



PRESS RELEASE

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Mindanao leaders sign Davao Declaration against extremism

Davao City – Descendants of sultanates and royal clans of Mindanao signed the "Davao Declaration" yesterday, March 4, signifying their "unequivocal and categorical commitment" to the peace and security initiatives of the government under President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, especially the fight against violent extremism and terrorism in the region.

The declaration is the product of the first-ever Mindanao Sultanate Summit on Peace and Security, jointly hosted by the Department of National Defense (DND) and Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) from March 2-4, 2017. Around 500 participants attended the summit, including the Sultanate of Magindanao, and Sultans, Datus and Bais from the Zamboanga Peninsula, Davao Region, Southern Mindanao, Iranun, Biwang, Bagoing, Lanao, Buayan and Kabuntalan.

The declaration was signed in the presence of Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, National Security Adviser Hermogenes Esperon, and government security forces led by Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) Chief of Staff General Eduardo Ano. Affirming their support, assistance and cooperation to deny the entry as well as prevent the growth of violent extremism and terrorism, the group stated "The struggle against violent extremism and terrorism should not solely be borne by the government but should involve the whole of nation, including the Sultanate and traditional institutions and leadership in Mindanao."

The three-day summit featured presentations from key government agencies such as DND-AFP, DILG, NSA, National Anti-Poverty Commission, and the Philippine National Police. They tackled how the government plans to bring its services to the people of Mindanao. The participants, in turn, were able to discuss issues, concerns, and suggestions that could help the government in its campaign against violence extremism and terrorism.

Secretary Delfin Lorenzana, a proud son of Mindanao himself, said he will submit a report to the President on the results of the three-day summit. He stressed the need to engage the Sultanate and the Sultans, Datus and Bais in the implementation of efforts to prevent the entry and stop the growth of violent extremism and terrorism in the region.

"Kailangan ng gobyerno ang tulong ng lahat. We look forward to more engagements. Umpisa lang ito. We will make this as a start of our constant engagement, the Defense Chief said.

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