

MEMORANDUM ORDER NO. 61

**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 consist of the following regions:

- a. Region X (Northern Mindanao);
- b. Region XI (Davao Region); and
- c. Region XIII (CARAGA Region).

The DND Secretary and the DILG Secretary shall ensure that there is close coordination, mutual support and cooperation at all times among the officers and men of the AFP and the PNP.

The DND Secretary and the DILG Secretary shall periodically report developments to the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security.

SECTION 3. The PNP and the Intelligence Service of the AFP shall jointly intensify and focus intelligence operations against individuals or groups responsible for committing or conspiring in the commission of acts of terrorism and lawless violence.

The DILG, together with the PNP, shall immediately establish an Informer Rewards Program for the apprehension of those responsible for acts of terrorism and lawless violence.

The PNP, when warranted, shall arrest all persons responsible for committing or conspiring in the commission of acts of terrorism and lawless violence, with due regard to their constitutional rights.

SECTION 4. The Department of Justice (DOJ) shall closely coordinate with the PNP in the immediate prosecution of all individuals or groups responsible for committing or conspiring in the commission of acts of terrorism and lawless violence. The DOJ shall not recommend bail for individuals who have committed or conspired in the commission of acts of terrorism and lawless violence which have resulted in the loss of innocent lives and destruction of property.

SECTION 5. The DILG and the DND shall enhance coordination with local authorities and intensify community and barangay defense and anti-terrorist action plans, including the imposition of necessary security measures in Mindanao.

All local government units in Mindanao are enjoined to lend their fullest support and cooperation to ensure the effective implementation of this Memorandum Order.



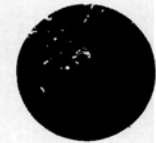
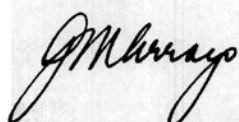
SECTION 6. The Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) shall extend emergency relief assistance to the victims of the bombings in General Santos City and Cotabato City and of other acts of terrorism and lawless violence. When necessary, the funding for the relief assistance to be provided by the DSWD shall be augmented from the President's Social Fund.

SECTION 7. The Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process and the Presidential Adviser for Special Concerns shall strengthen existing back channels to enlist the full support of all stakeholders to prevent and suppress acts of terrorism and lawless violence in Mindanao.

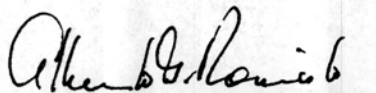
SECTION 8. At all times, the constitutional rights of every individual shall be observed and given due consideration in the implementation of this Memorandum Order. For this purpose, the Presidential Human Rights Committee shall continuously assess and monitor the human rights situation in Mindanao and ensure that the constitutional and statutory rights of every individual are respected.

SECTION 9. This Memorandum Order shall take effect immediately upon approval.

City of Manila, May 9, 2002.



By the President:


ALBERTO G. ROMULO
Executive Secretary

