



# PRESS RELEASE

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## ‘Marawi needs spiritual and moral recovery’ - Lorenzana



*Secretary Delfin Lorenzana receives a Certificate of Appreciation from the organizers of the “Diyakatra” Gala Dinner held at the Manila Hotel on September 28, 2017.*

"As we are in the process of rehabilitating and reconstructing the physical aspects of war-torn Marawi City, it is even more important to assess the spiritual and moral recovery of the people," said Defense Secretary Delfin N. Lorenzana, Chairperson of Task Force Bangon Marawi, during the “Diyakatra” gala dinner at the Manila Hotel on September 28, 2017.

Speaking as guest of honor in the event, Secretary Lorenzana emphasized the need for social healing of affected communities in Marawi, along with addressing the physical needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Marawi and surrounding areas.

"It is only when the people have morally recovered that we can finally say that Marawi has risen again," the Defense Chief added.



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The gala night, dubbed "*Diyakatra*" which means "peace" in Maranao, was organized by The Way to Happiness (TWITH) Philippines, a group which described itself in its website as "committed to touching the hearts and mind of people in a practical and sustainable way." Headed by Dr. Jorge Perez De Tagle as National Chairman, it also includes Amanoding Esmail, president of the Southeast Asian Islamic Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Dr. Habib Macaayong, president of Mindanao State University among its esteemed members.

Also present in the event were Assistant Secretary Paola Alvarez, Department of Finance; Assistant Secretary Abdulgani Macatoman, Department of Trade and Industry; Ms. Barbie Atienza, president of the United Print Media Group; and internationally renowned balladeer, Mr. David Pomeranz, Change Agent-Ambassador of The Way To Happiness Philippines.



*Secretary Lorenzana with The Way to Happiness Philippines.*

Secretary Lorenzana thanked the organizers of *Diyakatra* and various other groups and individuals who are helping the government in its peacebuilding efforts for the IDPs and affected communities. He said these groups complement the similar efforts of the Task Force Bangon Marawi to hasten the social healing of all affected communities through the conduct of multi-sectoral group psychosocial healing sessions, peace-promoting assessment and planning, and mainstreaming peace education in schools and Madrasah education. *"Hopefully, these acts of kindness will make them smile again and find their renewed happiness,"* he said.

Secretary Lorenzana also underscored the importance of social and spiritual recovery to counter the spread of radicalism and violent extremism. "Let us work together in painting smiles in the faces of the people of Marawi. Let us make sure that we will win the war against extremism by winning the hearts and minds of the people," the Defense Chief said in closing. "Let us work together in achieving genuine and sustainable *Diyakatra*," he added.

Proceeds from "*Diyakatra*" gala dinner will be used to fund the printing of the booklet titled "*The Way to Happiness*" which will be distributed to the people of Marawi for free to help in the government's recovery efforts. ###

