

venue for the discussion or formation of programs on the weapons issue. In addition, the universities can propagate the "culture of peace".¹⁶⁰ The Peace Education Center of the Notre Dame University in Cotabato City offers services and programs to resolve conflict situations and serves as a Secretariat to bodies working on the Mindanao peace process, such as the Independent Fact Finding Committee (IFFC) and the Quick Response Team (QRT).

The role of the international community particularly the OIC is important. OIC has played a crucial role¹⁶¹ in forging the peace agreement between the government and can be tapped in ensuring that effective disarmament and demobilization efforts take place among armed groups in Mindanao.

Such sectors above can contribute in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, either by promoting the culture of peace or through direct involvement in coercing armed groups in Mindanao to give up its arms and disband for the greater interest of their respective communities.

In the end, any attempt at disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in Mindanao will only succeed if these efforts are initiated or at the very least supported by the people themselves. Hence, efforts towards this end should first build on changing the perceptions among Muslims and Christians alike in Mindanao and gradually erasing the communities' collective memory of mistrust, hostility, indifference, militarization and marginalization. The above-mentioned sectors can contribute in creating an atmosphere conducive to disarming or demobilizing groups towards their integration to the larger community of Filipinos in general. Otherwise, Mindanao will likely remain in the vicious cycle of conflict.

¹⁶⁰ UNESCO, "UNESCO and a Culture of Peace: Promoting a Global Movement" in *From a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace* (UNESCO Publishing), pp. 251-268.

¹⁶¹ In the 1996 Peace Agreement, the roles of the OIC include: quasi-party, inquiry, good offices, consultation, regional arrangements, sanction even quasi-negotiation (OIC-GRP or OIC-MNLF), hosting, facilitation, cease-fire and post-settlement monitoring and international support generation. See Atty. Soliman Santos Jr, *The Philippines-Muslims Dispute: International Aspects from Origins to Resolution: The Role of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) in the Peace Negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)*. Unpublished research paper in International Dispute Resolution, Masters of Laws, Melbourne University, 1999.