

Kamindanawan 2001

Women Working a Mindanao Agenda

6-8 December 2001, Davao City

Conference organized by the
Mindanao Council of Women Leaders and the
Mindanao Young Women Leaders

A Women's Mindanao Agenda

Conference Statement

Women leaders of Mindanao take up the challenge of peace and development for our people. We rise to our responsibility as citizens and leaders to take action to secure the lives and livelihood of millions of Mindanaons living in conflict and poverty.

As Muslim, Christian and Lumad leaders, we gathered in Davao City on 6-8 December 2001 for "Kamindanawan: Women Working a Mindanao Agenda". Our gathering comes at a time when Mindanao needs leadership to offer fresh solutions to our region's intractable issues.

We assert our right to envision a future for Mindanao that is free of poverty and violence, where women and men are enabled to fully participate in and benefit from peace and development.

Mindanao will not know peace or development unless there is social cohesion. We will work at all levels to build bridges among our communities and groups, and between civil society and the government.

Our experiences and expertise as women playing multiple roles in our family and community put us in a unique position to provide leadership in many critical areas in our society.

To achieve the greatest impact, our work will focus on five strategic areas. These are peace, governance, health, education and livelihood. Environment and violence against women will be taken into prime consideration in all these areas.

Our advocacy and action will be directed at the following:

1. PEACE

- Develop a proposal for a political settlement between the government and the MILF
- Play a significant role in the peace process and humanitarian programs for internally displaced people

2. GOVERNANCE

- Monitor local budgets, with special emphasis on the gender budget
- Advocate gender parity in elected and appointive leadership positions
- Encourage women's active participation as voters and candidates in the forthcoming barangay elections, and in all other elections
- Create a Mindanao women's vote

3. LIVELIHOOD

- Improve equality of access to financing for women's enterprises
- Increase support for women's enterprises through trade fairs and market encounters
- Maximize the use of information technology

4. HEALTH

- Ensure gender-responsive health services
- Strengthen local health boards
- Remove provisions in health insurance programs that discriminate against women
- Monitor the price of medicines
- Embark on a solid waste management program for sanitation and livelihood

5. EDUCATION

- Transform the madrasah system so that its content will be gender-responsive and lead to social cohesion among the tri-peoples of Mindanao
- Mobilize adequate resources for basic education and adult functional literacy especially in the ARMM areas
- Mainstream into the curriculum Mindanao History and the cultures of the indigenous people, taking into consideration the role of women

To ensure that our actions are sustained, we have created the Mindanao Commission on Women with the following members:

Irene M. Santiago, Margie Moran Floirendo, Joji Ilagan Bian, Patricia M. Sarenas (former Party List Prerepresentative), Bai Yasmin Sinsuat Macalandong, Jhihann Hairun, Era Espana, Charie Gomez and Zenaida Tawagon (members-at-large);

and regional representatives:

Region XIII – Caraga: Mayor Jenny de Asis of Agusan del Sur and Dean Esperanza Dumaiocos of Suriago City

Region XII: City former Governor Rosario Diaz of Cotabato and Celia Santos of Cotabato City

Region XI : Former Councilor Pilar C. Braga of Davao City and Clarita Galagala of Panabo City

Region X: Dean Amor de Torres of Cagayan de Oro City and Dr. Melchora Ambalong of Iligan City

Region IX : Councilor Nida P. Dans of Basilan and Mucha Shim-Arquiza of Zamboanga

ARMM: J. Nadjemah Mokiin Malna of Marawi City and H. Monira Managala of Tawi-Tawi

Arlene Lozano and Myrna Lim are the alternates.

The conference also launched the Mindanao Fund for Women which will be used to leverage bigger funds for innovative and catalytic projects that will benefit women.