There’s More to the Philippines:
Building Resilience for Peace in Mindanao Through Water

Source: https://www.irinnews.org/special-report/2016/04/28/forgotten-conflicts-philippines

Roger-Mark De Souza
Director,
Population, Environmental Security and Resilience
There’s More to the Philippines…

“It should be clear that there’s more to the Philippines than Manila, more to its politics and society than upper-class Catholicism, and more to its security concerns than partnering with the United States to push back against the PRC [People’s Republic of China] in the South China Sea. There’s Mindanao, there’s Moros, there’s separatism, there’s issues of justice that have been papered over by the Manila establishment to present a neat neo-liberal narrative that complements the U.S. pivot to Asia. And there’s Duterte.” Peter Lee at http://chinamatters.blogspot.com/2016/05/mindanao-duterte-and-real-history-of.html
A Piece of the Peace Dividend in the Philippines: Water and Security Dynamics

1. Mindanao, Moros, Morality

2. So what?

3. What does it mean for us?
More than Manila...

Source: bing.com/maps
Mindanao is 1 of 3 island groups, with Luzon and Visayas, that make up the Philippines.
Mindanao consists of the island of Mindanao and smaller outlying islands. These include Maguindanao, Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Sulu and Tawi Tawi, the five predominantly Muslim provinces that make up the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).
It’s a Mindanao Thing…

- Location
- Autonomy
- Water resources
- Economic isolation
- Political weight
- Changing climate and environmental conditions
- Geopolitics

There's Moros…

Source: Gil Nartea and PhilANSA, https://youthpeacenetwork.wordpress.com/2015/01/30/10-things-why-should-we-pursue-the-bangsamoro-peace-talks
1969 - New People's Army and Moro National Liberation Front (NPA) forms.

1972 - Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos declares martial law.

1976 - MNLF signs preliminary peace accord.

1981 - NMNL becomes Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

1991 - Former MNLF members form 1,200-strong Abu Sayyaf Group with financial support from Al-Qaeda.

1996 - MNLF signs peace accord with Philippine government.

1999 - Joseph Estrada declares "all out war" and the army drives the MILF from its main camp, Abu Sayyaf.


2001 - Abu Sayyaf kidnaps 20 foreign nationals, raising tension in the Western Philippines, two Americans killed.

2004 - Philippine Supreme Court strikes down an unconstitutional peace proposal between MILF and government, sparking renewed conflict that kills about 250 people and displaces 30,000.

2008 - Peace talks resume with the MILF.

2011 - MILF signs a peace deal.

SOURCES: Office of the Peace Advisor on the Peace Process; Armed Forces of the Philippines; Philippine National Police; Internal Displacement Monitoring Center; World Bank; Center for Strategic and International Studies; Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research; Asia Foundation; US State Department.
There’s Morality (Justice)…
Drought and Urban Water Security
Impacts on Other Sectors
on Water Resources
Displacement and Water Scarcity

Source: Mathias Eick EU/ECHO


Source: https://www.unicef.org/eapro/media_16577.html
And then there’s Duterte...

- Absence of the rule of law
- Lingering effects of dictatorship
- Exacerbating socio-economic factors
- Geophysical changes

"We will survive, without the assistance of America, maybe a lesser quality of life, but as I said, we will survive" - Intelligence Community Assessment.

So What?
MINDANAO’S CONFLICT
IN NUMBERS

- 47 years of conflict
- 4 million people displaced due to violence since 2000
- 21 kidnapped foreign nationals since September 2015

“MOST WANTED”
- 2 Abu Sayyaf senior leaders in the US Rewards for Justice Program:
  - Isninon Hapilon ($5 million),
  - Raduullan Sahiron ($1 million)

ON THE US TERRORIST LIST:
- 2 Abu Sayyaf Group and New People’s Army

- 11,000 fighters currently in the Moro Islamic Liberation Front
- 150,000+ people killed during Muslim and communist insurgencies

RESEARCHER: Simone Orendain
SOURCES: Office of the Peace Advisor on the Peace Process; Armed Forces of the Philippines, Philippine National Police; Internal Displacement Monitoring Center; World Bank; Center for Strategic and International Studies; Philippine Institute for Peace, Violence and Terrorism Research; Asia Foundation; US State Department
## Paths of Influence: Mindanao

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Where Does that Leave Us?
Implications for U.S. Strategic Interests

• Development: U.S. geostrategic interests in the region: South China Sea and disputed Spratly Islands

• Defense: In 2014 the United States and the Philippines signed the Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement allowing the United States to rotate troops into the Philippines

• Diplomacy: Since 2001 Mindanao has been part of a “second front in the war on terror” with the U.S. Joint Special Operations Task Force Philippines combatting the Islamist groups Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf
Future Directions

Water, Security and Strategic Interests

• Using water programs as points of entry to invest in peacebuilding and climate resilience

• Building trust among the key stakeholders including local actors, the national government, and international aid groups

• Linking defense, diplomacy, and development efforts tied to water management programs