

[EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 115, June 21, 1999]

**PROVIDING FOR THE MECHANICS AND OPERATIONAL
STRUCTURE FOR THE LOCALIZATION OF PEACE EFFORTS TO
ADDRESS THE COMMUNIST INSURGENCY**

WHEREAS, the State recognizes that the attainment of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace under the rule of law and in accordance with Constitutional processes, is the basic foundation of economic development and national prosperity;

WHEREAS, it is the policy of the State to pursue a comprehensive peace process to attain a just, comprehensive and lasting peace under the implementing principles and approaches towards the paths to peace as embodied under Executive Order No. 125 dated 15 September 1993;

WHEREAS, in the furtherance of the above peace process and consistent with the principles and approaches thereof, the government deems it necessary and vital to localize and pursue its peace efforts with the communist insurgents on the ground to address the causes of armed conflict and at the same time prevent situations of "unpeace", and to provide the communist rebels with the opportunity to participate in the democratic process of peace and development in the community:

WHEREAS, there is a need to provide an efficient mechanism and structure for the localization of the government's peace efforts towards realizing its objectives and thereby, facilitate the attainment of a just, comprehensive and lasting peace;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOSEPH EJERCITO ESTRADA, President of the Republic of the Philippines, by the powers vested in me by law, do hereby order the adoption of the following mechanics and operational structure for the localization of the government's peace efforts:

SECTION 1. Framework for Localizing Peace Efforts. — The peace efforts of the government shall hereby be focused on addressing directly the specific issues and/or concerns on the ground, which are considered the causes of insurgency and/or creating situations of "unpeace" in a particular area. These shall be jointly pursued by the government and the community with, to the extent possible, concerned local communist insurgency group, hereinafter referred to as the insurgency group.

SECTION 2. Local Peace Forum. — The local peace efforts shall be pursued through a local-based Peace Forum, which shall be constituted by the President from time to time in areas where it is deemed appropriate to undertake the above peace initiative.

The Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, in coordination with the concerned agencies and the local peace constituency, shall identify and recommend to the

President, through the National Peace Forum herein referred to, the areas where Local Peace Forum may be organized as well as their respective composition of five (5) to seven (7) members representing preferably civil society and local government.

Once constituted, the members of the Local Peace Forum shall elect from among themselves their Chair and Co-Chairperson, provided one of whom is from civil society.

The Local Peace Forum, which shall be clothed with the necessary powers from the President, shall undertake the following activities:

- a. Reach-out to the local community and insurgency group to encourage their participation in the Local Peace Forum. The latter's participation thereto, however, shall not be considered a requisite for pursuing the activities lodged with the Local Peace Forum under this Order;
- b. Serve as a problem-solving mechanism in the community. As such, it shall identify issues attendant to the local insurgency, including concerns, which are creating situations of "unpeace" in its areas of responsibility, and thereafter, coordinate and/or cause the efficient resolution of the same.
- c. Serve as peace advocate by identifying and undertaking measures to promote an environment and culture of peace in the community.
- d. Refer issues and concerns requiring Presidential intervention and/or actions from the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches of the government to the National Peace Forum. It shall also provide regular feedback on their status to the concerned community;
- e. Provide the President, through the National Peace Forum, regular status report on its activities as well as the peace situations in its area of responsibility; and
- f. Undertake other tasks, which may be deemed necessary by the President and the National Peace Forum.

In carrying out its tasks, the Local Peace Forum shall build on the accomplishments already achieved by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, which has established a nationwide network of peace partners and local peace-building programs, as well as by the National Unification Commission created under Executive Order No. 19 dated 1 September 1992, including the linkages and public consultation processes the Commission has established. The Local Peace Fora, which may be organized under this Order, shall necessarily enhance various existing local peace efforts.

SECTION 3. National Peace Forum. — There is hereby created the National Peace Forum, to be chaired by the Executive Secretary, to address issues affecting the peace efforts, which the Local Peace Fora are unable to address.

The Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, through the Executive Secretary, shall recommend to the President for approval the membership of the National Peace Forum, preferably three (3) Cabinet Members; two (2) Members from