

**PHILIPPINE STATEMENT**

by Undersecretary Cleofe Sandoval,  
Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process  
on the occasion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Review Conference  
of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development  
*31 October – 1 November 2011, Geneva*

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the years Geneva has given rise to important humanitarian initiatives including the Red Cross Movement and the Geneva Conventions. Today, we come together once more to take stock of one such vital and significant diplomatic initiative, the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development.

I wish to thank Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey and the Government of Switzerland, as well as Administrator Helen Clark and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) for continuing to shepherd the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development and for convening its 2<sup>nd</sup> Ministerial Review Conference. My congratulations for the excellent arrangements made in hosting this successful review conference.

The Philippines is privileged and honoured to be a Declaration Core Member and signatory to the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. We reaffirm our commitment to the Geneva Declaration. The Philippines is proud to contribute actively to the development of the GDAVD as a Core Group member.

We have come together to work under the motto 'Reduce armed violence, enable development'. And in the following days, we will look back, reflect and listen to the progress made in the global implementation of our commitments under the Geneva Declaration. The Philippines looks forward to a dialogue rich in shared experiences and successful practices, in keeping the peace, for development.

For the Philippines, and I am certain for the rest of the world, the *raison d'être* for the Geneva Declaration is clear. Just a week ago, after fighting erupted in Basilan and Zamboanga that led to the death of 26 of our soldiers, our President, Benigno Simeon Aquino III, stood his ground against the clamor to fight and attack, saying we cannot go back to the ways of war. While strongly expressing a stand to deal vigorously against banditry, he upheld the government's commitment to the peace talks and a peace settlement based on the foundations of justice, fairness, and dignity for all.

For the first time, we have a government that has stated as a matter of national policy that *Promotion of the peace process shall be the centrepiece* – not a by-the-way, not a sideline or side effect, but the centrepiece – *of the internal security program as a testament to a government's commitment to a policy of peace, reconciliation, and reunification. Peace is not just the absence of war or conflict, but it is the sum total of the conditions that ensure human and social well-being in all its dimensions.*

While the government's aim is to win the peace, the goal for the medium term is to bring all armed conflict to a permanent and peaceful closure. The imperative is to finish the critical aspects of the negotiated political settlements and to ensure a firm start of implementation of signed peace agreements, within the window that we now have—that is, within the six-year term of P-Noy.

At the same time, we are trying to bridge the gap between what's happening on the negotiation

tables and on the ground. The groundwork has been laid for deliberately converging government services in conflict-affected communities, which we call PAMANA – Payapa at Masaganang Pamayanan (translates as “Peaceful and Prosperous Communities”) – which also means “legacy.” PAMANA is about doing things differently and bringing a new element into the exercise so that development, instead of bringing about new sources of conflict, grievance and inequity, will truly lead to sustaining community efforts to address the root causes of injustice, insecurity and un-peace.

Given this national thrust, we express our strong commitment to the Outcome Document, particularly with regard to actions for poverty reduction, equitable socio-economic development, good governance, gender equality and the respect for the rule of law and human rights as important dimensions in the continuing efforts to reduce and prevent armed conflict. For women and children, in particular, the Philippine National Action Plan on UNSCRs 1325 and 1820 affirm the primacy of peace and nonviolence in achieving a just, gender-sensitive society where every Filipino woman and child is empowered as peace builder and is accorded safety and protection from armed violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.

In the multilateral arena, Philippine adherence to peace and development is also complemented by its various international commitments: the Oslo Commitments on Armed Violence, the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, to name but a few. The Philippines is also a party or signatory to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction; the Convention on Cluster Munitions; the Biological Weapons Convention; and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. I urge other countries to move for the universal ratification of these arms control conventions and well as begin negotiations for an Arms Trade Treaty.

We look forward to advancing Triangular and South-South Cooperation for the GDAVD particularly

with our NAM, ASEAN and Pacific partners, and inter-regional activity with our counterparts in Grulac and Africa.

Finally, we applaud the ongoing work of civil society organizations in the part they are playing in this struggle. We welcome among us here for this meeting the presence of organizations from around the world who are working on many dimensions of armed violence reduction and prevention. We are aware of the intention of civil society organizations to seek to create a global alliance of organizations and networks working at all levels in order to strengthen the contribution of civil society as a partner to states and international organizations in realizing the intentions of the Outcome Document. We wish to express our solidarity with this important initiative.

I join the others in expressing my confidence that given the goodwill and cooperation of all the delegates, our meeting will come to a fruitful conclusion. I certainly look forward to an outcome that shall result in concrete and forward-looking initiatives.

Thank you.