

MALACAÑAN PALACE  
MANILA

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 192

ORDERING A 'HUMANITARIAN OFFENSIVE' IN BASILAN, SULU AND OTHER  
AREAS OF THE AUTONOMOUS REGION OF MUSLIM MINDANAO

WHEREAS, the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao is the poorest in the country;

WHEREAS, economic development remains our principal weapon against terrorism, which we draw from the arsenal of democracy;

WHEREAS, despite the recent hostilities, Basilan and Sulu are no means a war zone.

WHEREAS, ongoing peacekeeping operations against rearguard actions of a despised and defeated group are meant to clear the path for the journey of the provinces of Basilan and Sulu to peace and progress which terror has delayed for so long;

WHEREAS, the number of displaced persons is not as large as feared, and they are being assisted by the Department of Social Welfare and Development and other groups;

WHEREAS, there are attempts to whip up a negligible refugee situation as a crisis so it can in turn fan a public opinion hostile to operations of the Armed Forces of the Philippines;

WHEREAS, it must be made clear that government response to the conflict in Basilan and Sulu is not one-dimensional;

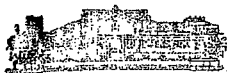
WHEREAS, putting all national government initiatives in one package shall result in a comprehensive delivery of services.

WHEREAS, the education situation is disturbing;

WHEREAS, livelihood in Basilan is reportedly inadequate and produce are reportedly very cheap in Sulu;

WHEREAS, the completion of the circumferential road in Basilan will have far-reaching impact on provincial life and commerce;

WHEREAS, there is a report that water pipes in Basilan are being dug up and vandalized;



WHEREAS, there is a bridge in Bongao town, Tawi-Tawi, donated by the United States which remains to be built even though the materials for it have been there;

WHEREAS, there is need for capacity-building in many areas of public life.

WHEREAS, bundling up disparate programs would give form and cohesion to national government presence;

WHEREAS, economic development in Basilan and Sulu are excellent laboratories for corporate social responsibility;

WHEREAS, the misconception must be avoided that the two provinces of the ARMM have been placed under the receivership of the Office of the President;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA M. ARROYO, President of the Philippines, by the powers vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the land, do hereby order:

Section 1. The police and military operations in Basilan and Sulu shall be balanced with full-scale development offensive, a 'humanitarian invasion,' so to speak. This shall consist primarily of the following:

1. Secretaries Esperanza Cabral and Francisco Duque are hereby dispatched to the South to ensure the care and comfort of those who might be displaced;
2. An engineering battalion shall beachhead in Sulu immediately. Seabees shall on the other hand take care of Basilan.
3. All national government initiatives shall be packaged by the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process (PAPP) under a Health, Education, Livelihood Progress (HELP) for Basilan and Sulu Program.
4. The HELP program shall be opened by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to private sector cosponsorship.
5. Agencies shall contribute projects to the HELP template. For instance, the Commission on Higher Education shall offer additional scholarship slots so we can have more Tausug doctors. The Department of Energy with the Department of Education (DepEd) shall build solar powered science laboratories.
6. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) shall launch 'Sulong Sulu, Bangon Basilan' programs. This shall be the HELP battlecry. The DTI shall help the people of Sulu and the entire ARMM areas market their products at better prices.

Section 2. While national government will have a handle on HELP, it must be coordinated within the mechanism of the ARMM by the PAPP.

Section 3. The education situation shall be addressed as follows:

1. Winston Garcia of the Government Service Insurance System shall fix its side of the problem of government employees unable to get loans, health insurance and



other benefits because reportedly their premiums totaling over several hundred million pesos have not been remitted to Manila.

2. The Professional Regulation Commission shall go to Basilan and Sulu and administer examinations and documentation there.
3. The national government through the DepEd shall assist the ARMM to move fast to build and repair more schools and shore up support for the teachers.

Section 4. The Department of Public Works shall assist the ARMM to move fast in the following projects:

1. Through the Local Water Utilities Administration, provide water facilities in the towns where less than 50% of the population have access to running water, especially in Basilan.
2. Finish the circumferential road in Isabela City and Basilan and other road projects.
3. Finish the bridge in Bongao town donated by the United States.

Section 5. Using best-practice as our model, the infrastructure for accountability and standards to implement all funding initiatives shall be set up by the Department of Interior and Local Government through the Local Government Academy.

DONE in the City of Manila, this 20<sup>th</sup> of August, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Seven.

*Gloria M. Arago*

By the President:

*Eduardo R. Ermita*

EDUARDO R. ERMITA  
Executive Secretary

