

NATIONAL CONFERENCE: A NATIONAL STEP to an AUTONOMOUS CORDILLERA

I. BACKGROUND/RATIONALE

The 1987 Philippine Constitution provides for the Cordillera Autonomy but despite the benefits, advantages and privilege of having it, majority of its peoples rejected the two organic acts in the 1995 and 1998 plebiscites.

Firm in its resolve to push the Cordillera Autonomy, the Regional Development Council-Cordillera Administrative Region (RDC-CAR) and its partners renewed the move in 2006 by launching a social preparation project for CAR (SPCAR) focusing on education and information activities, capability building in the area of devolution and alliance building. Since then, awareness and better understanding of a regional autonomy heightened as the working teams continue to reach more areas and sectors and dialogue with key formal and informal leaders perceived to have influence over the passage of an organic act for the region.

Now, in its new version and as filed in unison by the seven (7) representatives of the Cordillera Region, HB 4649 garners attention in both the House of Representatives and in the Senate towards a regional autonomy status by 2016. While this is so in both the lower and upper legislative houses, there is still much to be done in all the provinces and with other un-reached sectors to ensure that Cordillerans fully understand and accept regional autonomy, so that should the third plebiscite be held in 2016, a resounding "YES" vote comes out.

One of the major remaining activities toward the objectives of the SPCAR, is the conduct of a national conference that should bring together representatives to the legislative bodies not only those from CAR but from other regions sympathetic to the cause, officials of agencies of government and the judiciary, leaders of nongovernment and peoples organizations, church, and other civil society groups who strongly advocate for regional autonomy.

II. OBJECTIVES

The National Conference: A National Step to an Autonomous Cordillera aims to generate full and widespread support from and build a strong alliance among leaders and key players in government, the private sector and major civil society groups at the local, regional and national levels for Cordillera Autonomy.

Specifically, by the end of the National Conference, the following must have been achieved:

1. Signed National Declaration of Support for Cordillera Regional Autonomy;
2. Heightened national advocacy and expanded alliance for Cordillera Regional Autonomy; and
3. Major recommendations to ensure passage full and wide support for the pertinent Organic Act.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE: A NATIONAL STEP towards an AUTONOMOUS CORDILLERA
November 25, 2015 at Novotel Araneta Center, Cubao, Quezon City

TIME	ACTIVITIES	ACTORS
7:30 - 8:00 AM	Registration and Distribution of IDs & Kits	Registration Team
8:30 - 10:00	Opening Program	
	Entrance of Cordillera Colors	Cordillerans
	Ugayam	Hon. Mayor Mauricio Domogan Baguio City
	Philippine National Anthem	Cordilleran
	Acknowledgement of Guests and Participants	GQEP Facilitator
	Welcome Message	Hon. Gov. Eustaquio P. Bersamin Province of Abra and Chairman Regional Cordillera Development Council - CAR
	Inspirational Address	HE Pres. Benigno Simeon C. Aquino III President Republic of the Philippines
	Intermission number	Kabayan Dance Troupe
	Overview of the National Conference	GQEP Facilitator
10:00 - 10:15	Snack Break	
10:15 - 10:30	The Road to Cordillera Autonomy: Background & SPCAR Updates	Dir. Milagros A. Rimando, PhD Regional Director, NEDA-CAR
10:30 - 11:00	The Struggle for Cordillera Autonomy	Baguio City High School Theater Group
11:00 - 12:00	Legislative Response	
	House of Representatives	Hon. Cong. Feliciano Belmonte, Jr. Speaker of the House of Representatives
	Senate	Hon. Sen. Franklin Drilon Senate President
12:00 - 1:30 PM	Lunch Break & Community Dancing	Kabayan Dance Troupe
	Press Conference	Media & Publicity Team
1:30 - 1:45 PM	A Child's Call: "Cordillera Autonomy is for me!"	Cordilleran Child

TIME	ACTIVITIES	ACTORS
1:45 - 2:30	Conversations on the Challenges to Cordillera Autonomy and the Proposed National Declaration of Support	Participants and GQEP Facilitators
2:30 - 3:00	Presentation of Conversation Highlights & Statements of Support	Sectoral Representatives
3:00 - 3:30	Snack Break & AVP on SPCAR Activities Consolidation of Statements for the National Declaration of Support for Cordillera Autonomy	Drafting Team
3:30 - 4:00	Signing of the National Declaration of Support for the Cordillera Autonomy Community Singing	Participants
4:00 - 4:30	The Constitutional Mandate	Hon. Justice Hilario Davide former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines and former Commissioner of the Constitutional Commission which drafted the 1987 Philippine Constitution
4:30 - 5:00	Synthesis Thanksgiving Message Evaluation of the Conference Community Dancing and Singing Group Photos Distribution of Certificates of Attendance	GQEP Facilitator Participants