



# PRESS RELEASE

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## AFP Engineers to play “big role” in Zamboanga reconstruction



Defense Secretary Voltaire T. Gazmin addresses the officers, enlisted personnel and civilian employees of the 51<sup>st</sup> Engineer Brigade, Philippine Army, during the celebration of the 47<sup>th</sup> Gen. Rigoberto J. Atienza Day on October 8, 2013 at Camp Atienza, Libis, Quezon City.

Armed Forces of the Philippines engineers will play a big role in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the areas affected by the recent conflict between government forces and MNLF in Zamboanga City.

Defense Secretary Voltaire T. Gazmin, speaking during the 47<sup>th</sup> General Rigoberto Atienza Day on October 8, 2013 at Camp Atienza, Libis, Quezon City, headquarters of the Philippine Army’s 51<sup>st</sup> Engineer Brigade, said that AFP engineers are now “confronted with a formidable challenge” of helping restore the affected areas of the recent MNLF siege.

“This new deployment of our AFP engineers is aimed to restore the physical devastations and damages in the ground zero of the concluded armed confrontations between the government and MNLF forces,” Gazmin said.

The Defense chief added that the Army engineers will be deployed to cover about 40 hectares of land area, covering the barangays of Sta. Catalina, Sta. Barbara, Rio Hondo and adjacent areas, which were “practically leveled to the ground”.

“We can only anticipate and look forward to the successful accomplishment of this new mission, confident as ever on the manifested professional capability and expertise of our AFP engineers. Let us wish them well in the fulfilment of this endeavour,” he said.

AFP engineers primarily assist the government in its developmental endeavours in the different areas of the country. The brigade’s capability is instrumental in the government’s reliance on our military establishment in providing engineering support and assistance in nation-building.

They have joined noteworthy projects, including Gawad Kalinga and Brigada Eskwela, and the construction of roads linking farms and markets to spur development in the countryside. They have also been involved in the search and rescue operations in times of disasters.

For his part, Gazmin thanked the 51<sup>st</sup> Engineers for their contributions to the Department and the nation’s developmental projects. “I laud the officers, men and women and civilian employees of the 51st engineer brigade, for their incessant dedicated indulgence that made possible the unending realization of our engineering projects,” he said.



Defense Secretary Voltaire T. Gazmin inspects the equipment used by the 51<sup>st</sup> Engineer Brigade, Philippine Army for the unit’s various projects.