

**MUTLI-PARTISAN SUPPORT FOR PEACE PROCESSES IN THE
PHILIPPINES**
**A Covenant Based on the Respect for Human Rights and the Pursuit of
Social Justice**

Introductory Note:

Four decades of protracted armed conflicts have raged in the country. Peace negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front – and, previously with the Moro National Liberation Front – have equally been protracted but seldom sustained, leading to a situation where the main factors which underlie the conflicts have not been seriously addressed. It was the pioneer peace advocate, the late Senator Jose W. Diokno, who argued that to resolve the situation of violence confronted by the country the priority needed to shift from mainly military means to a negotiated approach whose main agenda would focus on “jobs and justice, food and freedom.” The proposed covenant which follows attempts to forge a working consensus among political leaders from different political parties and organizations to take up a common position of support for peace processes as the country enters a defining electoral season. By forging a common front to advance peace negotiations as the preferred option to address the challenges we face, we are paving the way to build a just and durable peace which our children deserve.

Advancing a Peace Covenant

The Advocates for a Peace Covenant (APC) hopes to catalyze – in concert with other ongoing peace initiatives – a modest yet timely effort that will broaden and deepen the peace constituency in the country. It aims to encourage multi-partisan support for peace processes in the country based on the principles of human rights and social justice – across political divides and generations.

Endorsements: This undertaking hopes to gain the endorsement of individuals, groups, organizations, and movements around a peace covenant that is based on the respect for human rights and the pursuit of social justice – to which different political formations, parties, party-list groups and national and local candidates can subscribe to – during the course of the year and particularly in the campaign period in the run-up to the national elections 2010.

Gatherings: A gathering on the Peace Covenant on the 23rd of September from 9:30 to 12 noon at the SGV Hall, 3rd Floor of the AIM Conference Center. There will be a further gathering on the eve or on human rights day, 10th of December 2009 around the Waging Peace Conference event scheduled during that period bringing together civil society organizations and party formations to formalize adherence to the proposed peace covenant.

Follow-Up: Based on consultations with different individuals and groups, follow-up to this process will be discussed and formulated so that there will be monitoring and enforcement of the provisions of the peace covenant in the lifetime of the next government and in the policies and practice adopted by elected political leaders who pledge to adhere to the principles espoused in the covenant.

A PEACE COVENANT

We, the representatives and leaders of different political parties and organizations, re-affirm our support for the peace processes in the country, expressing our preferences for negotiated approaches to address the issues of poverty and inequality, human rights violations and injustice, social exclusion and discrimination which underlie the armed conflicts in the country.

We resolve to protect human rights, putting an end to political killings and unresolved human rights violations. We intend to put a stop to electoral violence which in the past has become part of our contentious electoral contests.

We will work to build the peace that comes from meeting the basic needs of our people such as jobs, land and livelihood; homes, health, and education, and the safety and security of our communities – especially as the world confronts the present economic crisis and the impacts of climate change and environment degradation.

We pledge to put people at the heart of our politics, to put principles over patronage, and to forge a common sense of purpose as befits public servants who will heed the cry of the most vulnerable in our society as well as respond to the hopes of future generations.

We commit to protect and expand democratic space so that the diverse voices in our society are given due respect and that social change comes about in ways that are more inclusive and collaborative since the peace we pursue is far too important to become another casualty of partisan politics.

We will together – though we belong to different political persuasions – build a more peaceful and prosperous future that our children deserve.

09 September 2009

Advocates for a Peace Covenant

The Advocates for a Peace Covenant is an occasional forum composed initially of former Senators Bobby Tañada and Santanina Rasul, Dr. Jun Mercado, OMI, Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, SJ, Dr. Patricia Licuanan, Prof. Randy David, Prof. Ed Garcia, and the convenors of the Waging Peace Philippines, among others. Its secretariat is at the Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute, 2nd Floor, Hoffner

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gzopeace@gmail.com, ktanada@gmail.com

Advocates for a PEACE COVENANT
Initial List of Official Endorsers
As of September 22, 2009

Peace/Human Rights NGOs:

Ateneo Human Rights Center
Center for Peace Education – Miriam College
Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute
Human Right Defenders in Cebu
Human Rights Defenders in Negros
Human Rights Defenders in Tacloban
Initiatives for International Dialogue
Interreligious Solidarity Movement For Peace-Zamboanga
Mindanao Peaceweavers
Mindanao Solidarity Network
Our Movement for a Nonkilling Philippines
Paghiliusa sa Paghidaet Negros
Pax Christi Pilipinas
Peace Advocates Zamboanga
Philippine Action Network on Small Arms
Philippine Campaign against Cluster Munitions
Task Force Detainees of the Philippines
Waging Peace Philippines Network
World Without Wars Philippines

Youth:

Brotherhood of Destiny
Generation Peace
NAPC Youth and Students
United Youth for Peace and Development
Youth Aid Philippines

Religious:

Caritas Manila
Social Action Center Legazpi
The OMI Communications

Academe:

Association of Schools of Public Administration
Ateneo Political Science Department
Ateneo School of Government
Kalayaan College
Miriam College

Environmental:

Philippine Climate Change Imperative

Women:

NAPC Women Council
PILIPINA
Women and Gender Institute
Women's Action Network for Development
Women's Feature Service

Business:

Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for Human Development
District 3081 Rotary Club
Makati Business Club
Management Association of the Philippines
Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Civic Organizations:**Media:**

Catholic Media Network
Environmental Broadcast Circle
Foundation for Media Alternatives
National Alliance of Broadcast Unions
PeaceComm
Philippine Press Institute
Radio Veritas

Other CSOs:

Action for Economic Reform
Aktibong Nagsusulong ng Alternatibong Kultura, Inc.
ANAK-TEATRO
Association of Foundations
Confederation of Independent Union in the Public Sector
Eastern Visayas Network of NGOs and POs
Institute for Autonomy and Governance
Institute for the Study of Asian Church & Culture
Kilos Kanayunan Laban sa Kahirapan, A United Movement of Farmers, Rural
Workers and Indigenous People
Kusog Mindanao
Liwawa Ed Asinan Foundation Inc.
Mindanao Integrated Network Development Center
Ortigas Foundation
Pandayan Para sa Sosyalistang Pilipinas
Partnership of Philippine Support Services, Inc.
Peace and Equity Foundation
People's Alternative Studies Center for Research and Education in Social
Development
Philippine Chamber of Agriculture and Food, Inc. (PCAFI)
Philippine Employer-Labor Social Partners, Inc. (PELSPI)
Tanghalang Bonifacio-Rizal, Inc.
Touch Foundation, Inc.

Basic Sectors:

Kongreso ng Pagakakisa ng Manggagawa sa Pilipinas
NAPC Basic Sectors Forum
NAPC IP Council
NAPC Urban Poor Council
National Labor Union
PAKISAMA
Workers Welfare Watch-Philippines

Individuals:

Amina Rasul
Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, SJ
Atty. Carlos Medina
Augusto Miclat Jr.
Bobbitt Librojo
Bros. Ellis Gil Luciano, Augustinians of the Assumption
Cesar Villanueva
Chit Asis
Cristina Gregorio
Dr. Jose V. Abueva
Dr. Patricia Licuanan
Filomenon S. Sta. Ana
Florenca Casanova-Dorotan
Fr. Eliseo Mercado, OMI
Fr. Jhess Malit
George Bradford Patterson II
Grace Gorospe Jamon
Jasmin Nario-Galace
Jim Paredes
Joel Saracho
Jose L. Pavia
Loreta Castro
Mardi Mapa-Suplido
Marites Guingona-Africa
Miguel "Mike" Maga, Jr.
Muriel Orevillo-Montengro, Ph.D.
Nereus Acosta
Prof. Ed Garcia
Prof. Randy David
Prof. Victor Aguilan, Th.D
Ray Dean Salvosa
Rex C. Drilon II

Sen. Santanina Rasul
Sen. Wigberto Tañada
Sr. Cres Lucero, SFIC
Sr. Vida Cordero, SFIC
Veronica F. Villavicencio
Victoria M. Segovia
Wilson C. Wy Tiu

Principal Witness/Independent Monitor:
Commission on Human Rights, Philippines