

MINDANAO YOUNG WOMEN LEADERS CONFERENCE

19-22 October 2005

Eden Nature Park and Garden Resort, Toril, Davao City

Schedule of Activities

Day 1, October 19, Wednesday

3:00 Departure from SM City Davao
4:30 Check-in/Registration
5:30 Orientation
6:30 Dinner

Day 2, October 20, Thursday

8:30 Opening Ceremony
Invocation
Welcome Remarks
Presentation of Participants

Keynote Address
Mr. Benjamin D. Abadiano
Executive Director
Assisi Development Foundation

9:30 Another Mindanao is Possible! Campaign
Ms. Irene M. Santiago
Chair and CEO
Mindanao Commission on Women

10:00 Discussion on Hope and Good Governance
Hon. Francis Joseph G. Escudero
Representative, 1st District, Sorsogon

Hon. Darlene Antonino-Custodio
Representative

Open Forum

Photosession

12:30 Lunch

1:30 Presentation of the Youth Survey
Mr. Gerardo A. Sandoval
Social Weather Stations

Open Forum

3:30 Re-imaging Mindanao Youth
Ms. Geejay B. Arriola
Mindanao Commission on Women

5:30 Discover the Heroine Within

7:00 Dinner/Cultural Night

Day 3, October 21, Friday

8:30 Corporate Social Responsibility Programs
Ms. Marie Sol T. Delantar
Ayala Foundation

Engr. Roger A. Cerbo
Holcim Philippines

10:30 Simultaneous Workshops on Best Practices

Watershed Management Youth Council
Ms. Ella J. Gabuya

Entrepreneurship
Ms. Christine Benitez

Peace and Multiculturalism
Ms. Victoria Cajandig
Ms. Mercy Padua

12:00 Lunch

1:30 Developing an Advocacy Strategy
Ms. Irene M. Santiago

2:30 Workshop

4:00 Presentation of Workshop Results

5:00 Election of Core Group Members

6:00 Closing Ritual

Day 4, October 22, Saturday

8:00 Breakfast

10:00 Departure from Eden

The conference started with an opening ritual led by the Mebuyan Peace Project. All participants were asked to get out in the sun, bring to mind all the things that they should be thankful for, and not forget to thank themselves for it. Several participants came forward, thanked themselves for family, friends, good health, accomplishments and blessings.

Welcome Remarks

Ava Patricia C. Avila

Honored guests, empowered young women leaders of Mindanao, good morning, magandang umaga, maayong buntag, Assalamo Alaikom.

Today marks another milestone in the lives of young women of Mindanao, as the future leaders of our country are gathered in this hall.

As young women leaders, we are here to be one in making our voices heard because we matter. May this conference be an avenue for all of us to share, to learn and be more empowered.

So young women leaders of Mindanao welcome and let's work to make Another Mindanao possible!

Keynote Speech

Benjamin Abadiano

Assisi Dev't Foundation, executive director of Tabang Mindanaw, founded the Ilawan for Peace, received the 2004 Magsaysay Award,

First of all, I would like to congratulate the Mindanao Commission on Women for organizing this conference because I really believe the importance of gatherings like this. Soon we will be celebrating the Mindanao Week of Peace and in that celebration we are going to highlight the role of women and also the role of youth in peacebuilding, not only in Mindanao but even for the whole country. So this morning instead of giving you the usual keynote address, I thought of sharing with you a reflection -- a reflection born out of almost 16 years in development work. This reflection was further deepened and enriched with my experience with the war-affected communities in Mindanao that started in 2000. The title of this sharing is Leading with Passion for Service. I thought of this as a fitting theme for you who are our future leaders, not only of Mindanao but of our country. Leading with Passion for Service. We need the kind of leaders of the country that are really passionate for real service. And I think the objective of bringing you here is that of building that passion in you because all of us have that already in our hearts. We are already gifted with grace of service. And we should give a big hand to MCW for providing this atmosphere because at this point in time in our country we are really looking for real leaders not to mention the kind of leaders, the kind of politicians we have in our country. That's the reason why I said yes because we are also organizing a conference and soon there'll be a 1st in Asia, a college for the indigenous people. Some of my passion is really there but when I heard the reason why you're organizing this conference, we have the same vision we have the same commitment, I just had to say yes and come here. That's how I see the value of this activity. Now let me start by giving you this presentation, an easy to remember acronym – GROWTH

Leading with Passion for Service

Growth -- Guiding Principles in leading with passion for service

G – GRACE

- The opportunity to lead others is a grace in itself
- A leader is given a special privilege to become a sharer of God's mission
- Leading others becomes life-giving

R – RESPECT

- It is borne out of love that makes us more compassionate and understanding to other people (in all religions and cultures)
- It builds trust and confidence in people and highlights their dignity and inherent value as human beings

O – OPENNESS

It bridges our lives with those of others and disposes us to develop harmonious relationships with others

W – WILLINGNESS

- The capacity to give, to let go, to receive, to learn, to love and to be loved, to die for oneself and to die for others.
- The capacity to learn, cooperate, build with others
- The capacity to share one's life.

T – TRUST

It allows us to discover the wonders of the human person and the many aspects of our lives that reflect the very beauty of God's creation

H – HOPE

- It is by these that our lives must be measured; they ought to be the very character that permeates our every action and word.
- Hope and happiness make us different from those who merely work for the sake of working.
- Leaders are supposed to be bearers of hope

GROWTH

- Pertains to the kind of attitude that is built on growing relationships between and among people.
- It allows for both the giving and the receiving of love among those who share life and work in the context of service.
- Means that all our endeavor have to be experienced and lived not as a project with a preset agenda to be accomplished but as an on-going journey that calls one to deeper and greater commitment to love serve others.

Inday M. Santiago

Our keynote speaker, Ben Abadiano; Congressman Chiz Escudero; Executive Vice Chair of MCW, Margie Moran Floirendo; MCW officers Pat Sarenas and Arlene Lozano; my dear young women:

It is my pleasure to join my own welcome to that of Ava to all of you attending the Mindanao Young Women Leaders Conference. On behalf of everyone here, I most sincerely thank Ben and Congressman Escudero for accepting our invitation despite their very tight schedules. We know it is their commitment to Mindanao and to its young women that moved them to clear their schedules in order to be with us at this important gathering.

This conference comes at a most opportune time. If you were like me, it has been a horrifyingly depressing five months. How could we not feel a collective depression as many of our politicians try to outdo each other in showing unbridled ambition devoid not only of any principle but also of any sense of decency and love of country. There sits among many Filipinos today a feeling of spiralling downward to the deep, dark abyss of hopelessness.

However, we may also look at these events as “the final terrible death throes of the old, no longer workable, no longer justifiable system,” as a prominent feminist has described what is going on in the world. Moments like this we must look for inspiration in things bigger than ourselves. The words of that brilliant Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire have spoken meaningfully to me time and again. He said that those of us who would want to shake off oppression need to embark on a “fierce struggle to re-create the world.” He called on us to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be. Without a minimum of hope, he said, we cannot so much as start the struggle. Without struggle, hope dissipates, loses its bearings, and turns into hopelessness.

So struggle we must.

Today, we ask you to join that struggle. The Mindanao Commission on Women was created to influence public policy and public opinion by drawing on the strength of women's ideas and organization. Join us as we MOVE a Mindanao agenda – not a women's agenda - but a Mindanao agenda from the women's perspective. We believe now that women's leadership is necessary if Mindanao is to achieve peace and attain a level of human development our people deserve.

You have grown up in a Mindanao wracked by conflict, dire poverty, and corruption. But we all know that another Mindanao is possible! Yes, another Mindanao is possible. The time is ripe to launch a unified movement, a campaign, a tidal wave to imagine and attain a peaceful, prosperous, socially harmonious Mindanao for women, men, youth and children whoever they are and wherever they are.

In August, we brought together the movers and shakers of Mindanao, top leaders in government, business, NGOs, church, Moro groups, and media to envision "Another Mindanao." They have decided on a campaign to lift Mindanao, to make it politically strong, economically prosperous, secure, and socially harmonious by emphasizing our oneness as Mindanaons. The goal is to make each of us proud to be a true Mindanaon, by blood and by heart. We remembered the words we read in a museum that said:

"What is a nation? A nation is an act of imagination and will. In this act we create a place to which we belong. A part of the earth for which we have collective responsibility. A point of memory and tradition."

These top leaders agreed to embark on a campaign called "Mindanao Rising" as part of our efforts to make another Mindanao possible.

As young women, where do you situate yourselves in this act of creating a place where you and your children will be free and secure, where you can live lives of boldest daring, where truth and dignity matter, where you see all peoples as sisters and brothers, where you and those you love can dream and laugh and create? We have brought you here because you have and must take collective responsibility for creating that place, that other Mindanao!

I will end by letting the words of Robert Kennedy, who embodied youthful and powerful visions, speak to you today. He said:

Let no one be discouraged by the belief that there is nothing one man or one woman can do against the enormous array of the world's ills – against misery and ignorance, injustice and violence... Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.

It is from the numberless acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man (or woman) stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he (or she) sends a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current which can sweep the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

All of us here bless your efforts in the next two days and beyond to send your tiny ripples of hope. I have no doubt that they will be what Mindanao, no, our entire country needs to build a current that will change the course of our history.

Your task at this conference is not only to create your collective vision as young women from different parts of Mindanao but also to ensure that you participate meaningfully and actively in achieving that vision.

For in the end, what we need to do is to bind ourselves together as one people, and one nation.

As women move a Mindanao agenda to make another Mindanao possible, we know we are engaged in a “fierce struggle to re-create the world.” We are also engaged in creating a nation, an act of imagination and will, a part of the earth for which we have collective responsibility, a point of memory and tradition.

Escudero

*Adiós, Patria adorada, región del sol querida,
Perla del Mar de Oriente, nuestro perdido edén,
A darte voy, alegre, la triste, mustia vida;
Y fuera más brillante, más fresca, más florida,
También por ti la diera, la diera por tu bien.*

*En campos de batalla, luchando con delirio,
Otros te dan sus vidas, sin dudas, sin pesar.
El sitio nada importa: ciprés, laurel o lirio,
Cadalso o campo abierto, combate o cruel martirio.
La mismo es si lo piden la Patria y el hogar.*

Ang kaguluhan ay di lamang sa Maynila kundi sa lahat ng parte ng Pilipinas. At marahil ay marami sa inyo ay nagtataka, ano ba ang kinalaman nito sa buhay ko, bakit ba ang gulo-gulo nila doon at ano nga ba ang solusyon sa kasalukuyang problema?

Simple lamang sana. Merong paratang na ipinukol laban kay Pangulong Arroyo na hanggang ngayon hindi nya pa sinasagot. Iisa lamang ang hiling namin: sagutin niya. Lahat ng aming paratang dinudugtungan ng ‘diumano’ o *allegedly*. *That the president allegedly cheated, that she allegedly lied, and that she allegedly stole from the coffers of government. These allegations must not remain unanswered and the president must break her silence in regard to these issues & questions.* Tayo na lamang simpleng tao na hindi marahil opisyal, hindi pangulo ng bansa. Kung kayo siguro paratanganan ko, akusahan ko ngayon din “Ikaw magnanakaw ka, ikaw mandaraya ka, ikaw sinungaling ka”. Hindi siguro kayo magaaksaya ng 5 segundo, tatayo agad kayo, at sasabihin nyo “hindi totoo yan, at ito ang totoo.”

Ang nakakapagtaka, 4 na buwan na ang lumilipas mula ng lumabas ang tinatawag nating Garci tapes hanggang ngayon ayaw pa rin nyang sagutin. Maski na yung “I am sorry” speech nya sa TV, 18 takes daw. Ni hindi natin alam kung anong hiningan nya ng tawad. She said, “I’m sorry for my lapse in judgment. I talked to a COMELEC official.” As the president of the republic, she should very well know the difference between a COMELEC official and a COMELEC commissioner. What exactly did she admit to? And for those of you who are well versed to the internet, basahin nyo ang apology speech ni Clinton kaugnay ng Monica Lewinsky case. Halos verbatim kinopya lamang ni Pang. Arroyo. Ginamit nya ang salitang lapse in judgment, sinabi rin nya sorry, sinabi rin nya dodoblehin ko ang pagtatatrabaho para sa sambayanan. At pinagpatuloy nya iyon sa pagsabi ng mga bagay na kanyang gagawin. Pinaangkop lamang sa sitwasyon ng Pilipinas pero halos kinopya lamang ang sinabi ni Clinton noon. Ang problema hindi naman aplikable yung problema ni Clinton. Dahil ang problema ni Clinton ay kaugnay sa personal nyang buhay at pangangatawan. Ang problema ni Pang Arroyo kaugnay ng kanyang trabaho at ng kanyang panunungkulan bilang pangulo ng ating bansa.

Bakit nga ba mahalaga ang isyu? Iisa lamang ang dahilan sa punto de vista namin. Sa araw ng halalan kasi tunay na nagkakapantay-pantay ang bawat Pilipino. Sa araw ng halalan, mayaman o mahirap, maganda o panget, ano man ang relihiyon, pagdating ng eleksyon tig-isa-isa tayo ng boto. At siguro sa ibang antas ng buhay, merong mayaman merong mahirap, merong Kristiyano

merong Muslim. Ang masakit para sa amin, yun na nga lang ang bukod-tangi at nag-iisang pagkakataon para tunay nating masasabing pantay-pantay talaga ang bawat Pilipino. Pati pa ba yon ipagkakait sa atin? Pati pa ba yon nanakawin pa mula sa atin? Pati pa ba yon hindi pa ibibigay sa atin?

At maliban dyan, hindi nyo ba naisip o pinagtaka bakit nga ba ang uupo lamang ay yung nanalo sa eleksyon? At bakit nila dinefine na yung panalo sa eleksyon, yung makakakuha ng pinakamaraming boto? Bakit ba hindi pwede kung sino na lang yung pinaka-popular sya na lang ang uupo. Ang rason sa likod nyan ayon sa batas ay ito: kinikilala ng batas na ang tao ay makasarili. Kinikilala ng batas na ang tao kapag naupo sa pwesto, palagi nyang babalik-tanawan yung pinagkakautangan nya ng loob na naglagay sa kanya sa pwesto. At kung malinis lang sana ang halalan, lahat ng nakaupo sa gobyerno na hinalal ng bayan, utang nila ang kanilang pwesto sa taong bumoto sa kanila. At utang nila ang kanilang pwesto sa mas nakakaraming tao na naninirahan sa kanilang lugar. Kung dayain mo ang halalan at kung pagbayaran mo lamang ng utang na loob ang mga tumulong sa iyo para manalo, ang ibig sabihin lamang nyan imbes na pagsisilbihan mo yung mas nakakarami mong kababayan, pagsisilbihan mo lamang yung kaunting tumulong at nagmaniobra ng halalan para sa iyo.

Nagkataan sa ating bansa mas marami ang mahirap kaya't ibig sabihin noon lahat ng nakaupo, ang naglagay lahat sa amin sa pwesto ay mahihirap. Di sympre kung utang namin sa kanila yung pwesto namin, dapat sila ang una naming pagsilbihan. Yun sana ang rason kung bakit yan ang sistema natin ng eleksyon, yan ang sistema natin ng demokrasya. At kapagka inagaw mo, ninakaw mo, o dinaya mo yan nawawala na yung kabuuan ng teyorya at prinsipyo ng isang demokratikong bansa.

Dahil yung mga namumuno na ngayon hindi na pagsisilbihan yung nakakaraming mahihirap. Yung namumuno na ngayon pagsisilbihan na yung opisyal na nandaya para sa kanya, yung negosyanteng nagbigay ng pera sa kanya para makapandaya, at marahil yung ilan sa kanyang mga kamaganak na tumulong na maisagawa ito. Yon ang rason kung bakit napakabigat para sa aming bitiwang ito. Yun ang rason kung bakit para sa amin nagkakaaway-away man, kelangan pa rin ipaglaban ito at di bitiwang.

Mabigat para sa amin at di namin kayang konsensyehang talikuran na lamang ang isyung ito. Madalas sinasabi sa amin yung mga slogan ng administrasyon 'trabaho hindi gulo.' May kapalit ba kayo kay GMA o wala. Para sa akin, bilang kasagutan sa 2 tanong na iyan, siguro mas magkakatrabaho tayo kapagka hindi nagnanakaw, nagsisinungaling, nandadaya ang opisyal. At paano namin sasabihing aasikasuhin natin ang trabaho habang nananatiling ganyang uri ng opisyal ang nasa pamahalaan natin sa ngayon.

At dun sa nagsasabing walang kapalit si GMA, simple lamang ang aking sagot doon. Sa batas ng diyos at sa batas ng tao, wala naman nakalagay na kondisyon na mali lamang mandaya, magsinungaling o magnakaw kapagka may kapalit. At pwede yun maging tama, pwedeng kalimutan, pwedeng talikuran kapagka wala tayong nakikitang kapalit o kapagka yung kapalit ay ayaw natin. Walang ganon sa batas.

Sa punto de vista ng batas, ang puti ay puti, ang pula ay pula, ang itim ay itim. Tama pa rin ang tama, at mali pa rin ang mali, ke may alternatibo ke wala. At sa totoo lang, sampal sa 83 milyong Pilipino ang sabihin na walang kayang gumawa ng tungkulin ni Pang arroyo. There are 83 million Filipinos and don't tell me there is only 1 GMA who can run this country. I doubt that very much. That is plain & simple arrogance in power. That simply goes to show that they think what is best for our country & would not want to listen anymore to what others have to say, however good their suggestion may be.

Maging ganon pa man, natalo kami sa impeachment. Subalit parang poetic justice, hindi man namin nakamtan ang 79 boto sa kongreso, ayon sa survey ng SWS, 79% ng ating mga kababayan gusto syang ma-impeach. Yun ang isang nakakalungkot na yugto siguro ng kongreso ng Pilipinas. Para sa kaalaman ng lahat, lahat ng congressman na nakikita nyo sa kongreso at senador sa senado, hindi namin angkin, hindi kami ang may-ari ng aming boses at boto sa kongreso. Kung ano man ang sabihin ko rito ngayon, akin ito. Pero ano man ang sabihin ko sa loob ng kongreso, ano man ang boto ko dyan hindi ko pwedeng angkinin yon. Ang may-ari nun ay ang aming kababayan sa unang distrito ng Sorsogon. At kung ano ang gusto nila ang dapat kong sinasabi at binoboto roon. Kaya nga ang tawag sa amin ay *representative*. "Kaya *house of representatives*. Kinatawan lang kami. At kung totoo ang sinasabi ng survey ang dapat na sanang nagging boto sa kamara ay yung 79% at hindi yung 51 votes.

Maging ganon pa man, may isang benepisyong maganda na kinalabasan sa sitwasyong ito. At yon ay ang paglabas, pakikipaglaban at pagtayo ng mas nakakabatang miyembro ng kongreso. Mga ½ buwan na ang lumilipas nang binigyan kami ng parangal

Darlene Custodio

Re-imaging Youth
Geejay Arriola

The participants were asked to be grouped into sectors (NGOs & POs, GOs, academe, and Moros) then be subdivided into 8-10 members. The activity would involve portraying a snapshot scene, then the audience would guess what the scene is trying to depict. The group members would then affirm to the audience's impression if correct, otherwise the group will state the actual issue being illustrated.

Activity 1. Think of an issue the youth is currently facing in your sector/community.

Group	What was seen?	What was the issue?
NGO 1	Rally	Access to quality education
NGO 2	Unemployment, lack of school facilities that's why the students are outside; low salary of teachers so selling alcohol	Lack of facilities in the school; a general picture of poor quality of education
GO 1	Unemployment, prostitution, gambling, vices,	Unemployment. Education for employment not for entrepreneurship
GO 2	Illiteracy, unwanted pregnancy, premarital sex, moral degradation, moral degeneration	same
Students 1	Cutting classes, lack of interest in classes; poor quality of teachers	Apathy of students to education
Students and teachers	Student activism, pinpointing faults, no salary increase, politicians giving money to the youth, corruption	Access to quality education: lack of programs for the disabled
Moro students	Martial law, peace & order, discrimination, negative image of Muslims portrayed by media	Negative image of Muslim as portrayed by media – Muslims are always involved in terrorism

		and violence
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Activity 2. Imagine an ideal scenario; a setting without the portrayed problem.

NGO 1	They are all professionals; product of good education	same
NGO 2	Complete facilities; empowered students; using laptops; di na nagtitinda ng alcohol; e-loader	Complete facilities and multi-media classroom teaching
GO 1		Everybody is employed and happy
GO 2	Empowered single mothers, life goes on despite single parenthood, consciousness to social issues	Women empowerment
Students 1	Students are participative, lovers of education, walang seat plan, responsive students	A different strategy of teacher to have a more responsive students; give motivation to students to become more participative in social issues; creative seatplan
Students and teachers	Patriotism, nationalist mass-oriented students; disability rights	Not mere students but dignified 'proud to be Pinoy'
Moro students	Unity; educated & responsible media	Unity & equality

Activity 3. Think of a solution. How do we get from the problem to the ideal?

NGO 1	Rely on the funding agencies; public-private partnership	Public-private partnership
NGO 2	Pray-over; moral & financial support;	Stakeholders all linked together to improve the quality of education
GO 1	Partnership & collaboration; improvement of teacher's strategies;	Provide appropriate education to have sufficient skills; capability building; relevant education
GO 2	Sex education; training single moms, values formation, consultation	Advocacy thru gender awareness trainings to barangays
Students 1	Ritual healing; support from family, foreign grants	Support from all sectors of society
Students and teachers	Skills training; helping one another – alliance; livelihood	Provide basic education not just from government but from family
Moro students	Shared learning; survey on Moros; dialogues	Equal presentation of Muslims & Christians;

Marie Sol Delantar

The Youth Network Development Manager of Ayala Foundation, Inc.; a graduate of Bachelor of Fine Arts Major in Advertising Arts at the University of San Carlos, Cebu City; finished Non-Traditional Marketing, Public Relations and Advocacy courses at De La Salle University, College of St. Benilde.

Engr. Roger Cerbo

The Corporate Social Responsibility Manager of Holcim, Davao City; have had trainings in environmental protection; a graduate of BS Mechanical Engineering in Cebu Institute of Technology; and a Gerry Roxas Leadership awardee.

Workshop on Watershed Management Youth Council

Speaker: **Ella J. Gabuya**
Participants: Avila, Lara Bernadette
Butcon, Karen Jane
Cajandig, Victoria
Cariño, Mylah Faye
Demerin, Margilei
Domingo, Sheila
Dumanhog, Redgie
Jawom, Jessiel
Karon, Morena
Maquiling, Josephine
Onlos, Shiela Mae
Roxas, Expedita
Saplot, Cristy

IMS: difficulty in understanding that MCW is into advocacy, not projects. Given the issues, we are not here to solve the problem but find the person/organization/agency that will solve the problem. There are only very few NGOs who are here to work in influencing public policy for women and a lot of organizations working on projects but still little has changed.

When thinking of the structure, think of what works. Probably not only 2 representatives are needed.

Mark Faith Wales

Gathered here because we are young and we are all women, and we have a role to play

Rosie Conde

Prayed to keep the fire burning for the youth; without any background of MCW & with a detain degree of opposition. After the activities, talks, I will be continuing the fire burning in me & now I know I am not alone.