

Third Party Monitoring Team
Eighth Public Report, February 2022 to October 2023

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List of Acronyms

AGCH	Agreement on the General Cessation of Hostilities
AHJAG	Ad Hoc Joint Action Group
AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
APA	Assembly and Processing Area
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
ASPIRE	Assistance for Security, Peace, Integration, and Recovery for Advanced Human Security in the BARMM
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BEDC	Bangsamoro Economic and Development Council
BEC	Bangsamoro Electoral Code
BGC	Bangsamoro Governors' Caucus
BIAF	Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces
BIFF	Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters
BLGC	Bangsamoro Local Governance Code
BLGF	Bureau of Local Government Finance
BNTF	Bangsamoro Normalization Trust Fund
BOL	Bangsamoro Organic Law
BRC	Bangsamoro Revenue Code
BSDB	Bangsamoro Sustainable Development Board
BTA	Bangsamoro Transition Authority
BWC	Bangsamoro Women's Commission
CAAM	conflict-affected areas in Mindanao
CAB	Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro
CCCH	Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities
CHED	Commission on Higher Education
COC	Coal Operating Contract
CoL	Council of Leaders
COMELEC	Commission on Elections

CPC	Civilian Protection Component
CTP	Camps Transformation Plan
CTIP	Camps Transformation Investment Program
DA	Department of Agriculture
DBM	Department of Budget and Management
DepEd	Department of Education
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs
DI	Daulah Islamiyah
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government
DND	Department of National Defense
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
EO	Executive Order
FAB	Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro
FY	Fiscal Year
GPH	Government of the Philippines
ICCMN	Inter-Cabinet Cluster Mechanism on Normalization
ICG	International Contact Group
ICP	Independent Commission on Policing
IDB	Independent Decommissioning Body
IDP	internally displaced person
IEB	Intergovernmental Energy Board
IFPB	Intergovernmental Fiscal Policy Board
IGR	intergovernmental relations
IGRB	Intergovernmental Relations Body
IIDB	Intergovernmental Infrastructure Development Board
IMT	International Monitoring Team
IP	indigenous people

IPRA	Indigenous Peoples Rights Act
IRR	Implementing Rules and Regulations
JBZJC	Joint Body for the Zones of Joint Cooperation
JNC	Joint Normalization Committee
JPST	Joint Peace and Security Team
JTFCT	Joint Task Forces on Camps Transformation
LGU	local government unit
MAA	Most Affected Area
MCB	Marawi Compensation Board
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MILG	Ministry of the Interior and Local Government
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MP	Member of Parliament
MPOS	Ministry of Public Order and Safety
NAC	National Amnesty Commission
NAPOLCOM	National Police Commission
NBI	National Bureau of Investigation
NSQE	NAPOLCOM Special Qualifying Eligibility
NTF-DPAGs	National Task Force for the Disbandment of Private Armed Groups
NTJRCB	National Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission for the Bangsamoro
OOBC	Office for Other Bangsamoro Communities
OPAPRU	Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity
PAG	private armed group
PAMANA	Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan Program
PCBPF	Philippine Congress – Bangsamoro Parliament Forum
PhP	Philippine Peso
PNP	Philippine National Police
PRO BAR	Police Regional Office in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region
PSC	Petroleum Service Contract

PSRO	Peace, Security, and Reconciliation Office
RA	Republic Act
SALWs	small arms and light weapons
SAP	Special Assistant to the President
SC	Supreme Court
SDF	Special Development Fund
SGA	Special Geographic Area
SONA	State of the Nation Address
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
TFBM	Task Force Bangon Marawi
TFDCC	Task Force for Decommissioned Combatants and their Communities
TJR	transitional justice and reconciliation
TJRC	Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission
TOR	Terms of Reference
TPMT	Third Party Monitoring Team
TWG	technical working group
TWG-TJR	Technical Working Group on Transitional Justice and Reconciliation
UBJP	United Bangsamoro Justice Party
UN	United Nations

Third Party Monitoring Team**Eighth Public Report, February 2022 to October 2023****1. Summary**

In line with the Terms of Reference of the Third Party Monitoring Team (TPMT), this eighth public report intends to provide an overall assessment of developments in the implementation of the Agreements between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), hereafter referred to as the Parties, as incorporated into the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) signed on 27 March 2014. This includes in particular the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro signed on 15 October 2012. The report covers the period from February 2022 to October 2023 (see Annexes I, II and III for TPMT Terms of Reference, members and summary of TPMT monitoring sessions during the reporting period).

The transition phase of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) was extended by three years until 30 June 2025 following an amendment of Republic Act (RA) No. 11054 or the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL) passed by Congress in October 2021. Another extension of the transition phase is not likely and the BARMM is preparing for the first regional elections to take place in May 2025.

Following the May 2022 national and local elections a new administration took over in Manila. President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. appointed the 80-member Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) Parliament to serve for the remainder of the transition phase. The MILF continues to lead the interim BTA government and Chief Minister Murad Ebrahim remains in charge of the interim Cabinet. The GPH and MILF Peace Implementing Panels (the Panels) were reconstituted, as was the Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB).

The Bangsamoro peace process follows two tracks. The political track aims at ensuring meaningful self-governance for the Bangsamoro by establishing the BARMM as a new and democratic political entity. The normalization track focuses on the gradual normalization of conflict-affected areas and their transformation into peaceful and progressive communities.

The reporting period witnessed solid progress on the political track. The newly appointed BTA Parliament was quick to focus on essential legislative work. It enacted the Bangsamoro Electoral Code (BEC) on 8 March 2023 which defines the framework for the May 2025 regional elections. The Bangsamoro Local Governance Code (BLGC), which determines the relationship between the regional government and its local government units (LGUs), was adopted on 28 September 2023. All priority legislation is now in place with the exception of the Bangsamoro Revenue Code (BRC) and the Indigenous Peoples (IP) Code.

On 17 August 2023, the BTA Parliament approved bills establishing 8 municipalities comprising the 63 Special Geographic Area (SGA) barangays in North Cotabato province that opted to join the BARMM during the 6 February 2019 plebiscite.

Budget Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman has taken over as Co-chair of the IGRB on the National Government side, whereas Education Minister Mohagher M. Iqbal remains as Co-chair on behalf of the Bangsamoro Government. The IGRB continues to perform its crucial coordination function between the two governments. Among the priority issues tackled by the IGRB feature policing and co-management of energy resources. An Intergovernmental Energy Board (IEB) Circular on the joint exploration, development, and utilization of energy resources within the territorial jurisdiction of the Bangsamoro was signed on 6 July 2023.

All intergovernmental relations (IGR) mechanisms are now operational. The Philippine Congress – Bangsamoro Parliament Forum (PCBPF) convened for the first time on 15 November 2022 and the first meeting of the Council of Leaders (CoL) took place on 9 August 2023. Regular meetings of the CoL are particularly important to ensure effective coordination between the regional government and LGUs.

Progress on the normalization track has been comparatively slow. A ceremony to conclude the third phase of decommissioning took place on 3 August 2023. The total figure now stands at 26,132 decommissioned combatants and 4,625 firearms which were placed in the custody of the Independent Decommissioning Body (IDB). The GPH and the MILF hope to complete decommissioning before the regional elections in May 2025. The MILF has not yet provided the list for the fourth and final phase which is necessary to reach the targeted number of 40,000 decommissioned combatants and 7,000 weapons. The effective provision of socioeconomic benefit packages for decommissioned combatants is still under discussion by the Parties.

Recruitment into the police commenced in 2023, albeit much later than originally anticipated. In May 2022, the National Police Commission (NAPOLCOM) conducted a Special Qualifying Eligibility (NSQE) Examination for MILF and Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) members, which 7,145 out of 11,075 applicants passed successfully. Subsequently, Interior Secretary Benhur C. Abalos Jr. announced that 400 slots were allocated as a recruitment quota for MILF and MNLF in 2023. On 10 August 2023, 102 recruits (52 from the MILF and 50 from the MNLF) took their oath as officers of the Philippine National Police (PNP) Police Regional Office in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (PRO BAR). More candidates are undergoing a screening process. The question is how many former MILF and MNLF can be accommodated and whether the 5-year waiver period in the BOL on educational, age, and height requirements which expires in January 2024 can be adjusted.

The period to file amnesty applications under Presidential Proclamations issued in February 2021 has already expired. We note as positive that a National Amnesty Commission (NAC), chaired by Attorney Leah Tanodra-Armamento, was appointed on 13 January 2023. At the time of finalizing this report the NAC had not yet started to work on individual cases in anticipation of revised Presidential Proclamations to extend the application period. The actual application process will be administered through local amnesty boards composed representatives of religious groups, local chief executives, prosecutors, security services, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG). Only crimes perpetrated in pursuit of political beliefs fall under amnesty. A swift resolution of amnesty cases is particularly important for MILF members, including some already serving as BTA Members of Parliament (MPs), who have cases filed against them and who intend to run as candidates during the 2025 elections.

Other elements of the normalization track are still in the initial stages of implementation. A six-year Camps Transformation Plan (CTP) was approved by the Panels in 2021 but has not advanced much from the conceptual stage. So far only a limited number of private armed groups (PAGs) has been disbanded. Proposals for Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) redeployment parameters continue to be under discussion. There are moves in the House of Representatives and Senate to pass a law creating a National Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission for the Bangsamoro (NTJRCB), but it is uncertain whether this initiative will be given priority status.

Compensation of victims of the 2017 Marawi siege commenced six years after the event. On 30 January 2023, President Marcos Jr. appointed nine members of the Marawi Compensation Board (MCB), chaired by Atty. Maisara C. Dandamun-Latiph. The MCB has begun to assess compensation for residents who lost properties and lives as a result of the siege. The initial allocation for the year 2023 under the Marawi Siege Victims' Compensation Act amounts to PhP1 billion. The total number of potential claims is estimated at PhP89 billion, therefore allocations will need to be substantially increased in the coming years.

It is encouraging to record that the number of ceasefire violations between the Parties remains low. Nonetheless armed skirmishes between the GPH and MILF still occur on occasion. A recent example is a law enforcement operation in Datu Paglas municipality on 18 June 2023. The MILF mourned the loss of seven of its members including two decommissioned combatants and temporarily suspended the finalization of the third phase of the decommissioning process. A joint investigation of the incident by the Parties did not take place. The Malaysia-led International Monitoring Team (IMT), charged with monitoring the implementation of the 1997 GPH-MILF Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, left Mindanao on 30 June 2022 as the GPH did not extend its mandate. Independent field verifications of this and other incidents can therefore no longer be carried out.

2. Comment

After decades of conflict implementation of the CAB offers the opportunity to arrive at sustained peace in Mindanao. Peace is the basis for unlocking the region's full potential which will benefit the people in the Bangsamoro and the Philippines as a whole.

The transition period in the Bangsamoro ends on 30 June 2025. As we issue this report there are only 16 months left until the first election of the 80-member Bangsamoro Parliament in May 2025. The remaining period for the MILF-led transitional government to consolidate the foundations for meaningful self-governance in the Bangsamoro in line with the ambitions spelled out by the Parties in the CAB is therefore limited.

The CAB was painstakingly negotiated under consideration of all relevant aspect to achieve lasting peace in the Southern Philippines. The Parties negotiated a strong and workable autonomy settlement. It formally recognizes the Bangsamoro identity, acknowledges legitimate grievances, and aims to establish a new political entity in the form of a representative government for the Bangsamoro. As such, the CAB represents a very precious achievement and deserves to be held in high esteem by both Parties. Dilution of negotiated provisions and excessive implementation delays lower the chances of ultimate success of the peace process.

That said, we are aware that it has now been some 10 years since the CAB was negotiated. Conditions on the ground may change; therefore, there has to be scope for flexibility in the implementation of the peace agreements, provided both Parties agree on the way forward.

A change in administrations always brings with it some natural delay as new protagonists are appointed and need to familiarize themselves with relevant dossiers, even though there has been a high degree of continuity both in the MILF-led BTA in Cotabato and the OPAPRU in Manila. Then again, change also offers scope for improvement.

We identify as positive and encouraging the following developments in the peace process:

- Both Parties remain fully committed to the peace process, including at the highest levels. The lines of communication between the Parties remain open. The first meeting of the reconstituted Peace Implementing Panels on 1 July 2023 re-affirmed, along with the entire peace mechanisms, their commitment to the continued implementation of the CAB and the achievement of just and lasting peace in the Bangsamoro and in the entire country. President Marcos Jr. at the SONA on 24 July 2023 expressed pride in progress taken by the BARMM and pledged his administration's continued support for the peace process.
- We further acknowledge good progress on the political track. The BTA Parliament has taken on a proactive role in adopting priority legislations, five so far including the Electoral Code and the Local Governance Code during the reporting period. The regional government is arguably still in its formative years but has overcome initial limitations in particular due to the Coronavirus and an intricate recruitment process and has stepped up performance in delivering results to the Bangsamoro population. The

foundations for meaningful self-governance in the Bangsamoro have been laid which in itself is a magnificent achievement.

- In a major win for the peace process, all factions of the Moro National Liberation Front are now represented in the BTA parliament in a spirit of unity and convergence.
- The Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) has consolidated its role as the main forum to address and resolve practical questions affecting the work of the Bangsamoro Government and the National Government. All mechanisms under the IGRB are now operational. The IGRB is a success story of the peace process and its role has been invaluable.
- While progress on normalization has been slow, which is acknowledged by both Parties, there is a perceptible new drive on behalf of the GPH to fast-track the implementation of the normalization process and to provide increased resources for this purpose. New concepts for more effective performance delivery are under consideration. The Bangsamoro government has signaled flexibility to contribute to these efforts, albeit without neglecting its responsibilities to cater for the entire Bangsamoro population.
- The TPMT notes as positive the active involvement of women in the peace process, which finds expression in the quality of female participation in the BTA as well as the energetic role taken up by the Bangsamoro Women's Commission (BWC). The BWC and women civil society organizations as well as women parliamentarians themselves ensured the provision in the Electoral Code that at least 30% of political party nominees must be women. Women have reportedly also become more active in peace mediation at community level. That said, many of the various peace mechanisms still lack women representation in the decision-making levels of both parties.
- Marawi compensation is not covered under the peace agreements (the siege took place after signature of the CAB). Nonetheless, we observe the dedicated and professional work quickly initiated by the Marawi Compensation Board (MCB). For the MCB to complete its task budgetary allocations for Marawi compensation will have to increase substantially.

While the Bangsamoro peace process has come a long way, there are a number of challenges which need to be tackled to bring it to a successful conclusion:

- The Parties differ in their perception on what the peace agreements ultimately are about. The majority perspective from Manila is for a BARMM administration forming part of an integrated government structure under a presidential system, whereas the MILF leadership believes that it negotiated agreements with the ambition to strive towards real autonomy and meaningful self-governance. Fundamental differences in perception will ultimately have to be overcome for the peace process to succeed.

- There are also variances in perspective on some crucial elements of the normalization track, including on how to bring the decommissioning process to a successful conclusion, the shape of policing in the BARMM, how to implement the ceasefire mechanisms and how to progress on transitional justice and reconciliation (TJR).
- Within the normalization track we observe an emphasis on formal decommissioning of MILF Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF) members through the Independent Decommissioning Body (IDB) while other elements of the normalization track continue to lag behind. At the same time there has been limited progress on other elements of normalization including socioeconomic support to decommissioned combatants, camps transformation, disbandment of private armed groups (PAGs), amnesty, policing, redeployment of the AFP, and TJR. Care should be taken to prevent imbalances from undermining the integrity of the peace process. According to the CAB, decommissioning should be parallel and commensurate to the implementation of all the agreements of the Parties.
- The implementation of normalization also requires management capacity and a realistic assessment of implementation capacity. Primarily, this rests with the Panels and the Joint Normalization Committee (JNC). As the implementation of the peace process evolves, it has become apparent that the peace mechanisms have increasingly become exposed to overlapping responsibilities. Examples of this are the Inter-Cabinet Cluster Mechanism on Normalization (ICCMN) acting unilaterally on issues related to normalization and the IGRB being asked to look into issues which cannot be sorted out between the Panels. Arguably, this has resulted in a watering down of the peace process architecture.
- The slow and sporadic provision of socioeconomic packages beyond the PhP100,000 transitional cash assistance to decommissioned combatants has resulted in dissatisfaction among those who underwent the first steps of the process. As a result, the MILF claims that it faces increasing difficulties to motivate its remaining combatants to join decommissioning. Potential issues which could impact completing the decommissioning process include differences in opinion over the number of weapons to be put beyond use and a lack of clarity over the definition of combatants. It is currently not agreed between the Parties when the MILF will provide the list for the fourth and final phase of decommissioning.
- Recruitment of MILF and MNLF members into the police started only in 2023 which is much later than originally anticipated. Out of the 7,145 MILF and MNLF members who passed a NAPOLCOM test for entry into the police force, a quota of 400 will be recruited in 2023. It is not certain how many MILF and MNLF members can ultimately be taken in. The BOL waiver on educational, age and height requirements expires in January 2024. There are fears in the BARMM that the waiver could be used to curtail police recruitment unless a feasible solution is found to extend the waiver period. Not significantly raising the recruitment quota will likely result in considerable frustration among those who successfully passed the exam.

- The number of skirmishes between the GPH and the MILF remains low. Nonetheless, uncoordinated operations by security forces against lawless groups / individuals in areas where the MILF has presence continue to be of high concern. The Datu Paglas incident, a PNP law enforcement operation carried out on 18 June 2023, resulted in the killing of 7 MILF members including 2 decommissioned combatants. The PNP claims the victims were part of the militant Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF). The incident has raised questions over the implementation of the ceasefire mechanisms. It is seen by the MILF as a symptom of insecurity affecting their communities and resulted in the temporary suspension of the decommissioning process. It serves as an illustration that the peace process can still be put in jeopardy if the Parties do not execute the necessary levels of cooperation.
- After 18 years of service the GPH opted not to extend the mandate of the Malaysia-led International Monitoring Team (IMT), the presence of the IMT ended in June 2022. It is our impression that the absence of the IMT resulted in the failure to jointly investigate ceasefire violations and has deprived the Parties of the opportunity to benefit from independent field verifications. The departure of the IMT is in breach of the CAB and is liable to reduce confidence in the implementation of the peace process.
- Resolution of amnesty cases is of profound importance to enable MILF members who committed crimes in pursuit of their political beliefs to return to a civilian life without fear of arrest. Amnesty is especially significant for those MILF members interested in participating in the electoral process. The deadline for filing candidacies is October 2024. While the appointment of the NAC in January 2023 was a positive step, revised amnesty proclamations to extend the application period are yet to be issued.
- TJR is one of the most crucial tasks of the peace process and necessary to address historical injustices, achieve healing and build sustained peace. Many human rights violations took place outside the BARMM, hence the need for a national approach. It would be inappropriate to shift responsibility for historical injustices from the national government to the Bangsamoro government. There has been little progress on passing legislation to establish a National Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission for the Bangsamoro (NTJRCB), the main recommendation of the Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC).

The TPMT proposes the following key recommendations:

- Care should be taken to maintain the high degree of mutual trust which has been established between the Parties over the years. The momentum and commitment to shared objectives in the peace process must be continually nurtured. While there has to be scope for flexibility in the implementation of the peace agreements, any reflection on agreed commitments and adjustments to formal mechanisms should be jointly addressed by the Parties in a spirit of cooperation and continuity. Joint decisions are key, unilateralism should be avoided. The Panels need to be in the driving seat of bringing the peace process to a successful conclusion.

- As we approach the end of the transition period, the Panels might wish to take stock and compare their assessments of the status of implementation of the CAB with focus on normalization.
- There are many issues requiring clarification and decisions by the Panels, this relates in particular to the implementation of the normalization track which is lagging behind. A strategic review and dialogue process is needed to define an implementation roadmap until the end of the transition period and if necessary beyond. It is important to maintain the balance and integrity of the peace process. Clarity over mutual commitments and jointly agreed targets would also be helpful in defining conditions for signing the exit agreement.
- The BTA should focus on adopting the remaining priority codes, in particular the Bangsamoro Revenue Code (BRC), which is important to strengthen the fiscal autonomy of the BARMM, and the Indigenous Peoples (IP) Code. In order to ensure synergy within the legislative structure IP rights are reflected in the recently adopted Bangsamoro Local governance Code (BLGC). The IP Code should satisfy the aspiration of Non-Moro Indigenous Peoples (NMIPs) for respect of their identity and rights consistent with the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) as stated in the BOL, and lead to a stronger sense of inclusion and security among NMIPs in the Bangsamoro.
- Decommissioning is central to normalization. In order to bring the decommissioning process to a successful conclusion and to enhance trust in the process, it is of particular importance to remove remaining uncertainties over the provision of socioeconomic support to decommissioned combatants and their communities. This should be backed up with an implementation framework and a funding strategy, ideally on a multi-annual basis for the remainder of the transition period and beyond. It would be useful to associate the Bangsamoro Government more closely to the work of the ICCMN.
- The Parties should work towards a solution for a continued role of the IMT, even if modified from previous arrangements. The number of incidents between the GPH and the MILF may be greatly reduced but incidents still occur, like the one in Datu Paglas on 18 June 2023. The involvement of an impartial body in monitoring the ceasefire agreement is still needed for independent field verifications and to reinforce confidence in the peace process.
- The Parties should agree on steps for improving their approach in the field of communication. This is necessary in order to explain clearly what resources and development programs can be expected in the coming years in order to manage expectations among beneficiaries on the ground.
- Target figures for recruiting MILF and MNLF into the PNP for the coming years need to be clarified and communicated to the public, notwithstanding further screening requirements. A solution should be found for extending the waiver on age, height and educational requirements linked to the period of five years from the ratification of the BOL. More generally, there is a need for the Parties to discuss how the policing

elements in the CAB could be addressed and reconciled with the policing provisions in the BOL.

- The amnesty process needs to be fast-tracked. We recommend that in order to fulfil the spirit of the amnesty provisions contained in the CAB, the NAC should explore issuing safe conduct passes to all those whose formal applications have been accepted until resolution of their applications. The renewal of the Presidential Proclamation on amnesty is urgently needed.
- TJR is a task that needs to be pursued first and foremost at national level. Bills under consideration in the Philippine Congress to establish a NTJRCB should be awarded priority status. Action at regional level can at best complement action at national level. The Panels need to come to an agreement on how best to advance work on TJR.
- The Bangsamoro Government including its leaders need to reinforce its presence in the island provinces of Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi. While communication with these provinces is often difficult due to distance from the regional capital in Cotabato, lack of transport links and high travel costs, ways to sustain a stronger administrative presence and regular services of BARMM ministries can be developed. The needs of the BARMM citizens in the islands are no less of a priority than of those on the mainland.
- There is a high level of expectations among the Parties for international donors to contribute substantially to the normalization process. The CAB allows for donor grants to be received directly by the Bangsamoro. The GPH would be well-advised to look at reviewing current restrictions to visit the BARMM in order to facilitate enhanced donor engagement.

Overall assessment

The TPMT profoundly appreciates what has been achieved in the Bangsamoro peace process since negotiations of a peace agreement between the government and the MILF were launched in 1997. The steadfast commitment of the Parties to continue to strive for peace is truly impressive. President Marcos Jr. put this into a broader regional and global context when he addressed the international community at the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 20 September 2022, referring to success in the BARMM as a credible and solid foundation for self-government that paves the way for lasting peace and sustainable development.

As we approach the end of the transition phase, there can be no doubt that both Parties want the peace process to succeed. There are however some notable differences in perception between the Parties on how the implementation of the peace agreements should evolve and what meaningful self-governance for the Bangsamoro ultimately means.

This peace process is much more than a project implementation mechanism: it is more than a special form of administration for a once volatile region. It serves a higher purpose, as outlined by the architects of the CAB who aspired towards a new and unique form of autonomous political entity which reflects the distinct cultural identity of the Bangsamoro.

It is for this reason that we as TPMT believe that the CAB remains the cornerstone for peace in the region. We trust that the Parties understand and fully appreciate their responsibility to uphold the CAB and are convinced that they will continue to manifest their full commitment to the spirit and letter of the peace agreements.

With many tasks still to be accomplished, in particular on the normalization track, full implementation of the peace agreements may not be complete with the end of the transition phase in 2025. This also raises the question whether it would be possible to conclude an exit agreement by 2025.

Most crucial for the successful conclusion of the peace process is the continued commitment and sincerity of both Parties to fully implement the peace agreements, for as long as this may take.

3. Developments in the implementation of the agreements between the Parties

i. Key events during the reporting period

Notable key events affecting the peace process during the reporting period are listed as follows:

On the side of the GPH:

- National and local elections took place on 9 May 2022. Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. was sworn in as President of the Philippines on 30 June 2022.
- On 30 June 2022 Secretary Antonio Ernesto F. Lagdameo Jr. was appointed Special Assistant to the President (SAP) and is closely following the Bangsamoro peace process in the Office of the President. Secretary Lagdameo also co-chairs the Inter-Cabinet Cluster Mechanism on Normalization (ICCMN) along with Presidential Peace Adviser Secretary Carlito G. Galvez Jr.
- Secretary Galvez was reappointed as Head of the Office of the Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity (OPAPRU) on 18 October 2022. On 9 January 2023, he was appointed senior undersecretary and officer-in-charge of the Department of National Defense (DND). Following this on 20 February 2023, Presidential Assistant Isidro L. Purisima took his oath as Acting Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity at the Malacañan Palace. Secretary Galvez on 26 June 2023 returned as Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity, while Isidro Purisima was appointed senior undersecretary at OPAPRU.
- President Marcos Jr. appointed the Marawi Compensation Board (MCB) on 30 January 2023.

The following policy statements by President Marcos Jr. are particularly noteworthy:

- At the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly on 20 September 2022, President Marcos Jr. referred to the Bangsamoro peace process as the centerpiece of the Philippine experience in building peace as a means to enrich the work of the UN Security Council. The peace that was forged after many decades of conflict demonstrated that unity was possible even in the most trying circumstances. Inclusive dialogue involving all stakeholders conducted with patience and good faith had produced a credible and solid foundation for self-government paving the way for lasting peace and sustainable development.
- In his State of the Nation Address (SONA) on 24 July 2023, President Marcos Jr. lauded progress in the BARMM, saying it would be self-governing, progressive, and effective. This was made possible because of the cooperation of all key groups in the transition phase. He added that the nation's prospects for true and lasting peace in Southern Philippines had been strengthened through the BARMM and pledged continued support to the peace process.

On the side of the BTA

- The new BTA Parliament was inaugurated on 15 September 2022 in the presence of President Marcos Jr., who attended the ceremony at the Bangsamoro Government Center in Cotabato City. Regular BTA sessions started on 20 September 2022 (see Annex IV for list of BTA members of Parliament).
- A newly appointed BTA Interim Cabinet, consisting mostly of reappointed officials, took its oath of office on 23 September 2022 (see Annex V for list of Cabinet members).
- Sheik Kalipha Usman Nando, the first Wali of Bangsamoro and ceremonial head of the BARMM, passed away on 5 February 2023.
- The BTA enacted the Bangsamoro Electoral Code on 8 March 2023 which defines the legal framework for the May 2025 regional elections.
- Abdulraof A. Macacua was sworn in as Governor of Maguindanao del Norte by President Marcos Jr. on 28 April 2023. This follows a plebiscite on 17 September 2022 which resulted in the division of the former province of Maguindanao into Maguindanao del Sur and Maguindanao del Norte. Governor Macacua retains his position as Chief of Staff of the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF). Abunawas "Von Al Haq" L. Maslamama, previously Deputy Minister of the Ministry of the Interior and Local Government (MILG), succeeded him as Senior Minister.
- The Second Bangsamoro Development Plan 2023-2028 was officially launched on 12 April 2023.
- The BTA Parliament on 17 August 2023 approved bills establishing eight municipalities comprising the 63 SGA barangays in North Cotabato province that opted to join the BARMM during the 6 February 2019 plebiscite.

- The BTA enacted Bangsamoro Local Governance Code which defines the relationship between the BARMM and LGUs on 28 September 2023.

On the side of the IGRB

- The reconstituted Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) met for the first time on 1 December 2022 in Davao City. Subsequent meetings took place on 24 February 2023, 1 June 2023, and 27 July 2023 (see Annex VI for list of IGRB members).
- The first meeting of the Philippine Congress Bangsamoro Parliament Forum (PCBPF) took place on 15 November 2022 in Pasay City (see Annex VII for list of PCBPF members).
- The first meeting of the Council of Leaders (CoL) took place on 9 August 2023 in Davao City (see Annex VIII for list of CoL members).

On the side of the peace mechanisms

- The Malaysia-led International Monitoring Team (IMT) ceased operations on 30 June 2022 after 18 years of operations as their mandate was not extended by the GPH. Panel discussions on a successor arrangement were inconclusive.
- The National Amnesty Commission (NAC), mandated to implement amnesty provisions, was appointed by President Marcos Jr. on 13 January 2023.
- The first meeting of the newly constituted Peace Implementing Panels under the new administration took place on 1 July 2023.
- The third phase of decommissioning was concluded in August 2023. It had been launched in November 2021.
- A new Malaysian Facilitator has been appointed, H.E. Gen (Rtrd.) Tan Sri Zulkifli bin Zainal Abidin. His first visit to Philippines in this capacity took place from 14-18 August 2023.

ii. Relevant political developments during the reporting period

Regional elections in the BARMM, originally scheduled to be held on 9 May 2022, were postponed to May 2025 following signature into law in October 2021 of RA No. 11593, which amended Section 13, Article XVI of the BOL.

RA No. 11593 leaves the provision of Article XVI of the BOL in place which defines that the MILF shall lead the BTA as the interim government of the BARMM during the transition period with executive authority to be exercised by the interim Chief Minister.

At the time RA No. 11593 became law, the assumption was that President Rodrigo Roa Duterte would appoint the new BTA to ensure a continued smooth transition, including the 41 MILF-nominated seats. On 10 March 2022, Secretary Galvez announced that it would be up to the next President to appoint all new BTA members.

In the run-up to the 9 May 2022 elections, the United Bangsamoro Justice Party (UBJP), the political party of the MILF, had endorsed Marcos' opponent Leni Robredo as its favoured presidential candidate in view of a perceived compatibility of principles and values. During the election campaign, then-candidate Marcos Jr. chose not to publicly express any views on how he would approach the peace process and the transition in the BARMM.

Following the elections, Chief Minister Ahod “Murad” B. Ebrahim congratulated President-elect Marcos Jr. and assured him of the Bangsamoro Government’s continued openness, cooperation, and friendship for the benefit of the Bangsamoro people and the Filipino nation. The Chief Minister further stressed that the BARMM would be guided by the signed agreements and by the laws passed by the Republic of the Philippines.

Traditional political families, who with few exceptions had campaigned in favour of a Marcos presidency, clearly demonstrated their strength during the 9 May 2022 local elections. Some among them expected that their support would be reflected in the future composition of the BTA or more generally in enhanced political influence in the BARMM. The question was how the incoming President would handle his responsibility to appoint the new members of the BTA.

There appeared to be different legal interpretations on what flexibility the incoming President had in making BTA appointments, in particular whether the established 41:39 majority of the MILF in the BTA could be challenged. Some legal experts expressed the view that the wording “...the President may appoint the eighty (80) new interim members of the BTA...” in RA No. 11593 gave him freedom to act as he saw fit. As it turned out the President did uphold the provision of the BOL by ensuring that the BTA continues to be MILF-led.

President Marcos Jr. at the inauguration of the new BARMM Cabinet on 15 September 2022 affirmed the commitment of his Administration to the peace process. He acknowledged impressive achievements in the BARMM, but also stressed that more remained to be done.

In a major boost for convergence, both the MNLF Sema-Jikiri and Misuari groups are represented in the new BTA. MNLF Founding Chair Nur Misuari attended the BTA inauguration in person. Prior to this, Chief Minister Ebrahim had reached out, along with senior MILF leaders, and met Nur Misuari at his residence in Davao City on 11 September 2022, marking just the second encounter in over two decades of the leaders of the two fronts.

The MNLF Misuari faction joining the BTA was described by Secretary Galvez as “the reunification of all Bangsamoro leaders” and as a “milestone in the Bangsamoro peace process.” OPAPRU should be congratulated on facilitating this development which reflects leaders of the Bangsamoro fronts taking a reconciliatory position to heed President Marcos Jr.’s call for unity and represents a step towards the harmonization of all Bangsamoro peace agreements.

The unity drive further manifests itself in the fact that there is no more distinction between the majority and the minority in the BTA Parliament, thus demonstrating a joint commitment towards a common aspiration.

The outcome of the May 2022 elections revealed increasing space for democratic competition in the BARMM. The MILF through its party the UBJP competed against influential political families for selected positions with focus on local government posts where incumbent leaders were perceived as not supportive to BOL implementation. This was successful for the post of mayor in Cotabato City, as well as in 9 out of 36 municipalities in Maguindanao and in 2 municipalities in Basilan. The UBJP however did not win the race for position of governor in its Maguindanao stronghold. Some observers described the election outcome as strongly influenced by established patronage networks amidst allegations of vote-buying and voter obstruction.

Following the 17 September 2022 plebiscite which resulted in the division of Maguindanao into two provinces, Mariam Sangki-Mangudadatu took up the position as elected Governor of Maguindanao del Sur. Abdulraof A. Macacua was appointed by President Marcos Jr. as Governor of Maguindanao del Norte on 28 April 2023. He retains his position as Chief of Staff of the BIAF under the name Sammy Al-Mansoor. Governor Macacua's appointment was challenged by Fatima Ainee Sinsuat who came in second-placed in the May 2022 gubernatorial election of the now-defunct Maguindanao province and had initially taken up the position as acting Governor of Maguindanao del Norte. Sinsuat had petitioned the Supreme Court (SC) to compel the Bureau of Local Government and Finance (BLGF) to designate a provincial treasurer for Maguindanao del Norte. The Court, in a decision dated 26 June 2023, ruled in her favour, while also referring in the decision to her as having validly assumed office as acting Governor of Maguindanao del Norte. The BARMM authorities appealed the ruling and assert that the SC decision was not final and taken out of context, as it ignores the appointment of Governor Macacua by President Marcos Jr. To note prior to the June SC ruling Sinsuat had taken an oath as Vice Governor Maguindanao Del Norte at Malacañan.

Five Governors from the Bangsamoro, representing the provinces of Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao del Sur, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi launched the Bangsamoro Governors' Caucus (BGC) on 6 June 2023 as a platform to "advance the rule of law, peace and order, and inclusive governance and development." The group states it has no political motives but was formed to enhance coordination with national and regional governments to address development and foster peace mechanisms.

Barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan (BSK) elections (village and youth council polls) took place nationwide on 30 October 2023. While the BARMM experienced a number of election-related violent incidents, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) described the polls as successful and generally peaceful.

The transition period in the Bangsamoro ends on June 30, 2025. There are only seven quarters left until the end of the transition period, when the winners of the first election of the 80-member Bangsamoro Parliament in May 2025 shall have taken their oath of office and assumed their posts. The MPs shall then elect the Chief Minister.

The BARMM, as a result of the peace agreements, is unique in adopting a parliamentary system within a highly centralized presidential system of government.

The formation of a regional government post-2025 may require coalition building or the creation of alliances among multiple parties and political actors in the Bangsamoro. The peace process was deliberately designed to be inclusive of all stakeholders in the Bangsamoro. It will be important for the future Bangsamoro Parliament elected from May 2025 to be similarly inclusive.

iii. Activities of the Panels

Two Peace Implementing Panels meetings took place during the reporting period under the old administrations prior to the 2022 elections. These meetings dealt with a number of challenging issues with the aim to avoid passing them on to the next administration.

At the Panels meeting on 11 March 2022, the Parties agreed to form a technical working group (TWG) to formulate a transition plan for the ceasefire mechanisms including the Malaysia-led IMT. The Parties also adopted recommendations by the TWG on Transitional Justice and Reconciliation (TWG-TJR) to develop a GPH-MILF TJR roadmap based on the recommendations of the Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC). The Parties also renewed the mandate of the Ad Hoc Joint Action Groups (AHJAGs) and the Civilian Protection Component (CPC) of the IMT (the latter hinges on agreement by the Parties on the future of the IMT).

The last Panels meeting under the Duterte administration took place on 3 June 2022. The Parties agreed to work towards immediate resolution of the IMT's status. Discussions on this issue were however inconclusive and the IMT ceased operations on 30 June 2022.

Deliberations also continued on how best to provide socioeconomic packages for decommissioned combatants, following up on the October 2021 Panels meeting which had set up a Joint Study Group on a revised CAB implementation roadmap which was tasked to look into progress on normalization and whether there was a need for adjustments. As it turned out the Parties did not reach agreement on a renewed approach.

The Panels, at the meeting on 3 June 2022, also proposed to set up a TWG for the police force in the Bangsamoro and advised the TWG-TJR to also invite international experts to provide advice on the crafting of the TJR roadmap.

Following the June 2022 meeting, the Peace Implementing Panels did not formally meet for more than a year until 1 July 2023. Technical bodies reporting to the Panels, including the Joint Normalization Committee (JNC), the Task Force for Decommissioned Combatants and their Communities (TFDCC), and the Joint Task Forces on Camps Transformation (JTFACT) continued to do their work. It should be noted though that achievements at technical level require endorsement at Panels level.

The Peace Implementing Panels were reconstituted under the Marcos Jr. administration. On the MILF side, Mohagher Iqbal continues to serve as Chair. A stronger representation of women in the MILF Implementing Panel is a welcome development with BTA MPs Raissa Jajurie and Anna Basman having joined. On the GPH side, BGen. (Retired) Cesar B. Yano has taken over as Chair. The GPH Panel was restructured and expanded and now includes Usec. Alan A. Tanjusay from the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) as Vice Chair and principal members from the Department of Agriculture (DA), DILG, and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) as well as associate members from the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), Department of Education (DepEd), Department of Justice (DOJ), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). Two members who served on the old Panel remain in new capacities, these are former Chair PA David B. Diciano as Special Adviser for Operations and Exec. Dir. Wilben M. Mayor as Special Adviser for Legal Affairs. This arrangement has helped to ensure continuity. It is expected that the presence of representatives from relevant national departments on the GPH Panel will result in better coordination and fast-tracking of central government contributions to the peace process including through the ICCMN.

The new Peace Implementing Panels held their first meeting on 1 July 2023 in Davao City. On this occasion the Panels renewed their commitment to implement the CAB. They agreed to further study the proposals for the AFP redeployment parameters and areas for the joint security assessment, transition plan for the Joint Peace and Security Teams (JPSTs), and the integrated framework on the implementation of camps transformation program for the initial 33 barangays of the six previously acknowledged MILF camps.

The Panels recognized the “urgency and centrality” of the full implementation of the decommissioning program through the delivery of socioeconomic development programs for decommissioned combatants. To achieve this, the Panels agreed to create a socioeconomic study committee to discuss and recommend for their approval the components, implementation framework, and funding strategies for the socioeconomic development packages for decommissioned combatants and the transformation of former MILF camps into thriving communities.

The Panels further agreed to intensify resource mobilization to support the implementation of the CAB by engaging with international state and nonstate donors willing to support the normalization process.

The JNC has a new MILF Co-Chair: Akmad A. Brahim, who is also Minister for Environment, Natural Resources, and Energy of the BARMM. He replaces Minister of Public Works Eduard U. Guerra.

We understand that the intention of the Panels is to reenergize the International Contact Group (ICG) as a platform for dialogue.

iv. Political Track

Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) legislation

RA No. 11593, enacted on 28 October 2021, postponed the first regular election for the Bangsamoro Government from 2022 to 2025 and clarified that during the extension of the transition period, the BTA led by the MILF shall continue as the interim government of the BARMM. The 80-member BTA, appointed by the President, has legislative authority while executive authority rests with the interim Chief Minister and his interim Cabinet.

President Marcos Jr. attended the BTA inaugural session which took place on 15 September 2022 at the Bangsamoro Government Center in Cotabato City. During this event, Chief Minister Ebrahim assured the President that the BTA would complete all transition priorities and finish setting up a regional government ready for peaceful and orderly elections in 2025 and capable of continuing the transformation. The President had earlier, during the oath taking ceremony of the new BTA members at Malacañan Palace on 12 August 2022, declared that there would be no further extension of the transition period and that first-time regional elections in the BARMM should take place in 2025.

The newly appointed BTA Parliament has since placed priority on finalizing and passing the remaining priority codes. On 8 March 2023, it enacted the **Bangsamoro Electoral Code (BEC)** which defines the legal framework for the May 2025 regional elections. The Commission on Elections (COMELEC) was consulted during the preparation of the Code.

Following its adoption, the BEC was challenged in the SC by 15 BARMM local executives and officials. The petition reflects public criticism on the 10,000-membership minimum requirement for regional political parties and the 4% threshold to obtain a parliamentary party seat under the proportional representation system. According to the petitioners, the Code violates the powers exclusively vested by the Constitution upon COMELEC over the administration of election laws, curtails what should be free and equal opportunity for political parties to seek and obtain parliamentary seats, and intrudes into the power of Congress to define and penalize election offenses. BTA members have pointed out that the singularity of elections in the BARMM needs to be properly reflected by the BEC.

A sensitive point under the BEC is the delimitation of constituencies for district seats in the future Bangsamoro Parliament. This question has created considerable interest among political circles and is subject to continuing consultations. A law complementing the BEC to define parliamentary districting is expected by May 2024.

The BTA Parliament on 17 August 2023 with unanimous support approved **bills establishing eight municipalities comprising the 63 Special Geographic Area (SGA) barangays in North Cotabato province** that had opted to join the BARMM during the 6 February 2019 plebiscite. As a result, the 63 barangays will be separated from their original municipalities in the towns of Pikit, Midsayap, Aleosan, Pigcawayan, Kabacan, and Carmen and constituted into independent municipalities. The new towns have been named Pahamuddin, Kadayangan, Nabalawag, Old Kaabakan, Kapalawan, Malidegao, Tugunan, and Ligawasan.

The eight municipalities were set up under an Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) law (Muslim Mindanao Autonomy Act No. 18) which defines a minimum population requirement of 10,000. Two out of eight municipalities would not have qualified under the Bangsamoro Local Governance Code (see below) which specifies a minimum population of

25,000. The BTA therefore opted to set up the new LGUs still under ARMM rules before adopting the BLGC which is expected for October this year.

Ultimately, the aim would be to create a new province in the SGA which requires an act of Congress upon a request by the Bangsamoro Parliament. The minimum population required of 250,000 for setting up a new province may however only be reached by 2028.

To note that residents of the 63 barangays were disenfranchised during the May 2022 national and local elections. The creation of these new municipalities is therefore a positive and necessary step towards allowing SGA residents to perform their rights as citizens.

The creation of the eight municipalities still needs to be approved by plebiscite. It will however not be possible to conduct a plebiscite in parallel with the barangay elections in October 2023 as COMELEC did not have sufficient time for preparations.

The **Bangsamoro Local Governance Code (BLGC)** was adopted by the BTA Parliament on 28 September 2023 (57 MPs in favour, 4 against). Enactment of the BLGC defines the relationship between the regional government and its LGUs. Section 5, Article III of the BOL defines provinces, cities, municipalities, barangays, and geographical areas within its territorial jurisdiction as constituent units of the BARMM and provides authority to the Bangsamoro Government to regulate the affairs of its constituent LGUs.

Before its approval, the BLGC underwent eight public consultations from the regional to national levels and 23 days of deliberations at the committee level. One of the main issues raised during public consultations was a proposed anti-dynasty clause which caused resistance among political families. Discussion also included the powers of supervision the BARMM should have over its constituent LGUs. In a position paper dated 4 December 2022 the governors of the provinces of Sulu, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, and Basilan asserted that powers allotted to the BARMM under the BLGC overlap or supplant the President's power of general supervision over LGUs.

To counter these arguments the leading protagonists of the BLGC point out that the Code reflects that the Bangsamoro has a unique governmental setup in the Philippines. Its adoption is seen in the BARMM as an important milestone in pursuit of genuine and meaningful autonomy. Key points of the Code include, besides delineation of powers between regional and local governments, gradual devolution of powers to LGUs, mandatory training and capacity building for newly elected officials, creation of IP barangays within established ancestral domains and multisectoral representation in all levels of governance.

During the amendments period in the plenary, the Bangsamoro Parliament retained "governance" instead of "government" in the Code to highlight citizen participation.

The Code does contain a ban on political dynasties that limits the prevailing practice of political families and clans dominating in assuming executive and legislative positions. Family members of incumbent local officials running for elective positions in the second civil degree of consanguinity or affinity are prohibited from running for the same provincial, city, municipal or barangay positions.

Most of the MPs who voted against adoption of the BLGC cited the anti-dynasty provisions as unconstitutional, asserting that only Congress has the mandate to pass a law on the subject and claiming that the provisions violate the constitutional guarantee to equal access to opportunities for public service.

To note that there is a transitory arrangement for implementing the provisions on anti-dynasty and mandatory training of newly elected officials as these will only be applicable starting from the May 2028 elections.

An **Indigenous Peoples' (IP) Code** is needed to recognize, protect, promote, and preserve the rights of IPs in the BARMM. The IP Code is still in Committee discussions, and it is expected to be filed in the Cabinet in due course. Two drafts of the IP Code were consolidated into one version. There continues to be debate on the definition of indigenous peoples and extent of application of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA). The BOL contains provisions on the rights of non-Moro IPs which shall be recognized and promoted by the Bangsamoro Government based on the IPRA.

The **Bangsamoro Revenue Code (BRC)** is linked to prior adoption of BLGC and IP Codes and requires further deliberations at the Intergovernmental Fiscal Policy Board (IFPB). The provisions of the Mandanas-Garcia ruling need to be taken into account. The target to file the BRC is December 2023.

Further to note that on 19 June 2023 the BTA Parliament passed an **Act establishing the administrative capital of the Bangsamoro in the municipality of Parang, Maguindanao del Norte**. The Act outlines preparatory steps to define a plan for moving to the new capital without specifying a timetable.

Intergovernmental relations (IGR)

The TPMT notes as positive that IGRB meetings have become a consistent element in defining the working arrangements between the National Government and the Bangsamoro Government. The IGRB can be described as one of the success stories of the peace process. It is characterized by open communications and very good personnel relations.

The IGRB was reconstituted under the Marcos Jr. administration and met for the first time on 1 December 2022 in Davao in the presence of senior Cabinet members from Manila and Cotabato City. This was the 12th IGRB meeting since the body was established in 2019. Co-chairmanship on the National Government side is no longer with Secretary of Finance but was transferred to the responsibility of Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman of the Department of Budget and Management (DBM). On the side of the BARMM, co-chairmanship remains with Education Minister Mohagher Iqbal. Revised IGRB Terms of Reference (ToR) were signed. It was announced that the sequencing of meetings would be stepped up to a bi-monthly schedule.

The IGRB subsequently met on 24 February, on 1 June and on 27 July 2023 (15th IGRB meeting). Among the priority issues the IGRB is currently expected to tackle feature the framework for admitting MILF and MNLF members into the police, co-management of energy generation in Lake Lanao, dealing with properties / assets of the former ARMM (Cabatangan

property in Zamboanga City) and delegated rights to supervision over LGUs (appointment of Mayor of Pandag municipality).

It is important to note that all IGR mechanisms are now operational. Apart from the IGRB these are the Philippine Congress-Bangsamoro Parliament Forum (PCBPF), the Council of Leaders (CoL), the Intergovernmental Fiscal Policy Board (IFPB), the Joint Body for the Zones of Joint Cooperation; (JBZJC), the Intergovernmental Infrastructure Development Board (IIDB), the Intergovernmental Energy Board (IEB) and the Bangsamoro Sustainable Development Board (BSDB).

The PCBPF convened for the first time on 15 November 2022 led by the two IGRB co-chairs in the presence of Senate President Juan Miguel F. Zubiri, House Speaker Ferdinand Martin G. Romualdez, and Bangsamoro Parliament Speaker Pangalian M. Balindong. Setting up a regular forum for legislative interaction is necessary to coordinate legislative initiatives involving both governments including bills filed in Congress affecting the BARMM as well as issues related to the implementation of the BOL. A second meeting of the PCBPF was held on 23 August 2023 in Pasay City. The meeting discussed, amongst other issues, the proposed extension of the amnesty proclamations and qualification requirements for judges at shari'ah courts.

The first meeting of the CoL took place on 9 August 2023 in Davao City. The BOL provides that the main function of the CoL is to advise the Chief Minister, who chairs the Council, on matters of governance in the region. The Council's members are the governors of the region's six provinces, mayors of the three cities, representatives of the Bangsamoro's eight congressional districts and 12 representatives from communities and sectors including traditional leaders, non-Moro indigenous communities, women, settler communities, the Ulama and youth. Secretary Pangandaman was formally adopted as a regular member of the Council of Leaders on 9 August 2023.

During the same meeting, the CoL agreed to strengthen coordination between the Bangsamoro government and local government units through the Bangsamoro Economic and Development Council (BEDC) in order to rationalize and harmonize the planning and implementation of programs, projects, and activities. The BEDC serves as the planning, monitoring, and coordinating agency for all development plans, programs, and projects of the Bangsamoro government.

On 6 July 2023 the National and Bangsamoro Governments signed an IEB Circular on the Joint Award of Petroleum Service Contracts (PSCs) and Coal Operating Contracts (COCs) in the Bangsamoro region. The IEB Circular operationalizes the provision in Section 10, Article XIII of the BOL to jointly grant rights, privileges and concessions for the exploration, development and utilization of uranium and fossil fuels such as petroleum, natural gas and coal within the territorial jurisdiction of the BARMM. It further outlines the requirements, procedures and standards for companies seeking to apply for and operate PSCs and COCs and aims to ensure that the exploration and development activities will adhere to stringent rules and regulations and best practices. The Circular also aims to attract foreign capital into the region.

The Bangsamoro region incorporates most of the 288,000-hectare Liguasan Marsh, the largest wetland in the Philippines, which is reportedly rich in oil and gas deposits. The Liguasan Marsh

extends across the provinces of Maguindanao del Sur and Maguindanao del Norte in the BARMM and North Cotabato and Sultan Kudarat in the SOCCSKSARGEN region.

Fiscal autonomy

The fiscal autonomy of the BARMM has been consolidated due to regular and increased access to fiscal resources through devolution of some national taxes, higher shares from existing revenue sharing schemes, and a block grant that is automatically appropriated for the regional government. Initial problems with circuitous block grant transfers have been overcome. Better access to resources constitutes a significant advancement in the regional autonomy of the BARMM.

A Bangsamoro Revenue Code essential for the BARMM's capacity to raise its revenue collections still awaits adoption by the BTA Parliament.

The Bangsamoro Expenditure Program for 2023 was approved by the BTA Parliament on 20 December 2022. It amounts to PhP85.3 billion, an increase of 6.89% from the PhP79.8 billion allocated for 2022. Emphasis is on education, health, infrastructure, and social services.

According to information by DBM the 2024 proposed budget includes the BARMM's annual Block Grant of PhP70.5 billion, a Special Development Fund (SDF) allocation of PhP5.0 billion and the BARMM shares in national taxes, fees, and charges of PhP5.1 billion, pursuant to the BOL.

Interim Chief Minister Murad submitted the proposed 2024 Bangsamoro Expenditure Program to the BTA Parliament on 24 October 2023 for an amount of PhP98.46 billion, with focus on education, infrastructure and health. The proposal includes PhP17.3 billion in declared savings from previous years.

v. Normalization Track

Implementation of the normalization track has been comparatively slow. The TPMT notes emphasis by GPH on formal decommissioning of MILF combatants through the IDB. At the same time there has been limited progress on other elements of normalization including provision of socioeconomic support to decommissioned combatants, camps transformation, disbandment of PAGs, implementation of amnesty proclamations, admission of MILF members into the PNP, redeployment of the AFP and follow-up on the recommendations of the TJRC. The MILF continues to point out that in accordance with the peace agreements decommissioning shall be parallel and commensurate to all the agreements of the Parties.

Security Situation

Frequent violent incidents characterize the security situation in the BARMM, these are mainly related to horizontal conflicts over land and politics. There are sporadic clashes between military and extremist groups which remain a security threat, in particular the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in Maguindanao, Daulah Islamiyah (DI) / Maute Group in Lanao del Sur, and remnants of the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) in Basilan and Sulu.

The BARMM witnessed an increased level of violence in the run-up to and during the 30 October 2023 barangay elections, with incumbent and aspiring electoral candidates and local officials being targeted.

Based on GPH figures, the number of rido (family feuds) events is on the increase in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao (CAAM). Recorded cases rose from 19 in 2021 to 35 in 2022 and 29 in 2023 (up to 12 September 2023 inclusive). MILF members are involved in many of these events.

On 18 August 2023 BIAF-MILF Chief of Staff Sammy Al-Mansoor (aka Maguindanao del Norte Governor Macacua) issued a serious warning to all BIAF front and base commanders and members not to engage in rido or political rivalry. Whoever shall be found guilty of peace-spoiling activities shall be subjected to automatic termination from the roster of BIAF-MILF. The warning was welcomed by government sources.

The IP community in the BARMM remains particularly vulnerable to security incidents resulting in displacements. It is important that dispute resolution mechanisms work in a coordinated way to address these concerns, including at the barangay level.

Peace and Order Councils at regional, provincial and municipal levels in coordination with the GPH and MILF Coordinating Committees on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCHs) and Ad Hoc Action Groups (AHJAGs) as well as local conflict management teams play an important role in addressing and mediating disputes. Peace and Order Councils can initiate law enforcement action if necessary. Security is an issue where all relevant players in the BARMM need to join hands and cooperate, this will help to uphold the necessary confidence in the peace process.

The Peace, Security, and Reconciliation Office (PSRO) of the BARMM was established on 17 October 2022 directly reporting to the Chief Minister. It is tasked with providing support to the operation of peace mechanisms, coordinating and attending to the needs of transitioning combatants, conducting regular dialogues with peace partners, promulgating guidelines in the prevention and resolution of ridos involving MILF, Ministry of Public Order and Safety (MPOS), LGUs, security sector and other stakeholders, conducting training and accrediting community peace mediators, and carrying out information campaigns.

There have been some examples of effective cooperation between government and MILF on law enforcement, for instance on identifying suspects of the ambush on Lanao del Sur Governor Mamintal Alonto Adiong Jr. or apprehending members of the Maute Group.

Ceasefire mechanisms

The GPH and the MILF signed the Agreement on the General Cessation of Hostilities (AGCH) in Cagayan de Oro City on 18 July 1997 which forms an integral part of the CAB. A number of ceasefire mechanisms were set up by the Parties in order to prevent breaches of the AGCH. The CCCHs were established in 1997 to undertake enquiries and recommend action on alleged and proven ceasefire violations; the AHJAGs were set up in 2002 to coordinate law enforcement operations against suspected criminal elements within or near MILF communities;

and the Malaysia-led IMT was established in 2004 to observe and monitor the ceasefire and to conduct field verifications for reported violations.

These ceasefire coordination mechanisms have, since they entered into force, demonstrated their usefulness. It is a major success of the peace process that the ceasefire agreement has remained largely intact and the number of ceasefire violations has remained low following signature of the CAB.

According to GPH CCCH records, the number of GPH – MILF armed skirmishes has come down from peaks in 2002 (698), 2003 (589), 2008 (218) and 2009 (115) to 5 in 2021 and 1 in 2022. 45 ceasefire violations were recorded in 2022 and 2023 (up until 12 September 2023), the MILF was responsible for 42, the GPH for 3. Prominent among alleged MILF violations are uncoordinated movements (9) and participation in rido (7). One uncoordinated raid was listed for the GPH in 2023. The period from 2019 to mid-September 2023 has witnessed a total of 83 ceasefire protests (65 resolved, 10 proposed to be resolved, 8 unresolved).

The IMT's tour of duty came to an end on 30 June 2022. The GPH did not extend its mandate, citing the low number of ceasefire violations which according to Manila had substantially diminished the IMT's role. The MILF did not agree with this approach, referring to Item VIII/7 of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB) which states that the IMT, along with CCCHs and AHJAGs shall continue to monitor the ceasefire agreement until the full decommissioning of MILF forces. Nonetheless the MILF signaled flexibility on reviewing the administrative details of the IMT's Terms of Reference. Discussions on a compromise proposal based on an IMT with a more civilian orientation were launched by the Parties during the final months of the Duterte administration but did not result in a solution.

In discussions with the TPMT, both Parties expressed appreciation on the work of CCCHs and AHJAGs in upholding the ceasefire and in coordinating law enforcement operations. To note though that MILF contacts describe coordination between the Parties as variable, depending on local circumstances and personalities involved. We understand that the coordination process often takes the form of blanket announcements by the GPH covering an extended period and a large number of barangays where security operations could occur. Many of our interlocutors in the BARMM expressed apprehension that non-specific coordination before carrying out security or law enforcement operations represents a risk of escalation with potentially detrimental effects for the peace process.

A police operation in Datu Paglas, Maguindanao on 18 June 2023 resulted in the death of seven members of the MILF. The PNP claimed that the seven victims were members of the extremist Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF). Malacañan ordered an impartial investigation into the operation. A joint investigation by the Parties did, however, not take place.

The Datu Paglas incident has raised questions on the implementation of the ceasefire mechanisms. It prompted renewed calls by the MILF for the return of the IMT. This type of event has the potential to throw the peace process into jeopardy. Not only did it result in the temporary suspension of the decommissioning process, it is also seen by the MILF as a symptom of insecurity affecting their communities. Beyond that, it would appear that the

absence of the IMT has resulted in lack of pressure to jointly resolve cases of ceasefire violations.

The GPH is prepared to discuss a revitalization of the IMT at Panels level. There are however different perceptions among the Parties on the future ToR of the IMT. The position of the GPH is that posting active foreign military on Filipino soil is not in line with the Constitution. The GPH wants to see a predominantly civilian role for the IMT. The MILF, while prepared to show some flexibility, expects to see the return of the IMT also in a capacity which would allow it to comply with its originally defined function. This involves monitoring the ceasefire agreement and the possibility to carry out field verifications of security incidents. For this military expertise would be required in order to obtain optimal cooperation from those directly involved when working to resolve encounters.

Beyond considering a return of the IMT, it would be useful for the Parties to review implementation of the ceasefire coordination mechanisms to avoid a repeat of incidents like the one which occurred in Datu Paglas. In particular, it should be discussed how to ensure prior coordination as outlined in relevant Implementing Guidelines linked to the GPH-MILF 1997 AGCH.

These Guidelines call for effective coordination in advance of law enforcement operations conducted in MILF areas/communities to avoid unwanted firefights and hostilities. The TPMT calls on the Parties to follow these Guidelines meticulously in order to avoid possible setbacks to the peace process.

Furthermore, the TPMT encourages the Peace Implementing Panels to reengage in discussions to secure a renewed mandate for the IMT. While it is undisputed that the number of ceasefire violations between the Parties in recent years has been substantially reduced, the Datu Paglas incident has demonstrated that the presence of an impartial body would be helpful to maintain confidence in the peace process and is necessary to assess and validate violations should these occur.

Resource mobilization for normalization

To recall that under the CAB, the Government of the Philippines committed itself to provide the necessary funding for the normalization process. The National Government established the Inter Cabinet Cluster Mechanism on Normalization (ICCMN) through Executive Order (EO) No. 79 in April 2019. The ICCMN approach met with obstacles such as delays imposed by the pandemic and a reorientation of spending priorities, resulting in budget cuts by Congress of the originally planned allocations for normalization.

As we approach the end of the transition period, it is high time to come forward with a plan on how to speed up the implementation of the normalization process, provide it with adequate resources and bring it to a successful conclusion.

There is increasing pressure on the Bangsamoro Government to contribute to funding the normalization process through the block grant. While the Bangsamoro Government signaled some flexibility, for instance on provision of housing to disadvantaged groups, such an

approach has limitations as the block grant is meant to serve the entire BARMM without specific focus on MILF communities. Where unspent appropriations are carried over to future years, they are purpose-bound and cannot be spent on alternative tasks.

There have also been calls to intensify local provision of socioeconomic development packages or services at provincial, municipal, and barangay levels as LGUs benefit from increased shares of internal revenue allotments as a result of the Mandanas-Garcia ruling. The challenge here is implementation capacity of the LGUs.

Decommissioning and camps transformation are central to the implementation of the normalization track. These are complex tasks which require a high degree of coordination among the various contributors to the normalization process. Also required are management capacity as well as a realistic assessment of implementation capacity of the various players involved. Primarily this task lies with the Panels and the JNC.

In this context, the TPMT takes note that concerted efforts have been launched under the Marcos administration to channel more resources into socioeconomic support for decommissioned combatants and camps transformation. The GPH vowed to fast-track the implementation of the normalization program at an ICCMN meeting on 10 August 2023. OPAPRU has been soliciting increased support from ICCMN member-agencies. A renewed focus on normalization is also reflected by TFDCC consultation rounds and planned visits to MILF camps by ICCMN members.

Based on commitments resulting from the CAB, the most plausible approach would be to ensure that allocations in support of normalization including socioeconomic packages for decommissioned combatants are included in the general appropriations of ICCMN implementing agencies and that this is systematically done over the next couple of years until all commitments have been fulfilled. Such appropriations should be based on updated needs assessments to form the basis for defining overall budgetary targets by agency.

A Camps Transformation Plan (CTP) is in place which needs to be backed up with financial commitments. The Camps Transformation Investment Program (CTIP) is being refined with the intention to serve as a reference document for contributions by national agencies, the BARMM, LGUs, and donors.

Under the BOL, a SDF allotment of PhP5 billion is provided annually for a 10-year period by the National Government to the Bangsamoro Government for the rebuilding, rehabilitation and development of its conflict-affected communities. These resources can be used in the context of normalization, as has already been done on occasion in support of infrastructure development in areas in and surrounding MILF camps. The Parties might wish to consider the use of SDF funding as part of a non-discriminatory whole-of-community effort.

An allocation of PhP5.3 billion has been set aside for the implementation of the Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (PAMANA) Program 2024, implemented by OPAPRU and aimed at infrastructure development in various conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas. An amount of PhP1.35 billion has been earmarked for camps transformation in the BARMM.

Grants / loans / official development assistance

There is a high level of expectation among the Parties for international donors to contribute substantially to the normalization process, including through the Bangsamoro Normalization Trust Fund (BNTF). But it should be clear that donor funds alone can only provide a limited contribution towards tackling development challenges in the BARMM.

The BNTF, administered by the World Bank, was established in 2021 and is now operational. A first US\$4 million community-driven project was approved in July 2023 to support sustainable livelihoods and participation in resilient and inclusive communities of former MILF combatants and their families.

Enhanced donor engagement could be facilitated by addressing restrictions in visiting the BARMM, including a 15 working-day period to request permission through the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA). Appropriate alternative steps for oversight could be considered.

Decommissioning / socioeconomic development programs

Decommissioning of MILF combatants remains the most sensitive component of the normalization track. The completion of the third phase of decommissioning was marked by the Independent Decommissioning Body (IDB) at a ceremony on 3 August 2023 at the Old Maguindanao Provincial Capitol in the presence of dignitaries from Manila and Cotabato, 21 months after its launch in November 2021. The replacement of a small number of combatants who did not pass the verification process could be jointly resolved by the Panels.

Under the first 3 phases a total of 26,132 MILF combatants were decommissioned. The weapons intake stands at 4,625, in addition 6,317 pieces of ammunition have been turned-in and disposed.

The MILF temporarily suspended the finalization of the third phase of decommissioning immediately following the 18 June 2023 Datu Paglas incident, a police operation which resulted in the killing of seven of its members, including two decommissioned combatants. The decision to suspend was taken to allow for healing, introspection, and calm. The MILF agreed to proceed with the third round to align with President Marcos Jr.'s State of the Nation Address (SONA) on 24 July 2023. At the SONA the President pledged his administration's continued support to the peace process.

OPAPRU would like to obtain the list for Phase 4 as early as possible in order to request the necessary budgetary allocations for the PhP100,000 transitional cash assistance. There is funding available in 2023 to provide the transitional cash assistance for an initial number of 2,000 combatants under Phase 4.

It is however not certain when the MILF will provide the list for Phase 4 as several open questions remain.

One issue is the delayed delivery of socioeconomic packages to decommissioned combatants. While every decommissioned combatant is guaranteed to obtain the PhP100,000 transitional

cash allocation, other elements of the support package which include social protection, capacity development, livelihood / employment assistance and social infrastructure have been slow and sporadic in coming. This has resulted in dissatisfaction among many of those who have completed the formal procedure conducted by IDB and DSWD at the Assembly and Processing Area (APA). As a result, MILF contacts argue that they may find it increasingly difficult to motivate its remaining combatants to join the final round. The GPH is aware that the MILF has reservations and provides assurances that it is doing its best to translate commitments into tangible benefits.

The GPH has expressed concern that a high number of those already decommissioned were not actively serving members of the MILF Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces (BIAF). For the fourth and final round the GPH would like to see an emphasis on decommissioning active BIAF. There have also been calls for the MILF to hand in a higher number of weapons. The MILF argues that with the signature of the peace agreements, their members are in essence no longer combatants. There is also a need to differentiate whether weapons are owned by the organization or individual members. It would be advisable for these issues to be addressed conclusively by the Parties before the launch of the final phase of decommissioning.

It has become clear that implementation of the normalization track will extend beyond the end of the transition phase in 2025. Decommissioning is no longer regarded by all stakeholders as time bound as its successful conclusion also depends on delivery of other elements of the normalization process.

Sensitive issues will need to be addressed by the Panels in a spirit of cooperation and mutual trust. Deliberation at Panel level including the work of the socioeconomic study committee are therefore of crucial importance for the continuation of the decommissioning process.

Camps transformation

Under the CAB, the Parties agreed to set up joint task forces to assess the needs, plan appropriate programs and undertake necessary measures to transform six previously acknowledged MILF camps into peaceful and productive communities. This includes Camp Abubakar as-Siddique in Maguindanao, Camp Bilal in Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur, Camp Omar ibn al-Khattab in Maguindanao, Camp Rajamuda in North Cotabato and Maguindanao, Camp Badre in Maguindanao, and Camp Busrah Somiorang in Lanao del Sur.

The Joint Task Forces on Camps Transformation (JTFCT) were formally established by the Parties on 11 February 2016. The Panels approved the 6-year CTP 2021-2026 along with the CTIP covering the same period on 9 November 2021. The CTP serves as a roadmap to implement the transformation of the six MILF camps. The CTIP elaborates on the fiscal and other resources necessary for plan implementation. It underwent substantial revision in 2023.

Components, implementation framework and funding strategies for camps transformation is also to be dealt with by the socioeconomic study committee set up by the Panels on 1 July 2023.

Contributions to camps transformation are included under OPAPRU's PAMANA program for Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 for an amount of PhP1.35 billion.

Policing

The CAB calls for the establishment of a professional police force for the Bangsamoro, civilian in character, accountable for its actions and responsible both to the Central Government and the Bangsamoro Government, and to the communities it serves. An Independent Commission on Policing (ICP) was set up to recommend appropriate policing for the Bangsamoro. The ICP submitted its report in April 2014 which placed emphasis on community policing. To note that policing plays a central role for the successful completion of the peace process as well as in relation to other elements of the normalization process. It is in particular linked to phasing out transitional mechanisms including the Joint Peace and Security Teams (JPSTs) and to decommissioning of MILF combatants. According to the Annex on Normalization, agreed policing in the Bangsamoro should be constituted and operationalized before the launch of the final phase of decommissioning.

To recall that under the CAB, public order and safety was defined as a concurrent power, this was however revised under the BOL to become a power of the national government. In consequence NAPOLCOM issued Resolution No. 2019-634 on 24 September 2019 establishing the PNP Police Regional Office Bangsamoro Autonomous Region (PRO BAR). The GPH expects the MILF to accept that police will remain a national competence as stipulated in the BOL. The MILF however believes that the policing provisions in the BOL are not in line with the spirit of what was negotiated under the CAB. This implies that there is no agreement yet between the Parties on the final shape of policing in the Bangsamoro.

Nonetheless the Bangsamoro Government has established good working relations with the PRO BAR. Minister of the Interior and Local Government Naguib G. Sinarimbo chairs the multi-sector Regional Advisory Council of PRO BAR. The MILG has actively supported police operations in the BARMM, in particular through construction of new police stations and the provision of patrol cars.

The MILF has opted to work with the GPH towards pragmatic solutions in the context of facilitating the entry of its members into the PNP. A TWG on policing was set up under the IGRB which was tasked with finalizing respective guidelines.

The TWG has been working on recommendations to accommodate eligible graduates to allow them to join the PNP. Initially a number of 5060 was under consideration, reportedly the national leftover quota for the years 2021 and 2022, but there was no practical follow-up. In as far as the location of the deployment of recruits is concerned, it is intended to give preference to the BARMM, while relevant national laws and regulations for the police force apply in principle.

NAPOLCOM conducted a Special Qualifying Eligibility (NSQE) Examination for MILF and MNLF members on 29 May 2022. 7,145 out of 11,075 applicants successfully passed the exam (4,962 MILF and 2,183 MNLF). On 10 May 2023 NAPOLCOM issued Resolution No. 2023-

0380 approving the recommendation to allocate 400 slots from the recruitment quota for 2023 for the rank of patrolman / patrolwoman to former MILF and MNLF members.

Actual police recruitment started in June 2023. Out of those who passed the NSQE 1,134 applicants were initially screened for qualification into 400 available slots for 2023. On 10 August 2023 102 recruits – 52 from MILF and 50 from MNLF – took their oath as new officers of the PRO BAR at Camp Brig. Gen. Salipada K. Pendatun in Parang, Maguindanao del Norte. Starting from 9 September a further 693 applicants are undergoing physical agility tests or psychological and psychiatric exams with the intention to fill the 400 slots within this year. The BARMM contributes funding to the training of recruits.

The BOL under Article XI, Section 2 mandates a five-year waiver period of age, height, and education requirements to facilitate entry of MNLF and MILF members into the police force. The waiver formally expires in January 2024 five years after the ratification of the BOL. Extending the period on entry requirements might require an amendment to the BOL unless a flexible solution is found. As recruitment of MILF and MNLF into the police force started much later than originally anticipated, it would be logical for the waiver provision to be extended so that it would not be an obstacle to appropriate recruitment into the PNP.

There remains uncertainty in the BARMM on how many MILF and MNLF can ultimately be accommodated. Recruitment quotas for the following years still need to be determined. The Bangsamoro Government would favour a special quota and a considerable increase in numbers; however, it is not evident whether this can be accommodated. Not significantly raising the quota will likely result in considerable frustration among those who have successfully passed the NSQE exam and may not be offered a position.

There still remain other open questions in relation to policing in the Bangsamoro. So far not even the existing law is being followed, as the Chief Minister of the BARMM was not consulted during appointments of the Chief of the PNP PRO BAR in line with RA No. 6975.

The MILF looks at current arrangements as an intermediate solution and would like to bring its preferred concept of a Bangsamoro police back on the table, if necessary by reopening the questions on constitutionality of policing. At a minimum, efforts should be made to work towards a version of community-based policing in the Bangsamoro on the basis of ICP recommendations and what is feasible under the current framework. A suitable strategic approach should be agreed among the Parties at the earliest.

Joint Peace and Security Teams (JPSTs)

The CAB specifies that contingents from AFP, PNP and BIAF shall be organized into JPSTs to work for maintenance of peace and order and the stability of areas mutually identified by GPH and MILF. JPSTs are also engaged in preventing hostilities and supporting dispute resolution. The fact that representatives from the BIAF, the PNP and the AFP cooperate as one unit in harmony is in itself a very important accomplishment of the peace process. There is however no assurance that JPSTs will be able to cover all sensitive areas.

24 JPSTs have so far been constituted, out of which 22 have been activated and deployed, the latest two are JPSTs in South Upi and Guindulungan on 30 and 31 May 2023 respectively (see Annex IX for list of deployed JPSTs). A JPST transformation plan is under discussion by the Panels which will deal with facilitating the transfer of MILF members into civilian life once JPSTs cease to operate.

There have been reports of JPST MILF contingents not receiving their salaries for months and of JPST operational expenses not being provided on time. Such administrative shortcomings can undermine the effectiveness of this joint mechanism. Care should be taken to ensure funding for JPST salaries and operational expenses on time.

Redeployment of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)

It was agreed under the FAB Annex on Normalization that the AFP should redeploy its units and troops from and within the Bangsamoro, consistent with a normal and peaceful life and progress in other aspects of normalization. The AFP will retain installations necessary for national defense and security.

Criteria in support of a possible AFP redeployment were discussed at the JNC. At the Peace Implementing Panels meeting on 1 July 2023, the Parties agreed to further study the proposals for AFP redeployment parameters and areas for a joint security assessment. According to the AFP, redeployment is first and foremost a question of confidence and trust.

Disbanding Private Armed Groups (PAGs)

In line with the CAB, the disbandment of PAGs using diverse and appropriate approaches or methodologies shall be a priority to be undertaken in partnership between the GPH and the MILF through the JNC.

A National Task Force for the Disbandment of Private Armed Groups (NTF-DPAGs) was established in 2015 and charged with policy, planning and implementation of the program of disbandment of PAGs. After a period of inactivity it was reactivated in 2020. The MILF does not form part of the NTF-DPAGs.

The eighth NTF-DPAGs Oversight Committee Meeting on 10 June 2022 approved Joint Operational Guidelines of the AFP and the PNP which prescribe the policies, guidelines, and procedures to be observed by the AFP and PNP in neutralizing PAGs.

The TPMT is not aware whether an official list of PAGs is available. The 12th Oversight Committee Meeting of the NTF-DPAGs on Monday on 19 June 2023 reported on the disbandment of 18 potential private armed groups operating in regions 9, 12, and Bangsamoro.

The TPMT recommends the setting-up of an appropriate cooperation mechanism on disbandment of PAGs under involvement of MILF and BARMM authorities.

Small arms and light weapons (SALWs)

The CAB calls on the JNC to develop a program for reduction and management of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) of individuals and groups. The JNC has carried out preparatory work in this respect for discussion by the Panels. This is an important step in acknowledging that there are other, privately-owned weapons apart from those under the decommissioning process which need to be dealt with under a parallel approach.

According to information provided by the GPH, as a result of provincial SALW programs 1,159 weapons from Basilan, Tawi-Tawi, and Maguindanao were turned in by September 2023, whereas 4,346 were stenciled.

The Japan-funded Assistance for Security, Peace, Integration, and Recovery for Advanced Human Security in the BARMM (ASPIRE) Program was launched on 5 October 2023 in four pilot areas of Basilan, SGA BARMM, Maguindanao del Norte, and Maguindanao del Sur as a SALW control project. The concept involves a community approach – turnover of weapons in exchange for provision of agricultural equipment.

Transitional justice and reconciliation (TJR)

TJR represents a central part of the peace agreements. Many in the BARMM are convinced that genuine peace in the region and true healing can only be achieved by addressing historical injustices committed against the Bangsamoro people, including human rights violations, land dispossession and marginalization.

Under the CAB, the Parties agreed to create a Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) to undertake a study and to recommend to the Panels the appropriate mechanisms for TJR.

The TJRC issued its recommendations back in 2016, central among which is to set up a National Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission for the Bangsamoro (NTJRCB) as a dedicated body at national level to oversee a National Dealing with the Past Strategy.

The need for a national approach to address the legitimate grievances of the Bangsamoro is supported by the fact that many human rights violations took place outside the BARMM. An example is the Malisbong massacre, the mass killing of Muslim Moros by government forces inside a mosque in September 1974 which took place in Palimbang municipality, Sultan Kudarat province. A regional BARMM approach on TJR could be interpreted as failing to properly confront the full range of historical injustices. The BTA through a resolution called on the National Government to create a NTJRCB and to implement related programmes.

The TJR process has followed two tracks. The Peace Implementing Panels established a TWG-TJR tasked to formulate a joint roadmap for implementation of a TJR programme in the Bangsamoro. The Joint Statement issued by the Parties on 3 June 2022 advises the joint TWG on TJR to also invite international experts to provide advice on the crafting of the TJR roadmap. This provides an opportunity for the Parties to make progress towards the creation of a NTJRCB. The GPH under the ICCMN set up a sub-cluster on TJR which prepared a TJR roadmap including some 90+ recommendations. The roadmap has been submitted to the Peace Implementing Panels for approval and is pending completion of review by the MILF.

A number of initiatives on TJR have been taken in the Philippine Congress. A Bill on TJR was first filed during the 17th Congress and was endorsed by the House Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity. It was re-filed during the 18th Congress but did not pass the committee level. More recently a renewed attempt was launched in the current 19th Congress. In a hearing on 9 August 2023, the House Special Committee on Peace, Reconciliation and Unity expressed support to House Bill Nos. 4330 and 2975 filed by Representatives Mujiv S. Hataman and Zia Alonto-Adiong respectively. A TWG was set up to harmonize the provisions of the two measures. In the Senate, Bill No. 2043 authored by Sen. Risa Hontiveros was filed on 22 March 2023 and was read and referred to the Committee on Local Government and the Committee on Finance on 8 May 2023. On 7 August 2023 Senate Bill No. 2392 was filed by Sen. Francis Tolentino, Chairperson of the Committee on Justice and Human Rights.

The Bills are in line with the recommendations of the TJRC mandating the establishment of a NTJRCB. The intention is to provide mechanisms for the investigation of serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, to enable inquiries into specific events of the armed conflict, to contribute to the resolution of outstanding land disputes, to provide redress following land dispossession, and to promote healing and reconciliation among the different communities affected by conflict.

Enactment of this measure is long overdue. It would be helpful if TJR legislation would be dealt with as a matter of priority.

Amnesty

Provision of amnesty forms part of the confidence-building measures under the Annex on Normalization which forms part of the FAB. Therein the GPH commits itself to take immediate steps towards the resolution of cases of persons charged with or convicted of crimes and offences connected to the armed conflict in Mindanao to enable these persons to return to normal life.

On 5 February 2021, President Duterte issued a Presidential Proclamation granting amnesty to members of the MILF which allowed for applications to be filed within one year from the effectivity of the Proclamation. This period expired in February 2022.

OPAPRU submitted to the Office of President Marcos Jr. a request and justification for extension of the application. Once the President has taken a decision, the amended Proclamation will still have to be endorsed by Congress.

Revised amnesty proclamations to extend the application period have not yet been issued by President Marcos Jr. at the time of finalizing this report. Indications are that the proclamations will cover five organisations including MILF and MNLF and that they will feature an extended period of two years for filing applications.

A National Amnesty Commission (NAC) was appointed on 13 January 2023, chaired by Attorney Leah Tanodra-Armamento. She is supported by regular commissioners Atty. Nasser Marohomsalic and Atty. Jamar Kumalan, as well as secretaries of DND, DILG, and DOJ as ex-officio members.

The NAC took its oath at Malacañan on 20 February 2023. The actual application process will be administered through local amnesty boards composed of representatives of religious groups, local chief executives, prosecutors, security services (PNP/AFP) and DILG. Six of these local amnesty boards are being constituted in Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago (Cotabato City, Cagayan de Oro, Pagadian, Davao, Basilan, and Sulu). They have the tasks of receiving applications, verifying whether applicants are qualified and conducting interviews on an individual basis. All applicants are screened against the database of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) which features complete listings of crimes allegedly committed by individuals. To note that only crimes perpetrated in pursuit of political beliefs fall under amnesty.

It is expected that local amnesty boards will struggle with a high workload of individual cases. It is essential that the NAC is adequately staffed to provide administrative back-up services for a nationwide process of considerable complexity.

A swift resolution of amnesty cases is particularly important for MILF members, including some already serving as BTA MPs, who have cases filed against them and who may intend to run as candidates during the 2025 elections. The deadline for filing candidacies is October 2024. The MILF has reportedly identified a number of high-profile cases among its ranks and has an expressed preference for a general or wholesale amnesty approach for its members. It is not clear whether NAC rules will allow any preferential or fast-track treatment. It is also not clear whether the NAC will be in a position to issue safe conduct passes for those who have filed amnesty cases.

The NAC expects to carry out its functions until 2028 when the term of President Marcos Jr. will come to an end.

4. Other developments

i. Island Provinces

The TPMT during the reporting period visited the island provinces of Tawi-Tawi and Basilan and consulted with LGU and civil society contacts. Our impression is that island provinces benefit significantly from projects funded through the BARMM block grant. Positive examples include infrastructure support, provision of health facilities, agriculture development, and assistance to vulnerable sectors in particular following emergencies.

Residents of island provinces nevertheless expressed the wish for stronger representation in the BTA and more responsiveness to local issues of concern. In particular, they suggested a stronger administrative presence of the BARMM in island provinces, for instance by BARMM ministries, as well as a more consistent provision of services. The distance of island provinces from the BARMM linked with high travel costs and slow wi-fi were listed as impediments to proper communication with mainland Mindanao.

ii. Moros outside the BARMM

During TPMT visits to MILF communities outside the BARMM in Zamboanga Sibugay, Sarangani, and Sultan Kudarat provinces, residents conveyed sentiments of isolation. They stressed the need for better infrastructure, enhanced economic opportunities and access to social services. Residents also complained about a general feeling of administrative neglect, insecurity, and harassments by authorities.

MILF members outside the BARMM are entitled to benefit from activities under the peace process including decommissioning, amnesty, and recruitment into the police. They wish to be kept informed on developments in these areas and benefit from equal opportunities compared to those residing inside the BARMM.

An Office for Other Bangsamoro Communities (OOBC) outside the BARMM has been established under the Office of the Chief Minister, but its role and presence still has to be felt by various Bangsamoro groups residing outside the BARMM that the TPMT has engaged. Bangsamoro communities outside the BARM are represented on the CoL in the person of Malik J. Karil from Kabasalan, Zamboanga del Sur.

iii. Rehabilitation of Marawi City

The core of Marawi, the country's and the BARMM's only majority Islamic City, was destroyed during five months of urban warfare between government troops and Islamic State-aligned militants which lasted from May to October 2017. The Marawi siege resulted in more than 1,200 persons killed and an estimated 350,000 persons displaced.

The siege of Marawi took place after the peace agreements were concluded. The MILF cooperated with security forces in setting up peace corridors to facilitate delivery of relief goods and to evacuate civilians trapped in the war zone. Some observers believe that the Marawi siege served as encouragement to speed up implementation of the peace process by placing renewed emphasis on adoption of the Bangsamoro Organic Law.

The national government took charge of the city's reconstruction through the Task Force Bangon Marawi (TFBM) with focus on development of infrastructure and public utilities, including mosques, a new conference center and a sports stadium. During TPMT visits to Marawi City we noticed some impressive achievements, the reconstructed Grand Mosque being one example.

But it has also become clear that six years after the siege the rehabilitation of Marawi City is far from complete, as large parts of residential areas in the Most Affected Area (MAA), where the heaviest fighting took place, remain in ruins and off-limits to displaced residents. Priority efforts need to be placed on facilitating the return of residents to the MAA, including support to reconstruction for damaged properties and/or compensation. According to civil society representatives at least 5,000 families are still living in temporary shelters. This has left many among those affected frustrated and disillusioned. Permanent housing units which have been constructed could only accommodate a small part of displaced residents.

A Marawi Siege Victims' Compensation Act of 2022 (RA No. 11696) was adopted by Congress on 13 April 2022 to provide compensation for the loss or destruction of properties and loss of lives as a result of the Marawi siege. On 30 January 2023, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. appointed nine members of the MCB tasked with effecting payment of reparations. The Board is chaired by Atty. Maisara C. Dandamun-Latiph, who served as a BTA member during the first part of the transition phase.

The MCB has embarked on its work with a commendable degree of commitment and professionalism. On 23 May 2023, it adopted Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the remuneration of victims following consultations with relevant authorities. Two public consultations were held to solicit the views of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and other victims of the siege.

The initial allocation for 2023 under the Marawi Siege Victims' Compensation Act amounted to PhP1 billion. According to the MCB Chair, 4,762 claimants have submitted applications during July and August for a total amount of PhP17 billion. This would represent just 19% of the estimated 23,500 claimants. All claimants need to provide supporting documents. By mid-September 2023 some 220 claims had been assessed for a value of PhP395 million with disbursements expected to commence shortly.

A Dispute Resolution Unit has been set up to handle overlapping claims, in case no solution is found cases are referred to the court system. Courts are also required to deal with land expropriation. The MCB is planning to complete the compensation process within five years by 2028.

The proposed allocation for the Marawi Siege Victims Compensation Program earmarked by DBM under the 2024 National Expenditure Program is another PhP1 billion. This amount is very low when compared to the PhP89 billion total value of claims expected. The Board projected that for 2024 it would need an additional PhP7 billion to cover the claims for compensation. The appropriation is under review by a Joint Congressional Oversight Committee.

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ANNEXES

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THE THIRD PARTY MONITORING TEAM (TPMT) AND ITS TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. MANDATE

The mandate of the Third Party Monitoring Team (TPMT) is to monitor, review and assess the implementation of all signed agreements, primarily the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro and its Annexes.

2. COMPOSITION

The TPMT is an independent body composed of the following:

- A chair, who shall be an eminent international person and shall act as convenor and spokesperson for the TPMT;
- A representative from a local non-government organization registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, to be nominated by the GPH;
- A representative from a local non-government organization registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission, to be nominated by the MILF;
- a representative from an international non-government organization to be nominated by the GPH; and
- a representative from an international non-government organization to be nominated by the MILF.

One or two eminent international persons may be added to the membership of the TPMT as mutually agreed by the Parties. All members shall be mutually acceptable to and agreed upon by the Parties.

Unethical behaviour may be a ground for removal from the TPMT of an individual member upon the recommendation of the body through the Chair and/or the Panels by mutual agreement. In any case, the final decision rests upon the Panels.

3. FUNCTIONS

3.1 The basic functions of the TPMT are to:

- a. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of all Agreements.
- b. Review and assess the progress of the implementation of commitments by both Parties under the Agreements. Towards this end, it shall submit comprehensive periodic reports and updates to both Parties for their appropriate action.
- c. Communicate to the public the progress and developments in the implementation of the Agreements of the Parties.

- 3.2 At the end of the transition period, upon the regular operation of the Bangsamoro Government, the GPH and MILF Peace Panels, together with the Malaysian Facilitator and the TPMT, shall convene a meeting to review, assess or evaluate the implementation of all agreements and the progress of the transition. An 'Exit Document' officially terminating the peace negotiations may be crafted and signed by both Parties if and only when all agreements have been fully implemented.
- 3.3 The TPMT shall have the power to organize its work in the manner it deems most appropriate. It shall, under the direction of the Chair, devise its own tasking, work plans, security and confidentiality protocols, and financial systems in order to comply with requirements imposed by funding sources. It shall also define a code of conduct particularly with respect to the relationship between its members and their organizational affiliations. These shall be contained in the TPMT's Internal Rules and Regulations which shall be submitted to the Panels for their approval.
- 3.4 The TPMT shall work on the basis of consensus. In reporting, any disagreements must be noted. The TPMT shall commit to work in the spirit of cooperation, confidence-building and trust among themselves and with their external relations.
- 3.5 Access to meetings, activities, informants, documents and data

The members of the TPMT shall have access to all reports and activities connected to the implementation of the Agreements. It shall directly coordinate with the concerned bodies and individuals in order to accomplish its functions and achieve its objectives.

The TPMT shall be allowed to observe the meetings of the Transition Commission and other bodies concerned with the implementation of the Agreements, subject to guidelines that the respective bodies may set.

4. REGULAR MEETINGS

The TPMT shall convene every two months and as they deem necessary.

5. REPORTING

The TPMT shall submit confidential written reports to the chairpersons of the two Peace Panels and to the facilitator, quarterly and as deemed necessary. The reports shall contain the TPMT's observations and recommendations. The Parties are not bound by the recommendations but shall submit written responses to the TPMT, furnishing a copy to the facilitator, within one month from receipt.

The TPMT shall produce a public written report yearly or as it deems necessary, providing an overall assessment of developments in the implementation of the Agreements. Before issuing a public report, the TPMT shall submit it to the Parties and to the Facilitator for comment and consultation. The TPMT may consider the comments of the Parties but without prejudice to its independent discretion on what to publish.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

All information, data or opinions gathered, generated or exchanged in connection with the work of the TPMT shall be treated with utmost consideration for the safety and security of the source and the integrity of the peace process. Critical and/or confidential information as defined by the TPMT may not be divulged to their respective organizations and other entities.

7. ADMINISTRATIVE AND SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

The TPMT shall have an office and support staff / secretariat commensurate to its technical, operational and administrative requirements. It may engage the assistance of experts in the exercise of its monitoring and assessment functions.

8. FUNDING

Funding for the operations of the TPMT shall be independently sourced as jointly decided by the Parties in coordination with the TPMT. This may take the form of several funding streams or one funding source.

To address the problem of a possible gap between the formal establishment of the TPMT and its longer-term funding support, the Parties undertake to find modalities for short-term bridge funding for the initial activities of the TPMT. Potential organizational members of the TPMT may indicate how they would cover any “bridge” period.

9. DURATION

The TPMT shall be formed by the Parties not later than one month after the signing of these Terms of Reference. It shall continue to exist until an Exit Agreement is reached.

Done this 25th day of January 2013 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

FOR THE GPH:

MIRIAM CORONEL-FERRER
GPH Panel Chair

FOR THE MILF:

MOHAGHER IQBAL
MILF Panel Chair

SIGNED IN THE PRESENCE OF:

TENGGU DATO' AB GHAFAR TENGGU MOHAMED
Malaysian Facilitator

TPMT Members

Heino Marius
(Chair)

tpmt.marius@gmail.com

Heino Marius, a German national, earned a master's degree in economics from Hamburg University and a post-graduate degree in development economics from the German Development Institute Berlin. He stated his career in Indonesia working on management and small enterprise development with the International Labour Organization. He joined the European Commission in 1993 and served in European Union (EU) Delegations in Ethiopia and India. Since 2000 he held various positions at EU headquarters in Brussels, covering external relations with Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Southeast Asia. Mr. Marius retired from the services of the EU in February 2020.

Rahib Kudto
(United Youth for Peace and Development, Inc.)

tpmt.kudto@gmail.com

Rahib Kudto was born in Pagalungan, Maguindanao. He was National President of the United Youth of the Philippines (UNYPHIL) from 1998 to 2004, Deputy Secretary-General of the Mindanao Peoples Caucus (MPC) from 2007 to 2010, and Chairman of the Kutawato Regional Management Committee of the Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society (CBCS) from 1998 to 2011. He has been President of the United Youth for Peace and Development, Inc. (UNYPAD) since 2004, and is currently Chairman of the Cotabato City Coalition for Change (4C's) and visiting lecturer in the Graduate School of the Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology (CFCST).

HuseyinOruç
(IHH)

tpmt.oruc@gmail.com

Huseyin Oruç was born in Malatya, Turkey, 1969. He gained diplomas in Tourism Management and Public Management. He is one of the founders of The Foundation for Human Rights and Freedoms and Humanitarian Relief (IHH), a Turkish NGO based in Istanbul, and has managed various international projects of IHH. He is a founding Trustee of The Humanitarian Forum (UK), and founding member of UNIW (the Union of NGOs of the Islamic World) on behalf of IHH. He was head of the Preparation Committee of Code of Conduct for Islamic NGOs for OIC, and is a delegate of IHH for UN and OIC. He is Deputy President Of IHH Board of Trustees, responsible for Humanitarian Diplomacy and Mediation project. He is married and has three children.

Karen N. Tañada

(Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute)

tpmt.tanada@gmail.com

Rebecca “Karen” N. Tanada, is Executive Director of Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute, a service base and resource centre for peace and conflict resolutions in the Philippines, supporting citizen’s participation in peace processes. From 2001-4, she served as member of the Reciprocal Working Committee on Social and Economic Reforms of the government peace panel negotiating with the National Democratic Front. She is also Co-coordinator for Southeast Asia of Peace Women Across the Globe, and a member of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) Working Group on Enabling Collaboration and GPPAC Gender Core Group.

Sam Chittick

(The Asia Foundation)

tpmt.chittick@gmail.com

Sam Chittick is an Australian based in the Philippines, and currently the Philippines Country Representative of the Asia Foundation. He has ten years’ experience in the Philippines, and more than twenty years’ experience on issues of government and decentralization; peace, security, and conflict; local economic development; and human rights and the rule of law. He has worked within NGOs, the World Bank, Australian Aid, the United Nations, and GIZ in 14 countries across Asia and Africa.

Annex III

Summary of TPMT monitoring sessions, February 2022 to October 2023

For this period, the TPMT convened six times in the form of face-to-face meetings in Metro Manila and in Mindanao (see schedule below). In addition, some TPMT members attended as observers in some peace process-related meetings and events.

- 2 to 15 March 2022
- 1 to 14 June 2022
- 16 to 31 January 2023
- 16 to 31 May 2023
- 4 to 19 September 2023

Annex IV

Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) Members of Parliament

- 1) Abas, Akmad I.
- 2) Abas, Haron M.
- 3) Abbas, Basit S.
- 4) Abu, Mudjib C.
- 5) Alamia, Laisa M.
- 6) Alauddin, Mosber E.
- 7) Ali, Ibrahim D.
- 8) Ali, Lanang Jr. T.
- 9) Alih, Eddie M.
- 10) Ambolodto, Suharto M.
- 11) Amenoden, Abdulazis M.
- 12) Ampatuan, Baintan A.
- 13) Anayatin, Susana S.
- 14) Antao, Mohammad Kelie U.
- 15) Arnado, Mary Ann M.
- 16) Asnawie, Dan S.
- 17) Babao, Ali Montaha D.
- 18) Balindong, Pangalian M.
- 19) Basman, Anna Tarhata S.
- 20) Candao, Bai Maleiha B.
- 21) Dilangalen, Hashemi N.
- 22) Dumama-Alba, Sha Elijah B.
- 23) Ebrahim, Ahod Balawag
- 24) Esmael, Suharto S.
- 25) Estino, Matarul M.
- 26) Gayak, Abdullah E.
- 27) Guerra, Eduard U.
- 28) Hadji Abdullah, Khalid M.
- 29) Hashim, Abdullah B.
- 30) Hassan, Hatimil E.
- 31) Iqbal, Mohagher M.
- 32) Ismael, Rasul E.
- 33) Jajurie, Raissa H.
- 34) Jakilan, Muslimin A.
- 35) Jikiri, Albakil S.
- 36) Kahalan, Denmartin A.
- 37) Karon, Faizal G.
- 38) Lim, John Anthony L.
- 39) Loong, Benjamin T.
- 40) Loong, Don Mustapha A.

- 41) Lorena, Jose I.
- 42) Macacua, Abdulraof A.¹
- 43) Macapaar, Abdullah G.
- 44) Macasalong, Marjanie S.
- 45) Macatanong, Amroussi A.
- 46) Maglangit, Tarhata M.
- 47) Malik, Hamid U.
- 48) Mantawil, Baileng S.
- 49) Mashtua, Ishak V.
- 50) Matalam, Jaafar Apollo Mikhail L.
- 51) Mawallil, Amilbahar S.
- 52) Mendoza, Froilyn T.
- 53) Midtimbang, Michael E.
- 54) Midtimbang, Tawakal B.
- 55) Misuari, Abdulkarim T.
- 56) Misuari, Nurredha I.
- 57) Mitmug, Rasol Jr. Y.
- 58) Muñoz, Hussein P.
- 59) Oranon, Suwaib L.
- 60) Pacasem, Ubaida C.
- 61) Pak, Abdulwahab M.
- 62) Pangandaman, Nabila Margarita P.
- 63) Parcasio, Randolph C.
- 64) Piang, Ramon Sr. A.
- 65) Ramos, Diamila D.
- 66) Salendab, Said Z.
- 67) Salik, Ali O.
- 68) Sangki, Ali B.
- 69) Sema, Omar Yasser C.
- 70) Sema, Romeo K.
- 71) Shiek, Said M.
- 72) Silongan, Aida M.
- 73) Sinolinding, Kadil Jr. M.
- 74) Solaiman, Ali B.
- 75) Tago, Paisalin P.
- 76) Tan, Nabil A.
- 77) Usman, Adzfar H.
- 78) Utto, Bassir D.
- 79) Uy-oyod, Sittie Fahanie S.
- 80) Yacob, Mohammad S.

¹ Appointed Officer-in-Charge and Governor of Maguindanao del Norte on 5 April 2023 and 28 April 2023, respectively.

Annex V

BTA Cabinet

Ahod “Murad” Balawag Ebrahim
Chief Minister

Rizaldy L. Piang
Minister of Health

Ali B. Solaiman
Deputy Chief Minister

Hamid Aminoddin D. Barra
*Minister of Human Settlements and
Development*

Abunawas L. Maslamama
Senior Minister

Melanio U. Ulama
Minister of Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs

Mohd Asnin K. Pendatun
Cabinet Secretary

Naguib G. Sinarimbo
*Minister of the Interior and Local
Government*

Atty. Sha Elijah B. Dumama-Alba
Attorney General

Muslimin G. Sema
Minister of Labor and Employment

Abdullah M. Cusain
Assistant Senior Minister

Hussein P. Muñoz
Minister of Public Order and Safety

Ministries

Mohammad S. Yacob
*Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and
Agrarian Reform*

Eduard U. Guerra
Minister of Public Works

Mohagher M. Iqbal
*Minister of Basic, Higher, and Technical
Education*

Aida M. Silongan
Minister of Science and Technology

Akmad A. Brahim
*Minister of Environment, Natural
Resources, and Energy*

Raissa H. Jajurie
*Minister of Social Services and
Development*

Ubaida C. Pacasem
*Minister of Finance, and Budget and
Management*

Abu Amri Taddik
*Minister of Trade, Investments, and
Tourism*

Paisalin P. Tago
*Minister of Transportation and
Communications*

Intergovernmental Relations Body (IGRB) Members

National Government

Sec. Amenah F. Pangandaman
*Secretary of Budget and Management and
Co-Chair*

Sec. Antonio Ernesto F. Lagdameo, Jr.
Special Assistant to the President

Sec. Benjamin E. Diokno
Secretary of Finance

Sec. Benhur C. Abalos, Jr.
*Secretary of the Interior and Local
Government*

Sec. Gilberto C. Teodoro, Jr.
Secretary of National Defense

Sec. Manuel F. Bonoan
Secretary of Public Works and Highways

Sec. Raphael P.M. Lotilla
Secretary of Energy

Senior Usec. Domingo F. Panganiban
*Senior Undersecretary, Department of
Agriculture*

Sec. Jaime J. Bautista
Secretary of Transportation

Sec. Arsenio M. Balisacan
Secretary of Socioeconomic Planning

Sec. Carlito G. Galvez, Jr.
*Presidential Adviser on Peace,
Reconciliation and Unity*

Bangsamoro Government

Min. Mohagher M. Iqbal
*Minister of Basic, Higher, and Technical
Education and Co-Chair*

MP Pangalian M. Balindong
Speaker, Bangsamoro Parliament

Senior Min. Abunawas L. Maslamama
Senior Minister

Cab. Sec. Mohd Asnin K. Pendatun
Cabinet Secretary

Min. Ubaida C. Pacasem
*Minister of Finance, and Budget and
Management*

Min. Naguib G. Sinarimbo
*Minister of the Interior and Local
Government*

Min. Raissa H. Jajurie
*Minister of Social Services and
Development*

Min. Eduard U. Guerra
Minister of Public Works

Min. Mohammad S. Yacob
*Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, and
Agrarian Reform*

Min. Akmad A. Brahim
*Minister of Environment, Natural
Resources, and Energy*

Min. Paisalin P. Tago
*Minister of Transportation and
Communications*

Annex VII

Philippine Congress – Bangsamoro Parliament Forum (PCBPF) Composition

Senate of the Philippines

Senate President Pro Tempore Loren B. Legarda

Co-Chair

Sen. Joseph Victor G. Ejercito

Sen. Francis N. Tolentino

Sen. Robinhood C. Padilla

Sen. Aquilino L. Pimentel III

House of Representatives

Rep. Yasser A. Balindong

Co-Chair

Rep. Mohammad Khalid Q. Dimaporo

Rep. Zia A. Adiong

Rep. Munir N. Arbison, Jr.

Rep. Lorenz R. Defensor

Bangsamoro Parliament

Speaker Pangalian M. Balindong

Co-Chair

Dep. Speaker Omar Yasser C. Sema

Dep. Speaker Lanang T. Ali, Jr.

Dep. Speaker Abdulkarim T. Misuari

Dep. Speaker Nabil A. Tan

Floor Leader Sha Elijah B. Dumama-Alba

Dep. Floor Leader Raissa H. Jajurie

Dep. Floor Leader Jose I. Lorena

MP Eduard U. Guerra

MP Ubaida C. Pacasem

MP Marjanie S. Macasalong

Annex VIII

Council of Leaders Composition

Ahod B. Ebrahim
Chief Minister

Members of the Philippine Congress from the BARMM

Rep. Mujiv S. Hataman
Lone District of Basilan

Rep. Zia A. Adiong
1st District of Lanao del Sur

Rep. Yasser A. Balindong
2nd District of Lanao del Sur

Rep. Sittie Shahara I. Mastura
Lone District of Maguindanao del Norte

Rep. Mohamad P. Paglas
Lone District of Maguindanao del Sur

Rep. Samier A. Tan
1st District of Sulu

Rep. Abdulmunir M. Arbison
2nd District of Sulu

Rep. Dimszar M. Sali
Lone District of Tawi-Tawi

Provincial governors of the BARMM

Gov. Hadjiman S. Hataman Salliman
Basilan

Gov. Mamintal A. Adiong
Lanao del Sur

Gov. Abdulraof A. Macacua
Maguindanao del Norte

Gov. Bai Mariam S. Mangudadatu
Maguindanao del Sur

Gov. Abdusakur M. Tan
Sulu

Gov. Yshmael I. Sali
Tawi-Tawi

Mayors of chartered cities in the BARMM

Mayor Mohammad Ali “Bruce” D. Matabalao
Cotabato City

Mayor Majul U. Gandamra
Marawi City

Mayor Roderick H. Furigay
Lamitan City

Community and sectoral representatives

Mlang U. Madal
Traditional Leaders

Bishop Ernie M. Moral
Non-Moro Indigenous Peoples

Noni L. Lao
Women

Troy Eric O. Cordero²
Archbishop Emeritus Orlando Cardinal Quevedo³
Settler Communities

² Passed away June 2023

³ Appointed July 2023

Abdulkhair S. Tarason
Ulama

Mohammad Abqary A. Alon
Youth

Malik J. Caril
Bangsamoro Communities outside the BARMM

Tungko B. Tadtagan
Professionals

Shalimar A. Candao
Business Sector

Musa T. Solaiman
Farmers

Faisal A. Nahul
Labor

[Vacant]
Private Educational Institutions

Deployment of Joint Peace and Security Teams (JPSTs)

Basilan

1. Sapah Bulac, Sumisip
2. Poblacion, Tipo-Tipo

Lanao del Norte

3. Pacalundo, Balo-i
4. Munai

Lanao del Sur

5. Balindong
6. Dilimbayan, Maguing

Maguindanao del Norte

7. Tugaig, Barira
8. Tamontaka, Datu Odin Sinsuat (2 teams)
9. Pigcalagan, Sultan Kudarat
10. Simuay, Sultan Kudarat (2 teams)
11. Gadungan, Talitay
12. Ganasi, Upi

Maguindanao del Sur

13. Kitango, Datu Saudi Ampatuan
14. Muti, Guindulungan
15. Libutan, Mamasapano
16. Kuya, South Upi
17. Darampua, Sultan sa Barongis (*for deployment*)

North Cotabato

18. Kapimpilan, Midsayap (*for deployment*)
19. Bago-inged, Pikit
20. Balongis, Pikit

Sultan Kudarat

21. El Bebe, Columbio

Zamboanga Sibugay

22. Datu Tumanggong, Tungawan

Activities of the Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZOPI) and the United Youth for Peace and Development (UNYPAD)**GZOPI activities**

The Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZOPI) continued to implement its project that had begun in November 2020 and extended to July 2023, focused on monitoring civil society engagement in the Bangsamoro transition. Overall the project supported ten meetings and six workshops (done online or face-to face) and one conference, where youth and women's organizations and networks developed their key issue agenda and continued to assess the status of their advocacy.

These activities were documented and some of the outputs such as statements and agenda documents were communicated and promoted in various media as well as during events. By working with CSO multi-stakeholders, the project was able to monitor developments and concerns on key issues in the Bangsamoro, and therefore provide insights for the work of the TPMT.

Among the results of the project activities were the following:

1. Discussion of youth initiatives on and consolidation of perspectives on the BARMM Youth Peace and Security Agenda
2. Youth perspectives on political participation and governance; and on culture of peace and conflict transformation, particularly among the Generation Peace Youth Network members
3. Review by women's groups of the main concepts and findings of the TJRC report, with emphasis on the experiences and roles of women.
4. Women's concepts of transformative politics in the Bangsamoro and module for training of women in politics
5. Women's electoral agenda (refinement as part of overall Women's Agenda for Peace and Justice) and position on the Bangsamoro Electoral Code, particularly among members of the Women Engaged in Action on 1325
6. Further commentary on a gender framework on community policing in the Bangsamoro
7. Exchange of learnings among five CSOs on experiences in capability-building and advocacy of women on community peace and security

UNYPAD activities

From January to August, 2022, UNYPAD conducted eight focused group discussions (FGD) and eight key informant interviews (KII) in which 119 individuals participated from various sectors of the community with representation of males (58 %) and females (42%). FGD and KII were the tools employed to understand the feelings and sentiments of the Bangsamoro towards the implementation of the CAB, notably the BARMM as the political track of the agreement. The consultations covered the Mindanao mainland and island provinces of the BARMM.

The data gathered show no significant difference in the responses between the participants from mainland provinces and island provinces. The majority (90 percent) of the participating sectors expressed positive views on the current Bangsamoro Government. They feel and recognize the efforts of the BARMM government to improve their situations and cater to their needs. Some of these significant accomplishments were the implementation of social amelioration funds, providing strategic emergency and relief assistance that includes adequate food packs as well as road rehabilitation, and other infrastructure development projects.

Despite the perceived improvement in peace and security and economic growth in the region, the majority of the respondents expressed the need to expedite further the delivery of quick-impact projects. Many have highlighted also the need to improve access to free and quality education that will enable their children to have a better future. Moreover, the FGD participants were optimistic about seeing an inclusive, transparent, participative, and responsive BARMM government that could be translated into adequate job opportunities and sustainable livelihoods. Finally, the majority of them expressed the need to be part of the decision-making process.