



Recognition of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao for their Empowerment and Sustainable Development

***IPDEV's Froilyn Mendoza elected the IP's voice  
in the Transition Commission***

*Cotabato City, Philippines* – The IPDEV project, which is supported by the European Union (EU), is pleased to announce that groups from the indigenous communities hailed the appointment of **Ms Froilyn Mendoza** as member of the Transition Commission (TC). The TC will hammer out the Basic Law for the Bangsamoro political entity, replacing the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Her inclusion in the TC came as Indigenous Peoples (IP) in the ARMM move to assert their rights and not be left out as a new political entity emerges out of the ongoing peace negotiations between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). For the first time ever, the IPDEV project was able to bundle the interests of the Indigenous Peoples in the ARMM and was successful in making them heard. Therefore, it came as no surprise that a representative of the IPDEV project team was selected and elected a TC member.

The IPs in the ARMM lead their way of life and adhere to their customary laws amid an atmosphere of confidence, dignity and self-respect. Mendoza, herself an IP belonging to the Teduray tribe, said she gladly welcomes the appointment, but is mindful of the great responsibility that she will be undertaking. She expressed hopes that her entry into the TC "as a Teduray with a distinct identity will ensure that the rights of the IPs in the ARMM are recognized and protected", one of the main objectives of the IPDEV project. IPDEV and Ms Mendoza have agreed to continue their mutual support for each other in working towards the recognition of the rights of IPs in ARMM.

Presently, Mendoza serves as an advocacy specialist with IPDEV, a project empowering IPs (mostly Teduray, Lambangian and Dulangan Manobo) in the ARMM, who have their own culture, customs and tradition distinct from that of the Moro population.

Her appointment into the TC is strongly supported by IP groups like the Timuay Justice and Governance; the Lumad Development Center Inc; the Teduray, Lambangian Youth and Student Association; the Mamalo Descendants Organization, the Teduray, Lambangian and Dulangan Manobo Ancestral Domain Claim; the Organization of Teduray Lambangian Conference; the Teduray Lambangian Women's Organization Inc.; the Kena Menuwa (Dulangan Manobo Governance); the Mindanao People's Peace Movement Katawhang Lumad (MPPM-KL), the Women Engaged in Action 1325 (We-ACT), and the Mindanao Peaceweavers, among others.



This project is co-funded by the European Union.



'Recognition of the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao for the Empowerment and Sustainable Development' (IPDEV) is a project implemented by the consortium: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V., Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG) and DEVCON Development Consultants Inc.



Development Consultants Inc. DEVCON



The EU is fully supporting the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB) and is delivering a significant proportion of its aid in Mindanao to ensure the success of this historic process through capacity-building and poverty alleviation efforts. Likewise, the EU is supporting projects which promote and protect the rights of the indigenous peoples.

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*IPDEV's main objective is the development of IP communities in the ARMM that recognize and practice the rights of minorities at all levels and the improvement of living conditions of the IPs in the provinces of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur.*

*For over a year now (and with two more years to go) the project team has been successfully working towards the protection and promotion of rights of IPs in the ARMM.*

*The project aims to raise awareness for the discriminating political and administrative structures that leave about half a million IP (comprising up to 20 per cent of the ARMM constituency) at a disadvantage and unequal before the law.*

*The project's activities focus mainly on capacity building for the empowerment and strengthening of IP self-governance as well as advocacy for the IPs and socio-legal and administrative reforms in the ARMM.*

*Please add us on Facebook (IP DEV) or visit us on the IAG website <http://iag.org.ph/index.php/ipdevnews> for further information.*



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