

In the Name of God
The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful

Agreement to Sustain the Quest for Peace

Whereas, the Quick Response Team (QRT) is conceptualized on account of the confrontations/conflicts on the ground between the elements of the GRP and the MILF despite the Agreement on the General Cessation of Hostilities (AGCH) signed by the GRP and the MILF Panels on July 18, 1997 on Cagayan de Oro City.

Whereas, there is an urgent need to address these conflicts/confrontations immediately as they occur in order to avoid further exacerbation of the conflict that may create displacement and destruction to both human lives and properties.

Whereas, under normal conditions and terms of the AGCH, the Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities (CCCH) is the body primarily tasked to settle and address these incidents and alleged violations of the Ceasefire Agreement between the GRP and the MILF. However, the CCCH is formally constituted and does observe due protocols and other formalities required of any official body. As such, the CCCH is not capable of immediate response to conflicts and confrontations on the ground. The CCCH meets when conflicts/confrontations have reached a crisis level or after unnecessary casualties and destruction have been inflicted against each other and on the civilian populace.

Whereas, the Independent Fact Finding Committee (IFFC) cannot immediately respond to a crisis situation because its very nature is passive. It acts only on matters that the CCCH cannot mutually agree on. The IFFC enters into the scene when there is no agreement in the CCCH on what actually happened on the ground. In short, the IFFC becomes involved when the conflict/confrontation has reached a level of mutual disagreement between the GRP and the MILF.

Whereas, the IFFC Chairman recommended the creation of the QRT to the GRP and the MILF Panels during the February 6, 1998 plenary meeting of the Technical Committee and the CCCH at MSU, Marawi City.

Now, therefore, the GRP and the MILF have agreed to create as they hereby create a Quick Response Team, which shall be hereinafter referred to as QRT composed of representatives from the GRP, MILF and the IFFC to immediately address alleged violations of the AGCH. The QRT shall be chaired by the IFFC Chairman, or in his absence, by the IFFC Vice-Chairman.

The Operationalization of the QRT

1. The Official Office and Address of the QRT is at the Notre Dame University Peace Education Center in Cotabato City. Sub-offices in other areas may be opened as the need arises.

2. The QRT shall be composed of the following:

2.1 GRP Representatives – three (3) permanent members from the Secretariat of the GRP CCCH, three (3) alternate members;

2.2 MILF Representatives - three (3) permanent members from the Secretariat of the MILD CCCH, three (3) alternate members;

2.3 IFFC Principals – one representative each from the Notre Dame University (NDU), Maguindanaon Professionals and Employees Association Inc. (MAPEA) and Cotabato City Media Multi-Purpose Cooperative (CCMMPC). Additional membership to the IFFC may be made upon joint approval by the GRP and MILF Panels through their respective CCCH. The names of the alternate members to the QRT will be submitted as soon as possible.

The QRT can avail itself of assistance from the following in the performance of its duties:

- a) The AFP Commander in the area concerned;
- b) The PNP Provincial Director of the Province concerned;
- c) The MILF Commander or any other officers operating in the area; and
- d) The POCs in the Region, Province and Municipality concerned.

3. The QRT shall immediately address a reported conflict/confrontation between the GRP and MILF forces. The reports may come from any of the following sources: GRP Panel, MILF Panel and the IFFC.

4. Upon receipt of the report, the QRT Chairman shall immediately convene the QRT, make proper representation to the two principals and coordinate with the local commanders through the official representatives of both the GRP and the MILF regarding the quick response. It may conduct ocular inspections to assess and defuse the tension of the conflict.

5. The GRP and MILF CCCH shall convene immediately to assess and respond to the reports and findings of the QRT.

Done in Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao this 11th day of March 1998.

For the GRP:

ASec. Jovenal F. Lazaga
Chairman, GRP Technical Committee

MGen. Joselin B. Nazareno
Chairman, GRP SCCH

For the MILF:

Atty. Lanang S. Ali
Acting Chairman, MILF Technical Committee

Atty. Omar B. Umbar
Acting Chairman, MILF SCCH