRP as a main reference in the final drafting of the peace agreement in Tripoli, Libya.

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*(The author notes down the group’s departure for Bangkok, then for Istanbul [June 17] and then to Tripoli [June 18]).*

The MILF delegation was met at the airport by a number of Libyan officials, headed by Ambassador Salem Adem, with former Ambassador Azzarouq.

After a brief conference/taping at the airport, traveled to Tripoli in a convoy.

Billeted at Hotel Al Kabir,... 7:00 PM (Istanbul Time)

**June 19, 2001**

**A Dinner with the Libyan Ambassador**

At the Hotel Kabir (Funduq Kabir). In the evening, Ambassador Salem Adem tendered a special dinner for the MILF delegates at the Hotel,... 8:00 PM. Resting.

Day One (Wednesday, June 20, 2001)

Formal Talks for Peace and Unity Between (GRP) and (MILF)  
Hosted by the Gaddafi International Foundation for  
Charitable Associations  
Tripoli - Great Jamahiriya  
20-23 June 2001

**Opening Ceremonies**

From the Hotel (Al Funduq Kabir) left at 9:30 AM for the Hotel Mahari, the venue.

At 10:00 AM, arrived at the Hotel Mahari, Tripoli. Entered the session hall, greeted exchanged pleasantries, and interacted with MNLF observers. (Jusuf Jikiri, Abu Sahrin, etc.)

At 10:45 AM, the Emcee gave an introductory remark to start the program. For a start, there was the playing of Libyan March Anthem, followed by Qur'an Reading, 10:50 AM. The Libyan Ambassador Salem Adem gave his Welcome Remarks.

**The Great Libyan Leader's Message**

10:55 AM, the Great Leader, Ghadafi (in a tape-recorded speech) extended his greetings to guests and delegations, expressing the need for the "establishment of peace" and the quest for a global and just solution and the establishment of development. He enjoined us to put an end to decades of conflict for the realization of goodwill, the need to act now and integrate islamic values, etc., seeking charitable action to resolve

the hostage-crisis and condemned terrorist acts. There must be a “fruitful result” to put an end to conflict and in realizing unity of Muslims in the Philippines.

### Excerpts from Representatives

This was followed by a speech of Vice President Guingona of GRP, 11:00 AM, addressing the delegates and the guests at the presidential table. “We have learned the lesson... a real lasting peace, with honor,” he said. “It is attainable,” he added. “My dream is to have children finish schooling... with the “family united.” “The eyes of the international community are upon us... Libya, Malaysia, Indonesia,” and he exclaimed “Mabuhay” to end his talk.

A representative of Indonesia gave his speech, suggesting to “connect the missing link” in order to solve internal difficulties.” A “Prosperous Bangsamoro” entails a “long journey to adjust and peaceful solution.” But “focus must be on what unite us, rather than or what divide us,” he said.

Al Haj Murad, Head of the MILF delegation, gave his speech, 11:24-11:40 AM, noting the peace talk as a historic negotiation.

Dr. Farouk Hussein, Head of the MNLF delegation, was also requested to deliver a talk regarding their front, 11:40 AM. He announced that in spite of what has happened to the MNLF leadership, still they “elevate Misuari to Chairman Emeritus.” He admitted that the ARMM is presently stagnating and “we want to march forward.” We need an “honest and dynamic leadership.”

An MILF meeting was held in the afternoon, 5:30 PM in Room 829. The Chairman of the MILF Panel, Al Hadj Murad, presided. The meeting was called a “reaffirmation of agenda.”

Day Two (Thursday, June 21, 2001)

Program starts, 9:20 AM.

Opening Remarks by Ambassador Salem Adem, 9:27 AM.  
Remarks by Datu Zakaria, 9:27 AM: "Both sides in panel discussion and come out with complete framework, then go to concrete substance, on what you want to achieve."

Presiding: Amb. Salem Adem

Co-presiding: Dureza, gave his remarks, 9:27-9:40 AM:

In this peace effort, he said, "we'd be able to bring something to our people." The administration of GMA has a two-fold approach: Peace efforts and peace building. We have lessons to learn; no use signing good agreements that are not well implemented. The ongoing peace effort is addressed to benefit "Christians, Lumads, and Muslims" or the Bangsamoro people. This must provide a climate that would move towards normalization and rehabilitation. Peace is to be sincerely pursued as objective.

MILF hands over Draft Proposal of Peace (June 21, 2001)

Co-presiding, Al Haj Murad gave his remarks, 9:40-9:44 AM, noting the significance of the "historic negotiation..." Al Haj handed over the MILF draft proposal (MILF Draft No. 1) of the Peace Agreement to Dureza. He requested Atty. Lanang Ali to facilitate the session.

The GRP requested for a 30-minute recess, to review the MILF Draft No. 1

Recess... 9:46-10:40 AM

(Back to session hall,.. 10:40 AM)

At 11:10 AM, resumed discussion. Dureza, presiding (who apologized for the "lost" GRP draft proposal during long journey), GRP noted initial amendments to the MILF Draft No. 1.

Lanang Ali, suggested that a procedure be adopted to reduce everything into writing. This was adopted by the GRP-MILF: less talk, more writing.

Dureza: Abide by the rules/procedure.

Lanang: There must be a joint secretariat, to jointly prepare minutes of proceedings.

Break for lunch, at Hotel Al Kabir.

Resumed session, 2:45 PM, Dureza, presiding. Transmittal of counter-proposal (MILF Draft No. 2) to GRP (Dureza) by MILF (Lanang Ali).

Atty. Lanang Ali, requested for recess.

Dureza: Raised the point "to highlight documents earlier submitted" (MILF Draft No. 2). Article 6 restated: Joint rehabilitation, etc. (to be inserted), with the following paragraphs (on tri-people's interests: process of normalization, to be consistent with paragraph 4, in Kuala Lumpur, instead of annexes, paragraph 2; additional paragraph on constituting a joint committee with monitoring observers from Libya, Malaysia, Indonesia; confidence building measures to be integrated.

These amendments of the GRP counter-draft (GRP Draft No. 1) based on the MILF draft (MILF Draft No. 2) were transmitted to the MILF for review.

Ali left to be able to study the GRP draft carefully and to be ready the next day for the final draft.

Dureza suggested that the two sides re-convene, if possible, later in the evening, after dinner. If this would not be possible, because more time would needed to study and review the GRP draft (GRP Draft No. 1), then the next day (as it so happened).

There must be a “durable ceasefire mechanism, but open to specific mechanism,” Dureza said. The details of the matter of transfer was to be taken up in the presence of the Chairman, Lanang Ali said. Dureza stood pat on the GRP position, that there would be no transfer or pullout of troops.

Recess, 2:25 PM, back to base, at Hotel Al Kabir, to continue discussions.

The following highlights were taken up to restore the initials M-I-L-F,” in capital letters, to be placed ahead of the “G-R-P” (for the MILF version); to include “General Ceasation of Hostilities, 18 July 1997” and reaffirm previous agreements and the general framework of interest, “noting,” no change, as is; “recalling,” premise maintained, “tri-people” inserted by GRP, to be deleted; to go over to original and restore “Security” and “Rehabilitation and development,” remove “process.”

Break: 7:00 PM

Day Three (Friday, June 22, 2001)

After breakfast (talking at the Restaurant to Dr. Parouk Hussein, Hathimil Hassan, Utoh Salem, all from MNLF), an MILF group meeting was held at the base (MILF Room on the 8th floor), to review the revised/amended “back-channeled” draft (Libyan inspired GRP draft) of the agreement.

Break.

Back to base, MILF Rm 829 (on the 8th floor) then in Room 1035 (on the 10th floor) billeted, at Hotel Al Kabir, resting. Back to base, MILF Rm 829, 3:00 PM, then to Hotel Mahari for the final signing of the “back-channeled” draft (MILF Draft No. 3).

## The Final Draft (MILF Draft No. 3) Proposal on Peace Agreement

This MILF Draft (no. 3) was back-channeled by a Libyan representative to the GRP at the venue in Hotel Mahari, just before the final signing. The GRP group (in their room at Mahari) raised one more final and (by far) last "deletion" to the final draft (MILF draft No. 3), which was back-channeled by a Libyan representative to the MILF group waiting at the basement of Hotel Mahari. This was to delete the word 'Self-determination' from the final draft though guideline agreed was to avoid only the word "independence" on the MILF side (and the word "sovereignty and constitutional framework" on the GRP side). The MILF group (all the twelve delegates) brainstormed (for about half an hour) at a reception lobby near the basement of the stairway, then arrived at a consensus of adopting "Bangsamoro aspiration" and "political freedom" (as these appeared in the signed Tripoli Agreement of Peace of 2001).

At 4:30 PM, after the MILF consensus, as transmitted to GRP, all the delegates proceeded to the Session Hall of Mathari. In attendance were over a hundred people from several nations, mostly members of the diplomatic corps of the OIC.

At 7:48 PM, entered Said ul-Islam Al-Ghadafi. The signing ceremony formally started.

The opening (remarks) was given by Ambassador Salem Adem, addressing those people seated at the presidential table and all present.

### **Signing of the Peace Agreement of 2001 between the GRP and MILF (June 22, 2001)**

Finally, the culminating event took place at 7:50 PM. This was the signing of the Peace Agreement by Al Haj Murad for the MILF and Jesus Dureza for the GRP, and witnessed by Saif ul-Islam, with the protocol officers (of about a dozen people) looking on and witnessed by a panel of over a hundred people present, representing various diplomatic corps. There was a big round of applause after the signing.

## Saif ul-Islam's Message

7:35 PM, Saif ul-Islam, after addressing the body, expressed happiness over the achievement for the Muslims in the Philippines. He pledged to “personally support and follow up what have been written in this agreement for the benefit of all parties.” He thanked the Malaysian parties for their great role and achievement, and Indonesia along with the presence of foreign ministers.

## Excerpts from Representatives

Dureza gave his speech, 7:58 PM. He reiterated that “GMA launched an all-out peace.” He said, the “signing of this agreement and truce for development requires a lot of work and cooperation towards peace and development.”

Al Haj Murad also gave his speech, 8:03 PM, addressing dignitaries present, the GRP, MNLF and MILF brothers, and members of the diplomatic corps. He said the “first round of talk will open new avenues, in the reaffirmation to a just solution... working committees to be reactivated and the implementation of all agreements in the next rounds of meeting.” He expressed great gratitude to the Great Leader Muamar Ghdadafi in hosting, Malaysia (Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad) and President Wahid of Indonesia, for their continuing support.

To close the ceremony, Dr. Ahmad E. Alonto was requested (by Ambassador Salem Adem) to give a reaction, in which he expressed support for the peace effort of the government in southern Philippines. He gave words of thanks.

8:30 PM. The ceremony was over. (From the venue at Hotel Mahari, returned to Hotel Al Kabir, resting with an enormous sense of fulfillment)

*(The rest of the account, from Day Four (Saturday, June 23, 2001), covers a reception of the group and other guests, tended by Libyan Leader Muamar Gaddafi and the departure from Libya and arrival of the group in the Philippines on June 28, 2001).*

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IN THE NAME OF GOD  
THE BENEFICENT, THE MERCIFUL

AGREEMENT ON PEACE BETWEEN THE  
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
AND THE  
MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT

The Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front herein referred to as the "Parties" to this Agreement;

Determined to establish a peaceful environment and a normal condition of life in the Bangsamoro homeland;

Reaffirming the Agreement for General Cessation of Hostilities, dated 18 July 1997 and the General Framework of the Agreement of intent signed between the Parties on 27 August 1998, and committing to reach a negotiated political settlement of the Bangsamoro problem, and enduring peace and stability in Mindanao;

Recalling the Tripoli Agreement of 1976 and the Jakarta Accord of 1996 between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), and the OIC Resolution No. 56/9-P(IS) on 12 November 2000 of the Ninth Session of the Islamic Summit Conference in Doha, State of Qatar, urging the GRP and the MILF "to promptly put an end to armed hostilities and to pursued peace talks towards finding a peaceful resolution to the existing problem in Mindanao."

Noting that the basic elements/principles for the resumption of peace talks between the MILF and the GRP Panels have been facilitated

by the Government of Malaysia, as set forth in the Agreement on the General Framework for the Resumption of Peace Talks between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front signed on March 24, 2001 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia;

Further recalling Article VI of the said Agreement on General Framework for the Resumption of the Peace Talks between the GRP and the MILF signed in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in which Parties agreed to undertake relief and rehabilitation measures for evacuees, and joint development projects in the conflict affected areas; and

Recognizing that peace negotiations between the GRP and the MILF is for the advancement of the general interest of the Bansamoro people and other indigenous people, and, recognizing further the need for a comprehensive, just and lasting political settlement of the conflict in Mindanao, the Parties welcome the resumption of the peace talks and, consequently,

Have agreed as follows:

#### A. SECURITY ASPECT

In accordance with the incremental characteristics of the peace process and agreement on the General Framework for the Resumption of the Peace Talks, the Parties, as represented by their respective Peace Panels, consider that normalization in conflict affected areas can be achieved if certain principles and guidelines of conduct and action are adhered to by the Parties. That among these are:

1. All past agreements of the Parties shall be implemented in accordance with the Agreement on the General Framework for the Resumption of the Peace Talks signed in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 24 March 2001 for the progressive resolution of the Bangsamoro problem with honor, justice and integrity for all sectors of society.

2. The negotiation and peaceful resolution of the conflict must

involve consultations with the Bangsamoro people free of any imposition in order to provide chances of success and open new formulas that permanently respond to the aspiration of the Bangsamoro people for freedom.

3. The Parties agree to invite representatives of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) to observe and monitor the implementation of all GRP-MILF Agreements. The Parties further agree to strengthen the GRP-MILF Agreement on the General Cessation of Hostilities dated 18 July 1997. Upon signing of this Agreement, a Monitoring Team shall be constituted with representatives from the OIC.

## **B. REHABILITATION ASPECT**

1. 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.

2. The MILF shall determine, lead and manage rehabilitation and development projects in conflict affected areas, except when public funds are involved, in which case Government procedures and rules will be observed.

3. The Parties shall safely return evacuees to their place of origin; provide all the necessary financial/material and technical assistance to start a new life, as well as allow them to be awarded reparations for their properties lost or destroyed by reason of the conflict.

4. In order to pave the way for relief and rehabilitation of evacuees and implementation of development projects in the areas affected by conflict, the Parties agree to implement the GRP-MILF Agreement on the General Cessation of Hostilities dated July 18, 1997.

### C. ANCESTRAL DOMAIN ASPECT

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 rights over their ancestral domain, agree that the same be discussed further by the Parties in their next meeting.

### D. ACTIVATION OF COMMITTEES

Immediately upon signing of this Agreement, the Parties hereby agree to activate working committees for the purpose of discharging their mandates, particularly the implementation of all agreement between the Parties.

### E. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The parties acknowledge the leadership of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in pursuing an all-out peace policy in Mindanao.

The Parties express their collective appreciation and gratitude to the Great Leader of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Colonel Muamar Gaddafi, and to the Chairman of the Gaddafi International Foundation for Charitable Associations, Saif Al Islam Gaddafi, for hosting the Formal Opening of the Resumption of the GRP-MILF Peace Talks in Tripoli, Libya; to His Excellency Dato Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohammad, Prime Minister of Malaysia and His Excellency Abdulrahman Wahid, President of the Republic of Indonesia, for their full and continuing support.

Done on this 22nd day of June 2001 corresponding to 30 Rabi' ul Aw'al 1422 in the presence of the representatives of the Gaddafi International Foundation for Charitable Associations, the Government of Malaysia and the Government of the Republic of the Indonesia.

**For GRP:**

**(SGD.) JESUS G. DUREZA**  
**Chairman, GRP Peace Panel**

**For the MILF:**

**(SGD.) AL HAJ MURAD EBRAHIM**  
**Chairman, MILF Peace Panel**

**Witnessed by:**

**(SGD.) SAIF AL ISLAM GADDAFI**  
**Chairman of the Gaddafi International**  
**Foundation for Charitable Associations**