14 The Philippines

The ongoing saga of Moro separatism

Ron J. Mays

Several years ago, at a conference at the Australian National University, prominent Filipino scholar and peace activist Fr Eliseo Mercado commented on the long-running peace process in the southern Philippines, ‘We keep thinking we see light at the end of the tunnel. But as we approach the end of the tunnel all we see is another tunnel’. The scale of the separatist conflict between Philippine Muslims and the government of the Republic of the Philippines – in terms of lives lost and people displaced by the fighting – has diminished since the late 1970s, but fighting continues and attempts to achieve a settlement have failed to bring lasting peace. As often happens in such situations, the conflict has become more diffuse and new obstacles to peace negotiations keep emerging. However, negotiations between the Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front have continued since 1986 and negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front have been ongoing since 1996. These negotiations have been facilitated by external third parties, notably the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the governments of Indonesia and Malaysia, and successive Philippine governments have willingly accepted such outside mediation. Arguably, although the peace process since 1986 has not delivered a lasting peace, the persistent efforts of those involved have helped to prevent a resurgence of the violence that characterized the conflict in the early to mid-1970s.

This chapter briefly reviews the history of the conflict and the attempts, in recent times, to end it, and suggests several reasons why an effective peace settlement has proved elusive. These include: a long history of antipathy and distrust between Christian Filipinos and Philippine Muslims, which pre-dates European colonization of the Philippine islands but was seriously exacerbated by Spanish hostility towards Islam in the Philippines; the changing demography of the southern Philippines due to years of immigration, which has created a situation in which Muslims have become a minority in most of the area they claim as ancestral domain; and the factionalization of the Muslim separatist movement – particularly between the Moro National Liberation Front and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, both of which now face internal divisions – which has made negotiation difficult. The chapter argues that while the willingness of successive Philippine governments to negotiate with the separatists, and to accept the intermediation of external actors sympathetic to the separatist cause, has helped to reduce the level
of violent conflict, it is hard to see how a lasting settlement can be reached unless some creative solution can be found to the issue of territoriality — the problem posed by the fact that the area claimed as BangsaMoro homeland now contains a majority Christian population.

**Background**

The Muslim minority population of the Philippines is variously estimated at around 4 per cent of the national population and is concentrated in the southern islands of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. It includes 13 ethno-linguistic groups, of which four — the Maranao-Ilanan of central Mindanao, the Maguindanao of western Mindanao, and the Tausug and Samal of Sulu — account for around 90 per cent of the Muslim population.

The ongoing conflict between Muslim separatist groups and the Philippine government with its predominantly Christian constituency has deep historical roots. Between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries Islam had spread to the Philippine islands and Muslim sultanates had been established in western and central Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan. Coastal communities in southern and central Philippines lived in fear of the seafaring Muslim people from Mindanao and Sulu, who conducted periodic raids to take slaves to exchange with trading partners to the west and north (see Warren 1998, 2002).

When the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines, they identified the Philippine Muslims with their age-old Muslim protagonists from North Africa, the Moors (whence the term 'Moro'), and in effect resumed the crusades. The Muslim Kingdom of Maynila in the north was vanquished and there followed some 330 years of fighting between the Spanish colonial regime with its Christianized indios and the Muslim sultanates in the south. The Spanish never did achieve sovereignty over the Moro but after the Philippine islands were transferred to the United States after the Spanish American War the Moro were pacified by technologically superior military forces and, notwithstanding continuing outbreaks of resistance, were subjected to a policy of 'attraction' or 'benevolent assimilation' 1. During the twentieth century, and especially after World War I, a steady flow of Christian Filipino in-migrants from the more populous islands of Luzon and the Visayas brought about a fundamental change in the demography of Mindanao and Sulu, giving rise to growing tensions between traditional landowners and in-migrants and between traditional Muslim (and tribal taumal) leaders and new political forces among the in-migrant settler community (see May 1992a). By the 1960s there was escalating communal violence between Muslim, taumal and Christian Filipino communities and growing demands for a separate Moro nation (BangsaMoro) in Mindanao, Sulu and southern Palawan.

A Muslim (later Mindanao) Independence Movement (MIM) was established in 1969, and around 1972 the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) came together under the leadership of Nur Misuari, one of several radicalized young men who had undertaken guerrilla training in neighbouring Sabah, to fight for BangsaMoro independence and the return of lands now occupied by Christian Filipinos. The international Islamic community became involved in the conflict, supplying arms and finance to the MNLF, whose central committee was based in Libya, sending two fact-finding missions to Mindanao and accusing the Philippine president, Ferdinand Marcos, of genocide. Misuari and the MNLF were given observer status at the OIC. The declaration of martial law by Marcos in 1972 exacerbated the situation. By the early 1970s several thousand people had been killed in clashes between Muslim and Christian groups and the military, and many more had been displaced by the fighting, thousands taking refuge in Sabah. 2

In 1976 peace negotiations initiated by Imelda Marcos and Libya's President Muammar Gaddafi resulted in the signing of the Tripoli Agreement, which promised Muslim autonomy in the 13 provinces of historical Muslim influence (a scaling down, under pressure from the OIC, of the initial claim to the 25 provinces of Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan). Discussions about implementation broke down, however. A particular sticking point was President Marcos's insistence on making Muslim autonomy subject to a referendum in the 13 provinces — only five of which, by 1976, had a Muslim majority. The MNLF and its supporters boycotted the referendum. In the event, two autonomous regional governments were established in those parts of western and central Mindanao and Sulu that voted for autonomy, but they lacked popular legitimacy and achieved little.

In the second half of the 1970s tensions within the MNLF — over personality, ethnicity, ideology and strategy — began to surface and eventually the movement splintered. In 1977 the Cairo-based chairman of the foreign affairs bureau, Hasham Salamat, challenged Misuari's leadership and sought to persuade the OIC to recognize him (Salamat) as the new chairman of the MNLF; unsuccessful in this, he created a rival organization, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which drew its initial support mainly from the Maguindanao-speaking areas of western Mindanao. Subsequently, another group, mostly from the Maranao elite, left to form a MNLF-Reformist Group based in Jeddah. Attempts to reconcile the factions proved elusive.

On the eve of the 'People Power Revolution' of 1986, supporters of Corazon Aquino made approaches to Misuari to gain MNLF support for the mainstream opposition to Marcos, and when Aquino became president Misuari was invited back to the Philippines, and the new Constitution of 1987 made provision for an Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM). After some initial tensions within the Regional Consultative Commission set up to prepare an organic act for the ARMM (see Basman et al. 1989), legislation was drafted and submitted for approval by the people of the 13 provinces listed in the Tripoli Agreement, on the basis that only those provinces and cities voting to do so would become part of the ARMM. In the event, only four provinces and no cities voted to be included, and, as had happened in 1977, the main Moro factions rejected the ARMM, which they saw as falling well short of their demands for BangsaMoro autonomy. Misuari returned into voluntary exile.

In 1992 President Aquino was succeeded as president by former Philippines Constabulary commander, General Fidel Ramos. Ramos reopened negotiations...
with Misuari—despite the dismay of many, who saw the MNLF as a waning force. The new round of negotiations, carried out mostly through a ministerial committee of the OIC chaired by Indonesia, culminated in 1996 in a new agreement, described, somewhat optimistically, as ‘The Final Agreement on the Implementation of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement’. 3

The 1996 Agreement provided for the creation of a Special Zone of Peace and Development (SZOPD) corresponding to the provinces and cities covered by the Tripoli Agreement, which was to be ‘the focus of intense peace and development efforts over the next three years’, and of a Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCD), which was to have powers to ‘control and/or supervise . . . appropriate agencies of the government that are engaged in peace and development activities in the area [of the SZOPD].’ Provision was also made for a Consultative Assembly of 81 members (44 of them from the MNLF), headed by the chair of the SPCD, to serve as a forum for consultation and advice to the president. Under the 1996 Agreement, the military wing of the MNLF, the Bangsamoro Muslim Army (BMA), was to be disbanded and 7,500 BMA fighters were to be recruited into the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP). Additionally, a special socioeconomic, cultural and educational program was to be developed for members of the MNLF not absorbed into the AFP/PNP, to help them and their families acquire education, technical skills and livelihood training.

Misuari was appointed to head the SPCD, and later in 1996 he was elected governor of the ARMM—thus reducing the potential for disputes over jurisdiction between the ARMM and the SPCD. The 1996 Agreement was enthusiastically hailed in many quarters as a resolution of the long-running conflict in the Philippines south. Anyone who had followed the history of the dispute, however, would have realized that such euphoria was premature (see May 2001).

For one thing, the agreement between Ramos and Misuari had to be passed into law, and faced strong opposition, particularly from non-Muslim groups in Mindanao. Among non-Muslim communities in Mindanao the agreement generated considerable anxiety. Christian community leaders, led by Congresswoman Maria Clara Lobregat, organized demonstrations against the agreement and there were threats that the Christian vigilante groups that had been active in the 1970s would be revived. In Congress, there was opposition to the granting of autonomy and accusations that President Ramos had ‘sold out’ to the militant Muslims. Six of the 24 members of the Senate voted against a resolution supporting the agreement and there were demands for the withdrawal of powers from the SPCD and Consultative Assembly and for the exclusion of local government units from SPCD control. In the House of Representatives, the House Appropriations Committee threatened to block funding for the SPCD and Consultative Assembly. Prior to the signing of the final agreement a group of congressional representatives and a provincial governor filed a Supreme Court petition seeking invalidation of the agreement (see Stankauchi 1999). Consequently, the implementing executive order, which emerged in October 1996, was a significantly watered-down version of the agreement signed by Ramos and Misuari. As one commentator wrote:

‘. . . the transitional structures [the SPCD and Consultative Assembly] . . . were too powerless to make an impact. They had very limited funding, no police powers, no control over national projects and programmes that were supposed to be within their remit, and no jurisdiction over significant sections of the bureaucracy in the region.’


Second, the 1996 agreement was specifically an agreement between the MNLF and the government of the Philippines. Not only was Misuari the widely recognized leader of the Moro movement, he also had the support of the OIC, which in effect meant that the Philippine government was bound to negotiate through him. But by 1996 the MILF was almost certainly the stronger of the two Moro factions (the MNLF/RG having faded out in the early 1980s). The MILF had a network of ‘camps’ in western and central Mindanao, which had become in effect small municipalities under MILF administration, and there were reports that the MILF’s military wing was undergoing transition from a guerrilla force to a ‘semi-conventional army’. It was later revealed that since 1994 the MILF, through contacts established in Afghanistan in the late 1980s, had been hosting a training camp run by Turkish Islamists (see ICG 2002, 2008a) and had links to international terrorists. The MILF was not a party to the 1996 agreement—indeed in 1993 MILF chairman Salamat distanced the MILF from the Ramos–Misuari discussions and vowed to continue the armed struggle—which meant that, even if the 1996 agreement succeeded, the Philippine government would have to conduct separate negotiations with the MILF (see later in chapter).

Third, and perhaps most critically, as with earlier moves towards Moro autonomy, the 1996 agreement mandated a plebiscite, to be held within two years of the establishment of the SPCD, to determine whether the parts of the SZOPD not included in the ARMM would join in an expanded autonomous region. The previous history of Muslim autonomy arrangements, however, strongly suggested that when the vote was taken, the predominantly non-Muslim provinces and cities would opt to stay out—as they had done in 1977 and 1989.

By 2001, there was a further threat to the viability of the 1996 agreement. The performance of the SPCD and ARMM under Misuari had fallen well short of people’s expectations and there was growing opposition to Misuari’s leadership. There were complaints that jobs within the ARMM administration went exclusively to Misuari’s supporters and that the administration was rife with corruption (see, for example, Bacani 2004). Promises of financial assistance and investment from Muslim countries had for the most part not materialized and Misuari accused the national government of failing to provide adequate funding and support for the ARMM. The predominantly Muslim provinces remain amongst the nation’s poorest. The ARMM is the poorest of the country’s 17 regions, with per capita relative GDP in 2007 of 23, compared with a national figure of 100 and the next

The Philippines 225
poorest region on 45, and a poverty incidence in 2006 of 62 per cent, compared with the next poorest region on 33 per cent (Briones 2009). In 1999 Misuri told the author that if conditions didn’t improve he ‘would return to the hills’ (interview with Misuri, Makati, 1999). There were reports of some former MNLF fighters joining the MILF or operating as independent units in Sulu, and of rival leadership bids within the MNLF from a ‘National Islamic Command Council.’

In contrast to the ascendancy of the ARMM in this book, most concessions to Philippine Muslims—such as the creation of a Philippine Amanah Bank, the reopening of traditional (duty-free) barter trade between Mindanao and Malaysia, and moves to codify Sharia law—and measures to promote economic development in the south had little apparent impact on the situation. The cornerstone of the government’s efforts in the 1970s to promote economic development, the Southern Philippines Development Authority, was largely captured by non-Muslims and in fact became something of a grievance to the Moros. And, as noted, the creation of two regional separatist movements in western and central Mindanao in 1977 did nothing to satisfy the separatist demands of the MNLF. After 1986, the Aquino government’s commitment to an ARMM, together with limited efforts to foster economic development and address poverty in the Muslim provinces, may have done something to slow the drift of disadvantaged Muslims into the armed conflict, but neither the MILF nor the MILF supported the ARMM, and the fighting went on, although more sporadically than in the 1970s.

However, the 1980s also saw the growth of MNLF ‘lost commands’ and the emergence of Abu Sayyaf. Abu Sayyaf was established around 1991 by a former MNLF member and charismatic preacher who had trained in Libya. It supported the general demand for a separate Bangsamoro and other political objectives, but was primarily involved in extortion and kidnapping for ransom (in one well-publicized incident in 2000, kidnapping 21 foreign and Filipino tourists from a resort in Malaysia) (see Villar and Gloria 2000). There has been interaction between Abu Sayyaf and hardline MNLF and MILF supporters, but at an operational level both the MNLF and the MILF have denounced the group and the Philippine government has refused to negotiate with it. Another group, alleged to have links with MILF members, is the Pentagon Gang, which has been involved in kidnap for ransom in Mindanao.

When President Ramos reopened negotiations with Nur Misuri many believed that the president had given Misuri a new lease of life. With the 1996 Agreement, however, Ramos succeeded in bringing Misuri “back into the fold” and for a while at least achieved a cessation of hostilities with the MNLF. In the same period, the MILF continued to consolidate and develop links with Islamic organizations outside the Philippines.

The Ramos government apparently tacitly accepted the MILF presence in western and central Mindanao, provided that it maintained the peace, and in 1996 Ramos initiated separate peace talks with the MILF, which produced an Agreement for General Cessation of Hostilities the following year. President Estrada, who succeeded Ramos in 1998, attempted to continue the negotiations but quickly became frustrated by the lack of progress and violations of the General Cessation
of hostilities. In 2000, after MILF attacks on non-Muslim communities in western Mindanao, the Estrada government launched an ‘all-out war’ against the MILF. AFP forces overran MILF headquarters at Camp Abubakar and over 40 other MILF strongholds, but the offensive was largely ineffective as the MILF simply retreated, regrouped and eventually returned to their bases when the AFP had withdrawn.

In 2001, facing impeachment, President Estrada stepped down. His successor, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, sought to reverse the conflict and revived negotiations with the MILF, facilitated by the Malaysian government. An Agreement on the Framework of the Peace Talks was signed in March 2001, a new Tripoli Agreement on Peace in June, and an Agreement on the General Cessation of Hostilities in August, and in 2003 an International Monitoring Team, with personnel from Malaysia, Brunei, Libya and later Japan, was created to oversee the ceasefire. A Bangsamoro Development Agency was also created to channel funds, coming mostly from the World Bank and Japan, to development projects. Progress in peace negotiations between the Philippine government and the MILF has been tenuous, with talks stalling on several occasions and the Malaysian government threatening to withdraw from the process.

In 2006 a number of ‘consensus points’ on ancestral domain and the Bangsamoro Jurisdicntial Entity were agreed between the MILF and Philippine government negotiators, and a form of ‘Moro self-determination’ was proposed to address the controversial issue of sovereignty. In 2008 a Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) was signed by the Philippine government and the MILF to provide a framework for a peace agreement on the basis of the Bangsamoro Jurisdicntial Entity (BJE). The BJE was to comprise the present ARMM as core territory, together with 735 municipalities outside the ARMM that were said to have a Muslim majority population; provision was also to be made for ‘special socio-economic and cultural affirmative action’ in 145 conflict-affected areas (or ‘critical intervention areas’, initiated by the BJE, in October 2008). This was promptly challenged by prominent Christian politicians from Mindanao and in October 2008 the Supreme Court ruled that the MOA-AD was unconstitutional. In the wake of this, armed conflict resumed, with reports of ‘hundreds of thousands’ being displaced, the government dissolved the peace panel, and the International Monitoring Team withdrew.

In mid-2009 a suspension of hostilities was negotiated and an International Contact Group was created to assist the peace process; it included government and civil society organization representatives from Malaysia, Brunei, Japan, Libya, Indonesia, Britain, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, the EU and Norway. Talks were revived in December 2009, with the MILF presenting a ‘Comprehensive Compact on Interim Governance’, which included demand for a Moro ‘sub-state in association with’ the Philippines with powers in all areas except defence, foreign affairs, currency and postal services, but broke down once again the following month. Attempts were made throughout 2010 to revive talks, but were delayed by a number of factors, including the Philippine government’s objections to the

Malaysian facilitator, and the election of a new Philippine president, Benigno Aquino III. Finally, the two sides met in Kuala Lumpur in February 2011 and were scheduled to meet again in April. The April meeting was rescheduled for June, but the June meeting was terminated early after the Philippine government deferred submission of its ‘counterpart proposal’ to the MILF’s Comprehensive Compact. The meeting reconvened in August but was adjourned; the MILF’s chief negotiator, Mohagher Iqbal, later stated that the two peace panels had ‘inimicable positions’ which could not be reconciled.

Persistent efforts by a new Malaysian facilitator to keep the peace process alive were not helped when MILF guerrillas and Philippine Army Special Forces clashed on Basilan in October, killing 19 soldiers and five MILF fighters, and displacing 8,000 villagers. However, talks resumed in Kuala Lumpur in December 2011. The outcome of this meeting was a one-page statement broadly reaffirming the two parties’ commitment to move the peace process forward.

Meanwhile, in late 2010 a split occurred within the MILF, with a breakaway group, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) led by a prominent hardline military commander in the MILF’s Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces, Ustadz Amerli Umbra Kato, rejecting further peace talks and threatening to resume fighting for Bangsamoro independence. (In 2008, following the Supreme Court’s decision against the BJE, Kato had led a series of raids against non-Muslim communities in central Mindanao.) Umbra Kato was subsequently expelled from the MILF, but the split has been seen as a significant threat to the peace process.

Following a visit to the Philippines in 2006 by a delegation from the OIC, a tripartite review of the 1996 agreement with the MNLF commenced in Jeddah in 2007 (although Misuari, who was then still under house arrest, was unable to attend). With the leadership of the MNLF under dispute — but the OIC recognizing Misuari — these talks have been continuing, with a meeting hosted by Libya, and in December 2011 representatives from both the MNLF and the MILF attended a meeting in Jeddah, initiated by the OIC, which urged the leadership of the two groups to continue efforts at joint coordination and collaboration to achieve peace and development.

External support, through training, funding and diplomatic initiatives, much of it on the basis of personal contacts between MNLF leaders and sympathetic associates in the Middle East, Pakistan and Malaysia, undoubtedly encouraged the Moro separatists in the 1970s and put pressure on the Philippine government to seek a non-military solution to the conflict. The OIC’s recognition of Misuari has also locked successive Philippine governments into continuing negotiations with the MNLF, even though, as suggested above, the MILF is now the major player on the Moro side.

Despite the many vicissitudes of the peace-making story in the southern Philippines, international mediation — and the Philippine government’s willingness to accept such mediation — has also been critical in keeping the peace process alive and limiting recourse to armed conflict. Thus, while the peace process in the southern Philippines has not delivered a lasting settlement, it has seen a reduction
of the conflict from the levels of the early 1970s and, apart from the brief “all-out war” waged by President Estrada, no sustained resurgence of the conflict.

Prospects

After some 40 years, the conflict which began with the formation of the MIM and the armed insurgency of the MNLF - a conflict that might be regarded as the most recent phase of a struggle which has been going on for more than four centuries - has not been resolved. According to a Reuters report (1 April 2011) since the early 1970s some 120,000 have been killed and 2 million displaced by the conflict. Violent conflict has been largely replaced by negotiation, assisted by international mediation, but intermittent fighting still occurs, and negotiations have failed to produce a lasting settlement.

As I have argued elsewhere (for example, see May 2011) three major elements of the situation make resolution difficult. First, the changing demography of Mindanao and Sulu, beginning during the American colonial period but accelerating after World War II, has meant that areas formerly under Muslim influence have become dominated by Christian in-migrants and their descendents, and in many parts of Mindanao traditional Muslim leaders have been displaced by new political dynasties (for example, see McKenna 1998). The OIC persuaded the MNLF to modify its claim for a Bangsamoro from the 25 provinces of Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan to what are now 14 provinces of central and western Mindanao and Sulu; but of these only five retain a Muslim majority. This has repeatedly, and predictably, frustrated attempts to create an ARMM that satisfies the territorial demands of the Moro. The MILF’s proposed Bangsamoro Juridical Entity attempted to overcome this problem but with Supreme Court’s rejection of the MOA-AD that no longer seems to be a potential option and the territorial issue remains unresolved.

Second, while many Christians and Muslims live peacefully together, there is a long history of mutual distrust between the two communities, which pre-dates the colonial period. This has been reflected in several surveys which have revealed negative stereotypes of Christians held by Muslims and, more strongly, of Muslims held by Christians (see, for example, Lacar and Hunt 1972; Balatao 1974; Filipinas Foundation 1975; Tolbas-Nufiez 1997). When, after the People Power Revolution of 1986, Marcos returned to the Philippines and toured parts of Mindanao-Sulu accompanied by a large, liberally armed, entourage, many Christian Filipinos were apprehensive and criticized President Aquino for recognizing the MNLF leader. Ten years later, there was paranoia among some Christian communities and political leaders at the prospect of their being incorporated into an enlarged SZEPA/ARMM - especially after photographs had appeared in the national press of wranglers being crucified in MILF-controlled areas of Mindanao. This has made it difficult for Philippine government leaders to gain congressional, let alone popular, acceptance of proposals to meet the demands of the Moro population.

Third, the divisions within the Moro population compound the Philippine government’s problems in negotiating a settlement. The MNLF, with the backing

of the OIC, argues that the task of the Philippine government is to negotiate a final agreement on the implementation of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement with the MNL, which the 1996 agreement attempted, but failed, to do. At the same time, the Philippine government is attempting, through the mediation of the Malaysian government, to separately negotiate a settlement with the MILF, which has become the more significant actor on the Moro side. Both these tasks have been exacerbated by splits, first within the MNLF and more recently within the MILF. Moreover, since the MNLF lost control of the ARMM regional assembly in 2005, the Philippine government also faces demands from the so-called ‘traditional politicians’ who now control the ARMM and insist that the national government should be negotiating with the autonomous regional government.

So long as negotiations continue, a resumption of fighting on the scale seen in the 1970s is unlikely, even though localized ‘incidents’ may continue to occur. But as the recent history of southern Thailand suggests, if the demands of the Moro separatists cannot be accommodated, then the prospect of a resurgence of conflict, under the leadership of a new generation of frustrated Moro nationalists, cannot be ruled out.

Lessons

Given the persistent nature of the Moro conflict in the face of repeated attempts at resolution, it is difficult to see what lessons might be learned from the Philippines, at least regarding resolution of conflict.

However, if we focus on conflict reduction rather than on conflict resolution, then the southern Philippines may offer some useful lessons. The willingness of successive Philippine governments to negotiate with the separatists, and to accept the intermediation of external actors sympathetic to the separatist cause (the OIC, Libya, Indonesia and Malaysia), has helped to reduce the level of violent conflict. At least since the presidency of Corazon Aquino, national governments (perhaps with the exception of the brief Estrada administration) have been willing to make concessions to Moro demands, though not to the extent of bypassing the constitutional provisions, which have been seen as limiting the national government’s powers to extend Muslim autonomy beyond the ARMM without a plebiscite.

Unless some creative solution can be found to the issue of territoriality – that is, the fact that the Moro demand control over an area whose population is now in large part non-Muslim – it is hard to see how the impasse can be broken. Nevertheless, the extensive violence that characterized the early conflict seems to have passed, in no small part due to the persistent efforts of those who have been attempting to pursue a negotiated settlement.

On the more negative side of the ledger, one thing that the southern Philippines case does demonstrate (along with the case of West Papua in Indonesia), however, is the problems that can arise when internal migration has the effect of marginalizing an ethnically or religiously defined cultural community within its own traditional homeland. In the twentieth century, internal migration to Mindanao was
pursued at least in part as a deliberate policy to integrate Philippine Muslims into mainstream Christian-dominated Filipino society and to provide a counterweight against the spread of Islam. Philippine Muslim leaders, in consequence, saw their political authority being challenged and their culture threatened, and this was a major contributor to the tensions that built up in the 1960s and exploded in the early 1970s. The situation was substantially exacerbated by cultural insensitivities - if not downright antipathy - on the part of in-migrant settlers and successive national administrations.

During the 1970s, amnesty programs coupled with livelihood projects may have induced some Moro fighters to forsake the armed struggle, but generally measures to promote economic development as a means of winning over disaffected Muslims had limited impact, in many cases, as suggested above, being captured by non-Muslims and adding to Moro grievances. The Philippine case arguably supports the view that when combatants are divided by historically based 'primordial' antipathies attempts to resolve differences through economic development have limited positive impact, and may even prove counter-productive.

Notes
1 For a review of government policies towards Philippine Muslims see May (1997), and Gowing (1977) who documents comprehensively American colonial policies. Tan (1977) records the Philippine Muslims armed struggle from 1910 to 1972.
2 For contemporary accounts of the conflict in the 1970s see Gowing (1979), May (1981) and Che Man (1987).
3 Ramos's account of the peace process is contained in Ramos (1996).
4 'Lost commands' is a term used to describe rogue military elements operating independently (or at least overly independently) of the formal chain of command.
5 For an account of the negotiations between the Government and the MILF in 2007 see Jabbar (2007).
6 For a discussion of the Supreme Court decision see Nastum (2008).
8 For accounts of recent developments see ICG (2008b, 2011).
9 For a recent comment on the role of external intervention in the Mindanao peace process see Lingga (2008).

References
Masilin: Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and Center for Autonomy and Governance, Notre Dame University College of Law, Cebuana.

The Philippines 233
Filipinas Foundation Inc. (1975) Philippine Majority-Minority Relations and Ethnic Attitudes, Makati: Filipino Foundation.


---

*Map 15: Kashmir*
### Major events: Kashmir

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Ruler of J&amp;K, Maharaja Hari Singh, accedes to India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Sheikh Abdullah sacked as prime minister; end of autonomy in Indian J&amp;K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Rigged elections and violence: severe Kashmiri disaffection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Anti-Indian protests in Kashmir Valley; curfews imposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>First violence in anti-Indian insurgency: bomb blast at Srinagar Telegraph Office (July)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Violence entrenched as Muslim cleric, Mirwaiz Moulvi Farooq, assassinated; many Hindu Pandits, feeling threatened by Muslim militants, leave Kashmir Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Pakistan starts supporting pro-Pakistan militants; All Parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference formed; Yasin Malik renounces violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Indian Army defeats Pakistan-sponsored ‘militants’ in Kargil area of J&amp;K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>War weariness: unilateral ceasefire by Hizbul Mujahideen, then by Indian forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>October attack on J&amp;K State Assembly first major terrorist incident since ‘9/11’; December terrorist attack on Indian Parliament almost provokes India–Pakistan war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>(Kashmiri) People’s Democratic Party and Congress Party form coalition government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>India–Pakistan forces begin ceasefire on border, Line of Control and Siachen Glacier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>India and Pakistan begin talks on eight major items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Decreasing violence; Kashmir insurgency now ‘low intensity’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>First firing over LOC since November 2003 ceasefire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Large Kashmiri protests over attempt in May to transfer land to Hindu religious trust; December: (Kashmiri) National Conference and Congress form government coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Stone-throwing protests in Kashmir; over 100 killed (June); New Delhi appointees hold ‘sustained uninterrupted dialogue’ in Kashmir (October)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>