

**[OP MEMORANDUM ORDER NO. 61, MAY 9, 2002,
May 09, 2002]**

**PROVIDING MEASURES TO QUELL THE RECENT ACTS OF
TERRORISM AND LAWLESS VIOLENCE IN MINDANAO**

WHEREAS, lawless elements have repeatedly threatened to launch bomb attacks and have recently exploded bombs in General Santos City and Cotabato City resulting in the loss of innocent lives and destruction of property;

WHEREAS, such lawless elements continue to threaten and perpetrate acts of terrorism and lawless violence in Mindanao in open defiance of the duly constituted authorities;

WHEREAS, the existing situation necessitates an immediate, effective and adequate Government response to avert further loss of innocent lives and destruction of property;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article VII, Section 18 of the Constitution, General Order No. 2 dated May 9, 2002 has been issued calling upon the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the Philippine National Police to prevent and suppress acts of terrorism and lawless violence in Mindanao.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution as President and Commander-in-Chief of all armed forces of the Philippines, do hereby order:

SECTION 1. In accordance with General Order No. 2 dated May 9, 2002, the Department of National Defense (DND) and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) shall coordinate the immediate deployment of additional forces of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to prevent and suppress acts of terrorism and lawless violence in Mindanao.

SECTION 2. The DND and the DILG shall organize all AFP and PNP personnel in Mindanao into Joint Task Forces.

The DND Secretary shall have responsibility and exercise authority over the Joint Task Force deployed in the Western Mindanao Area of Responsibility which shall consist of the following regions:

- a. Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao;
- b. Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula); and
- c. Region XII (SOCCSKSARGEN).

The DILG Secretary shall have responsibility and exercise authority over the Joint Task Force deployed in the Eastern Mindanao Area of Responsibility which shall