



Republic of the Philippines  
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao  
**BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY**  
Cotabato City

**BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY**  
**PARLIAMENT**  
(First Regular Session)

**Journal No. 17**

Thursday-Friday, September 19-20, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

At 1:52 P.M., the Speaker, Hon. Atty. Ali Pangalian M. Balindong, called the session to order.

INVOCATION

Upon the request of the Chair, Hon. MP Ibrahim D. Ali led the invocation.

NATIONAL ANTHEM

Thereafter, the singing of the national anthem followed.

ROLL CALL

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretariat called the Roll and the following

Members of the BTA Parliament were present:

1. Hon. Abas, Akmad I.
2. Hon. Abas, Haron M.
3. Hon. Abas, Zul Qarneyn M.
4. Hon. Abbas, Basit S.
5. Hon. Abu, Mudjib C.
6. Hon. Adiong, Ziaur-Rahman A.
7. Hon. Alamia, Laisa M.
8. Hon. Alauddin, Faiz S.
9. Hon. Ali, Ibrahim D.
10. Hon. Ali, Lanang, Jr. T.
11. Hon. Alih, Eddie M.
12. Hon. Alil, Zesar H.
13. Hon. Ambolodto, Suharto M.
14. Hon. Ampatuan, Baintan A.
15. Hon. Anayatin, Susana S.
16. Hon. Balindong, Ali Pangalian M.
17. Hon. Barra, Hamid Aminoddin D.
18. Hon. Basman, Anna Tarhata S.
19. Hon. Bato, Mohammad Zainoden P.
20. Hon. Candao, Bai Maleiha B.
21. Hon. Diamlala, Musa K.S.
22. Hon. Esmael, Hadji Abduladzis M.
23. Hon. Gayak, Abdullah E.
24. Hon. Guerra, Eduard U.

25. Hon. Hassan, Hatimil E.
26. Hon. Ismael, Rasul E.
27. Hon. Jajurie, Raissa H.
28. Hon. Jakilan, Muslimin A.
29. Hon. Latiph, Maisara D.
30. Hon. Loong, Don Mustapha A.
31. Hon. Macapaar, Abdullah G.
32. Hon. Macaraya, Jamel D.
33. Hon. Macasalong, Marjanie S.
34. Hon. Mastura, Datu Tucao O.
35. Hon. Mastura, Sittie Shahara I.
36. Hon. Mawallil, Amilbahar S.
37. Hon. Midtimbang, Datu Midpantao M.
38. Hon. Mitmug, Rasol, Jr. Y.
39. Hon. Mujahid, Abdulmuhmin A.
40. Hon. Muñoz, Hussein P.
41. Hon. Pacasem, Ubaida C.
42. Hon. Pak, Abdulwahab M.
43. Hon. Ramos, Diamila D.
44. Hon. Rimbang, Edrieza Nasser H.
45. Hon. Sacar, Modayao M.
46. Hon. Sahrin, Abdul R.
47. Hon. Salendab, Said Z.
48. Hon. Saliga, Romeo C.
49. Hon. Salik, Ali O.
50. Hon. Sani, Punduma B.
51. Hon. Sattar, Alzad T.
52. Hon. Sema, Omar Yasser C.
53. Hon. Sema, Romeo K.
54. Hon. Sheik, Said M.
55. Hon. Silongan, Aida M.
56. Hon. Solaiman, Ali B.
57. Hon. Tago, Paisalin P.
58. Hon. Udjah, Sahie S.
59. Hon. Usman, Adzfar H.
60. Hon. Yu Ekey, Narciso

The Members of the BTA Parliament who notified the Secretary General:

1. Hon. Asmawil, Muslima A.
2. Hon. Oranon, Suwaib L.
3. Hon. Yacob, Mohammad S.

The Members of the BTA Parliament who were on official business:

1. Hon. Dipatuan, Saffrullah M.
2. Hon. Ebrahim, Ahod B.
3. Hon. Iqbal, Mohagher M.
4. Hon. Macacua, Abdulraof A.

The Members of the BTA Parliament who appeared after the roll call:

1. Hon. Burahan, Abraham T.
2. Hon. Lorena, Jose I.
3. Hon. Pangandaman, Nabila Margarita P.
4. Hon. Tan, Nabil A.

The following Members of the BTA Parliament who were noted absent:

1. Hon. Ahang, Abdulla A.
2. Hon. Lidasan, Mussolini S.
3. Hon. Mangudadatu, Khadafeh G.
4. Hon. Mantawil, Malik A.
5. Hon. Sali, Al-Syed A.
6. Hon. Ulama, Melanio U.
7. Hon. Karon, Bainon G.

With sixty (60) Members of the BTA Parliament present, including the Speaker, the Chair declared the presence of a quorum.

#### READING AND APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL OF THE PREVIOUS SESSION

At this juncture, on the motion of Majority Floor Leader, Hon. MP Atty. Lanang T. Ali, Jr. duly seconded, and there being no objection, the body deferred the reading and approval of Journal No. 15 dated August 30, 2019.

#### CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 98

Thereupon, the body proceeded to consider the Proposed Resolution No. 98, entitled:

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING, RESPECTING AND PROTECTING THE TIME IMMEMORIAL PACTS, TREATIES, AGREEMENTS, AND MUTUAL COVENANTS BETWEEN AND AMONG THE MEMBERS OF MUSLIM FILIPINOS AND NON-MORO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Authors: MP Romeo C. Saliga and MP Melanio U. Ulama

#### READING OF THE TITLE OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 98

Upon the direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of Proposed Resolution No. 98.

#### TREATMENT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 98 AS SIMPLE RESOLUTION

Subsequently, on motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the Proposed Resolution No. 98 was treated by the body as a simple resolution.

#### BRIEF STATEMENT OF HON. MP ROMEO C. SALIGA ON PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 98

When recognized, Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga delivered his statement about the said proposed resolution.

#### POINT OF ORDER

The Chair, Hon. Speaker Atty. Ali Pangalian M. Balindong asked if Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga was delivering a sponsorship speech, to which the latter answered affirmatively; stating that it was just a brief statement to enlighten the honorable Members of the BTA Parliament and the people who were present.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 2:10 P.M., the Chair *motu proprio* declared a one-minute suspension of session.

#### RESUMPTION

At 2:13 P.M., the session resumed with Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia presiding.

#### INCLUSION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 98 IN THE BUSINESS FOR THE DAY

In view of its treatment as a simple resolution, on the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the Proposed Resolution No. 98 was included in the Business for the Day.

#### CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 99

Thereafter, the body proceeded to consider the Proposed Resolution No. 99, entitled:

A RESOLUTION URGING THE DIFFERENT MINISTRIES OF THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO, NATIONAL LINE AGENCIES, ALL LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS AND OTHER PRIVATE ENTITIES TO OBSERVE AND RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO FREE, PRIOR, AND INFORMED CONSENT IN THE FORMULATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES, PROGRAMS, AND ACTIVITIES WITHIN THEIR FUSAKA INGED/NATIVE TITLE

Author: MP Romeo C. Saliga

#### READING OF THE TITLE OF PROPOSED NO. 99

Upon the direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of the Proposed Resolution No. 99.

#### MOTION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Thereupon, the Majority Floor Leader moved that Proposed Resolution No. 99 be referred to the Committee on Indigenous Peoples' Affairs.

#### POINT OF INQUIRY OF HON. MP ZUL QARNEYN M. ABAS

When recognized, Hon. MP Zul Qarneyn M. Abas inquired on the intent of the proponent in filing the Proposed Resolution No. 99.

#### POINT OF ORDER OF HON. MP ZIAUR-RAHMAN A. ADIONG

Upon recognition by the Chair, Hon. MP Ziaur-Rahman A. Adiong raised a point of order. He explained that they were currently in the referral of proposed resolution and if there is no objection to the motion of the Majority Floor Leader to refer the proposed resolution, then the said resolution should be referred to the appropriate committee.

#### COMMENT OF THE CHAIR

Whereupon, the Chair commented that the point of order raised by Hon. MP Ziaur-Rahman A. Adiong was well taken. The Chair, however, stated that she would like to know from Hon. MP Zul Qarneyn M. Abas if his manifestation was an objection to the motion for referral of the proposed resolution to the appropriate committee.

#### RESPONSE OF HON. MP ZUL QARNEYN ABAS

In response to the query of the Chair, Hon. MP Zul Qarneyn M. Abas, when recognized, stated that he would just like to clarify as to what prompted Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga in filing the Proposed Resolution No. 99.

#### AMENDMENT OF MOTION OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER C. SEMA

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema moved that the Proposed Resolution No. 99 be referred also to the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Energy.

#### MANIFESTATION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Thereafter, the Majority Floor Leader, when recognized, manifested his support to the motion of Hon. MP Omar Yasser C. Sema that the Proposed Resolution No. 99 be referred to the Committee on Indigenous Peoples' Affairs and the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Energy.

#### REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Consequently, the Chair remarked that the point of order raised by Hon. MP Ziaur-Rahman A. Adiong was considered. The Chair, however, explained that the current Parliamentary Rules and Procedures states that in the first reading, the proponent

may answer questions with respect to the general purpose of the filing of any resolution. The Chair stressed that unless the Rules are amended, the body is constrained to follow the same.

#### COMMENT OF HON. MP ZIAUR-RAHMAN A. ADIONG

When recognized, Hon. MP Ziaur-Rahman A. Adiong stated that he would like to be guided as to how the body would behave in terms of appreciating legislations as to whether or not the first referral be simply asking the Secretary General to read the title as well as the author of a bill or resolution. He stressed that if it was the latter then the BTA Parliament would not have more time to discuss all the items lined-up in the Order of Business. Hon. MP Ziaur-Rahman A. Adiong further stressed that the discussion will be extensively done in the committee level and then a committee report will be submitted for proper amendments. He concluded his statement by asking to be guided as to the changes of the Rules or adjustments of the Rules to accommodate concerns regarding the resolution or law on the first reading imply the opening of the period of debate and interpellation.

#### RESPONSE OF THE CHAIR

In response to the query of Hon. MP Ziaur-Rahman A. Adiong, the Chair stated that as of the moment, the body is constrained to follow the existing Parliamentary Rules and Procedures.

#### REQUEST OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Whereupon, the Majority Floor Leader, when recognized, requested Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga to answer the query of Hon. MP Zul Qarneyn M. Abas.

#### RESPONSE OF HON. MP ROMEO C. SALIGA

In response to the query of Hon. MP Zul Qarneyn M. Abas, Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga explained that the purpose of the Proposed Resolution No. 99 is to address the issue which has reached his office regarding the development projects that have been entering the areas of the Indigenous people without any consultations, stressing that such development activities are creating conflicts on the ground. He inferred that they have to

find some measures to address the conflict so that it would not escalate into a bigger conflict.

#### REFERRAL OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 99 TO COMMITTEES

There being no objection to the motion of the Majority Floor Leader as amended by the motion of Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema, the same having been duly seconded, the Proposed Resolution No. 99 was referred to the Committee on Indigenous Peoples' Affairs and the Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Energy.

#### CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 100

Thereafter, the body proceeded to consider Proposed Resolution No. 100, entitled:

RESOLUTION ON THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES IN THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO (BARMM) THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF TRADE, INVESTMENT AND TOURISM

Author: MP Susana S. Anayatin

#### READING OF THE TITLE OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 100

Upon the direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of Proposed Resolution No. 100.

#### REFERRAL OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 100 TO COMMITTEE

On the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the Proposed Resolution No. 100 was referred to the Committee on Trade, Investment and Tourism.

#### CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 101

Subsequently, the body proceeded to consider Proposed Resolution No. 101, entitled:

URGENT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG) THROUGH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MILG) TO CLARIFY THE MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NUMBER 2019-121, RE: DIRECTING ALL PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS, MAYORS, PUNONG BARANGAYS AND BARMM REGIONAL GOVERNOR TO CLEAR ROADS BY ILLEGAL STRUCTURES AND CONSTRUCTIONS

Author: MP Sittie Shahara I. Mastura

## READING OF THE TITLE OF THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 101

Upon the direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of Proposed Resolution No. 101.

## TREATMENT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 101 AS SIMPLE RESOLUTION AND ITS INCLUSION IN THE BUSIENESS FOR THE DAY

On the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the Proposed Resolution No. 101 was treated as a simple resolution and was included in the Business for the Day.

## CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED NO. 102

Thereupon, the body proceeded to consider Proposed Resolution No. 102, entitled:  
RESOLUTION URGING THE CABINET THROUGH THE INTERIM CHIEF MINISTER TO DEVELOP AND INSTITUTIONALIZE AN INFORMATION, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNICATION (IEC) PROGRAM ON THE ORGANIC LAW FOR THE BANGSAMORO AND THE BANGSAMORO PARLIAMENT

Author: MP Engr. Baintan A. Ampatuan

Co-Authors: MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia and MP Amilbahar S. Mawallil

## READING OF THE TITLE OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 102

Upon the direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of Proposed Resolution No. 102.

## MOTION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER AND REFERRAL OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 102 TO COMMITTEES

On the motion of the Majority Floor Leader the Proposed Resolution No. 102 was referred to the Committee on Basic, Higher and Technical Education and to Committee on Transportation and Communication.

## MOTION OF HON. MP BAIN TAN A. AMPATUAN

When recognized, Hon. MP Baintan A. Ampatuan moved that Proposed Resolution No. 102 be referred to the Committee on Rules considering that the said resolution involves all other agencies to be informed and educated on what the BOL and BTA Parliament System were all about.



## AMENDED MOTION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Thereafter, on the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the Proposed Resolution No. 102 was referred to the Committee on Rules.

## PRIVILEGE HOUR

At this juncture, the body proceeded to the privilege hour in the Order of Business.

## PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF HON. MP IBRAHIM D. ALI

When recognized, Hon. MP Ibrahim D. Ali delivered a privilege speech on the Invocation of the Rights of the Bangsamoro to Self-determination, the full text of which is hereto attached as Appendix “A” and made an integral part of this Journal.

## REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Thereafter, the Chair thanked Hon. MP Ibrahim D. Ali for his touching speech and for the nuggets of wisdom, especially, for those who are coming from the younger generation. Then the Chair directed the Secretary General to include the speech of Hon. MP Ibrahim D. Ali in the journal and forward the same to the Office of the Interim Chief Minister for publication in the BARMM website.

## PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF HON. MP EDRIEZA H. NASSER RIMBANG

In his speech, Hon. MP Edrieza H. Nasser Rimbang proposed for the creation of the Office of the Bangsamoro Sultanate, the full text of the speech is hereto attached as Appendix “B” and made an integral part of this Journal.

## DIRECTION OF THE CHAIR

Subsequently, the Chair directed the Secretary General to include the speech of Hon. MP Rimbang in the journal and forward the same to the Office of the Interim Chief Minister for publication in the BARMM website

## POINT OF ORDER OF HON. MP AMILBAHAR S. MAWALLIL

When recognized, Hon. MP Amilbahar S. Mawallil stated that he appreciated the gesture of Hon. MP Edrieza H. Nasser Rimbang. He, however, raised a point of order, saying that the subject matter of the privilege speech of Hon. MP Rimbang was a proposed resolution filed and referred to the appropriate committee. He explained that

under the Rules of the BTA Parliament, a resolution or a bill pending before the Committee cannot be the subject of a privilege speech.

#### CLARIFICATION OF THE CHAIR

Whereupon, the Chair clarified that a proposed resolution pending before the Committee cannot be the subject of the privilege speech.

#### PRIVILEGE SPEECH OF HON. MP DIAMILA D. RAMOS

When recognized, Hon. MP Diamila D. Ramos delivered a privilege speech on her legislative agenda, the full text of which is hereto attached as Appendix “C” and made an integral part of this Journal.

#### DIRECTION OF THE CHAIR

Thereafter, the Chair likewise directed the Secretary General to include the privilege speech of Hon. MP Diamila D. Ramos in the journal and forward the same to the Office of the Interim Chief Minister for publication in the BARMM website.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP ZIAUR-RAHMAN ALONTO ADIONG

As to what possible way could the Members of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, as the legislators of the people in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, address the issue on overturning the declaration of military reservation over the piece of land in Marawi City and ask the President to eventually distribute to the real owners. Hon. MP Diamila D. Ramos responded that her general concept is to educate the people, especially the private owners to submit to the rule of law by having their properties registered and titled. She explained that one of the reasons for the delay in Marawi rehabilitation is not only due to the Military Reservation Area, but even the privately owned lands, some of them do not have titles. According to her, one way to address the issue is for the Members of the BTA to legislate free land titling and survey for all BARMM areas. With respect to the Military Reservation Area, she stated that the clamour should come from the people for them to ask if the President can possibly overturn the Military Reservation Area and award the same to the true owners via Presidential Decree, saying, however, that it will go through a rigid process and will

involve people on the ground, including the Local Government Units and the Royal Sultanate.

As to what is the status of the purchase of land area in Marawi City where Hon. MP Diamila D. Ramos and Mr. Robin Padilla would set up temporary shelters for the internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Marawi City, Hon. MP Diamila D. Ramos replied that with respect to the status of the Tindeg Marawi Housing Project of brother Robin Padilla, it took them one year to work on the documentation, explaining that the title of the property was burned. She informed the body that considering the court has already reissued the title, the transfer of the title is ready anytime. She also informed the body that they are ready to give the full payment of the land, so that they can already start with the development thereof.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP ATTY. JOSE I. LORENA

When asked by Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena if land ownership and declared reservation sites are parts of the constraint in the rehabilitation of Marawi, Hon. MP Diamila Ramos responded affirmatively.

When asked if there are already efforts undertaken either by the Local Government of Marawi or by any group in Marawi to request the President to declare the reservation sites in Marawi opened, Hon. MP Diamila Ramos responded that she has no personal knowledge if there are efforts made by the current City Government of Marawi, but there are efforts made by the people on the ground, the civil society organizations and some lawyers who have been talking about the issue. She informed the body that some people have been hoping that with BARMM, the issue will be raised and acted upon favorably.

Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena proposed that the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) can support if there are efforts exerted by the Local Government of Marawi asking the President to declare the reservation sites in Marawi opened to distribution for housing purposes. He concluded his interpellation by expressing hope that the BTA and the Local Government of Marawi would work together to fast track the rehabilitation of Marawi.

#### REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Thereafter, the Chair thanked Hon. MP Diamila D. Ramos, and asked the latter to inquire from the Majority Floor Leader as to the creation of sub-committee on Marawi Rehabilitation if she might want to join the said sub-committee.

#### REQUEST OF HON. MP SAHIE S. UDJAH

When recognized, Hon. MP Sahie S. Udjah stated that while they are at the early stage of working with the Philippine Government in the spirit and purpose of Peace Agreement which both have signed, there are misinterpretation of the word “jihad” from the security sector in the country. In view thereof, he requested Hon. MP Diamila D. Ramos if they could just put the translation in English the word “struggle” so that there will be no misinterpretation in looking for the solution of Marawi problem.

#### RESPONSE OF HON. MP DIAMILA RAMOS

In response to the request of Hon. MP Sahie S. Udjah, Hon. MP Diamila D. Ramos that she would submit to the request of Hon. MP Sahie S. Udjah if it is the wisdom of their Ulama and their religious leaders.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

On the motion of the Majority Floor Leader, the Chair declared the session suspended at 3:32 P.M.

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 4:05 P.M., the session resumed.

#### CONSIDERATION OF BTA PARLIAMENT BILL NO. 16 ON FIRST STAGE

At this juncture, the body proceeded to consider the BTA-Parliament Bill No. 16 on first stage, entitled:

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE BANGSAMORO ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Author: MP Engr. Baintan A. Ampatuan

Co-Authors: MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia and MP Amilbahar S. Mawallil

#### READING OF THE TITLE OF BTA PARLIAMENT BILL NO. 16

Upon the direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of BTA Parliament Bill No. 16

#### REFERRAL OF BTA PARLIAMENT BILL NO. 16 TO COMMITTEE

On the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the BTA Parliament Bill No. 16 was referred to the Committee on Rules for referral to the appropriate committee.

#### CONSIDERATION OF BTA PARLIAMENT BILL NO. 11 ON SECOND STAGE

Thereafter, the body proceeded to consider the BTA Parliament Bill No. 11 on second stage, entitled:

AN ACT CREATING THE BANGSAMORO SOCIAL ACTION COMMISSION (BASAC) OF THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO, DEFINING ITS COMPOSITION, POWERS AND FUNCTIONS, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Authors: MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema and MP Naciso C. Yu Ekey

#### SPONSORSHIP OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER C. SEMA

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema delivered his sponsorship Speech on BTA Parliament Bill No. 11, the full text of which is hereto attached as Appendix “D” and made an integral part of this Journal.

#### PERIOD OF DEBATE AND INTERPELLATION

On the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded and there being no objection, the period of debate and interpellation on BTA Parliament Bill No. 11 was opened.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. SPEAKER ATTY. ALI PANGALIAN M. BALINDONG

In response to the question of Hon. Speaker Atty. Ali Pangalian M. Balindong, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema informed the body that BASAC is the acronym for Bangsamoro Social Action Commission.

As to whether or not, BASAC is going to be a bureaucracy, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema answered that it is another bureaucracy with project.

As to whether or not, it is under the Office of the Chief Minister, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema responded affirmatively.

As to whether or not, the existing ministries under the present set up are not enough to address the problem of poverty, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema replied that there is still a need to create another office, explaining that not all of the ministries are dedicated towards eradicating poverty. He said that there is need to have an office that is dedicated and focused only in addressing and combating the issues of poverty, and will serve as an advisory council for the Office of the Chief Minister.

When Hon. Speaker Ali Pangalian Balindong stated that the Chief Minister has many advisers already who can advise him on matters regarding poverty that BARMM is encountering, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema responded that he has seen the priority agenda of the Chief Minister and there is no focused attention on anti-poverty.

When asked if the BASAC is a person, there is a point man to advise the Chief Minister, like Hon. Minister Abdulraof A. Macacua and Manny Pinol, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema replied affirmatively.

As to whether or not, the office has to be provided with staff and budget, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema answered in the affirmative.

When asked if the BARMM has enough budget for the salaries and other needs of the employees, Hon. MP Omar Yasser Sema stated that the budget will be charged to whatever local funds that can be generated by the BARMM.

When asked if the Ministry of Social Services not enough to eradicate or at least to minimize poverty, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema explained that the Ministry of Social Services has programs which are nationally formulated and that in the past six (6) years, the program such as the Cash Conditional Transfer or the 4Ps has not really made an impact on the lives of the marginalized, adding that in fact it has worsen their situation, considering that what the people are supposed to receive under said program has been corrupted.

When Hon. Speaker Ali Pangalian Balindong stated that the proposed office is under the Office of the Chief Minister and there is no need for it to be discussed in the intergovernmental relation mechanism, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema agreed.

Hon. Speaker Ali Pangalian Balindong concluded his interpellation by expressing thanks for the enlightenment given by Hon. MP Omar Yasser C. Sema.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP ATTY. JOSE I. LORENA

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena prefaced his interpellation by stating that he agreed on the premises with respect to the rationale of the bill as mentioned by the author such as corruption, and inadequate program for social and economic development resulting to massive poverty in the region. Then he asked Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema if the rationale for the creation of the Bangsamoro Social Action Commission (BASAC) was stated correctly by the former, to which the latter responded that as far as the proponents who had asked him to author the bill is concerned, it is the rationale.

When asked by Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena if he agrees that the poverty situation in the Bangsamoro was because of the exclusive economic system in the region, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema responded not necessarily exclusive, but those who have resources have treated their resources as exclusive.

When asked if he agrees that the lack of economic activity of the majority of the population of the BARMM results in the lack of income, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema answered affirmatively.

As to whether or not, the need to address economic development and economic exclusivity is one of the objectives of the proposed legislation, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema gave an affirmative response.

As to whether or not, the BASAC is similar to the National Anti-Poverty Commission, which would need appropriation, Hon. MP Omar Yasser Sema replied affirmatively.

When Hon. MP Atty. Jose Lorena asked if the appropriation can also be used for economic development, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema responded affirmatively, saying, however, that the appropriation can also be used for program development, setting of policy direction, and hiring of consultants and the real advocates of anti-poverty.

When asked if BASAC would also contemplate of having comprehensive plan for economic development of the region, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema explained that the BASAC could do it by including the same in one of its powers.

When asked if the BASAC would not duplicate the existing economic body which is tasked to provide comprehensive and integrated economic development plans in the region, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema responded in the negative, explaining that the Office of the Chief Minister needs to have a focused group in dealing with the issues of poverty and alleviating the people.

As to whether or not, he has mentioned in his sponsorship speech that the ARMM was considered a failed experiment, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema answered affirmatively.

As to whether he thought or not, that the failed experiment might have been caused by the over bloated bureaucracy of the ARMM, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema replied that he was not aware of the bloated bureaucracy, as he was never an employee of the ARMM.

When Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena stated that the former ARMM has about 33,000 employees and if the fund for the said 33,000 employees was used to propel economic activity in the region, it might have shaped or changed the character of poverty situation in the ARMM, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema responded that Hon. MP Atty. Jose Lorena was talking about 33,000 employees from the education sector, the social welfare and the Ministry of Health. He stressed that those employees were serving schools and were not really dealing with anti-poverty programs. He added that they were helping the ARMM in terms of educating the people, giving social services, and aiding their needs of health.



Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena pointed out that as stated by the good BTA Speaker, there are already ministries devoted to the implementation of social programs, including economic programs. Then he asked Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema if it would still be necessary to form a commission, since those ministries could be grouped together as a cluster in order to integrate the social and economic programs, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema replied that what the bill projects to create is a focused office under the Office of the Chief Minister and with a certain degree of permanence and which cannot be just be removed without a law to remove it. He added that its function would be focused on anti-poverty only.

As to whether or not, it is necessary that a body under the Office of the Chief Minister focused on the delivery of service be a commission, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema responded that it is not necessary, saying, however, that the intent of the law is to create collegial body that can work with each other, the fusion of ideas from the different experts in the region, and to find a long lasting solution against poverty.

As to whether or not, the BASAC which would be under the Office of the Chief Minister, will be granted fiscal autonomy, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema answered in the negative, explaining that its funds will be under the control of the Chief Minister.

Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena concluded his interpellation by manifesting that his concern is in the finalization of the bill; the body might be overload the BARMM bureaucracy by coming up with many organization set up that would make the BARMM an employment agency and might deplete the resources of the BARMM for organizational structures rather than the delivery of economic and social programs.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP EDDIE M. ALIH

When Hon. MP Eddie M. Alih stated that as mention by the proponent, under the bill, BASAC is only advisory in nature, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema, responded affirmatively.

As to whether or not, an advice can address poverty, Hon. MP Omar Yasser Sema responded that he believes so, explaining that if there are people under the Office of the Chief Minister advising him on what to do with respect to the economic condition of their

people, the Chief Minister can file a bill with the Parliament and that after a bill has become a law, it will be implemented by the ministries.

As to whether or not, coming up with projects are more relevant to address poverty, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema that projects can somehow make an impact on the lives of the people, but the impact might not be long term.

As to whether or not, the current ministries cannot give advice to the Chief Minister to alleviate poverty, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema replied that he was not saying that the current ministries cannot give enough advice nor was he saying that there is duplication. He stressed that, what he was saying was that they would need a focus group that would deal and make study on the issue of poverty.

Hon. MP Eddie M. Alih manifested that while he appreciated Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema in filing BTA Parliament Bill No. 11, he still has reservation considering that the present set up, the fifteen (15) ministries are more than enough to simply advise the Chief Minister on how to address the poverty in the region. He also agreed with Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema that Lanao, Maguindanao and Sulu are among the five (5) poorest provinces of the country and that Tawi-Tawi is just fortunate enough being not included anymore. He emphasized that Tawi-Tawi itself was out of the poorest provinces not because of government intervention, but it was due to the peace and order situation in Tawi-Tawi which contributed to its economic development.

#### REMINDER OF THE CHAIR

Thereafter, the Chair reminded the next interpellators to limit their questions to purpose and the highlights of the bill, saying that the bill was still on the Second Stage.

#### COMMENT OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER C. SEMA

When still recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema stated that with respect to Hon. MP Eddie M. Alih who disagreed with him, he would respect his right to say it, and he will depend the latter for saying it.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP ABDUL R. SHARIN

When recognized, Hon. MP and Deputy Chief Minister Abdul R. Sahrin manifested that he appreciated and supported his initiative for having arrived at BTA

Parliament Bill No. 11. Then, he inquired if the purpose of the initiative in establishing a commission is to address poverty, where in Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema responded in affirmative.

When Hon. Deputy Chief Minister Abdul R. Sahrin opined that poverty is caused by several factors, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema likewise responded affirmatively.

Hon. Deputy Chief Minister Abdul R. Sahrin stated that if there is a peace and order problem in the community or in the province or region, the livelihood of the people will be affected. He reminded the body that up to the present, the peace and order situation in poverty stricken parts of the Bangsamoro Homeland like the island provinces and Central Mindanao are still reeling the said problem. He stressed that, in fact, up to the present, the Abu Sayyaf problem still has not been resolved by the National Security Forces or the Armed Forces of the Philippines and that the Philippine National Police have additional problem regarding the Islamic State.

Hon. Deputy Chief Minister Abdul R. Sahrin averred that since the purpose of the bill is to address poverty, there is one important factor that should be taken into consideration which is the prevalence of graft and corruption in government and all other anomalies in public services. He explained that, it is not the case of lack of funds to address poverty, saying that they have billions and billions of money available in the government. But he cited that according to the reports, billions and billions of money have been lost to corruption. In view thereof, he suggested another measure on how the body would address corruption in order to lessen the problem on poverty. He also cited as an example of other country like Malaysia which has organized an effective anti-corruption campaign or anti-corruption agency of the government.

In view of the foregoing, Hon. Deputy Chief Minister Abdul R. Sahrin also suggested that the body must organize an anti-corruption agency that will run after the corrupt in government.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP BANTAN A. AMPATUAN

When recognized, Hon. MP Bantán A. Ampatuan stated that Article XVI of RA 11054 defines the priorities of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority as far as legislation

is concerned. Then she asked Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema if the proposed BASAC is one of the priorities in the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL), on which Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema responded that he could not recall that anti-poverty program is one of the priorities during transition.

As to whether or not, BASAC is not part of the fifteen (15) ministries and the six (6) priority agencies, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema replied that BASAC was not included.

When asked if he was aware of the current set up of other administrative regions where there is a policy making body that looks over the macro situation of a particular region, including the poverty concerns, citing that in the case of the administrative regions, they have the Regional Development Council and in the of the defunct ARMM, it has Regional Economic and Development Planning Board that looks at the overall policy making and development direction of the region, which includes poverty problem, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema gave an affirmative answer, emphasizing that the BASAC will be under the Office of the Chief Minister.

As to whether he was aware that the Development Council was under the Office of the Regional Governor, and later on under the Office of the Chief Minister. Stressing that in her bill which creates the Bangsamoro Economic and Development Council, a body that will oversee all development efforts in the entire Bangsamoro Region, including poverty problem, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema responded that the word of Hon. MP Baintan A. Ampatuan is “including” and is not a focused action on poverty.

As to whether there is an appropriate program that directly caters to the poorest of the poor, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema responded that it is precisely the answer that the BASAC will bring, adding that it can create program under the Office of the Chief Minister.

As to why not develop a program directly for the poor communities rather than creating an office which needs maintenance and other operating expenses as well as personal services on a yearly basis which is supposed to be given to the poor communities directly as a program, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser Sema responded that he

understood the perspective of Hon. MP Baintan A. Ampatuan. He, however, stated that since the signing of the 1996 Final Peace Agreement, there were warehouses and dryers which have been built in their areas, still the condition of their people have not changed. He added that in fact, extremist group has sprouted and drugs have been proliferating in their areas due to extreme poverty.

When Hon. MP Baintan A. Ampatuan asked if creating the BASAC will eradicate poverty in the Bangsamoro Region, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema clarified that he was not saying, that they will be eradicating poverty. He explained that the purpose of the bill is to act against poverty, not eradicating it overnight.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP ZIAUR-RAHMAN A. ADIONG

As to whether or not, he would agree that in order to alleviate poverty incidence in the region, there is a need to spur economic activity, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema responded that it is one of the methods.

As to whether or not, it would be necessary to first create an office that will deal actively with regional economy as a tool for improving or alleviating the poverty incidence before creating a social advisory council, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema replied that it was not a chicken and egg approach, explaining that what the body needs was an immediate action. He stressed that if they would try to cite the Regional Planning and Development Council in the last few years of the ARMM, then the current economic condition of the people would have not been the same. He pointed out that the existing condition of the people in the Bangsamoro, three (3) are in the top 10. He emphasized that he was not trying to discredit the previous administration, but the general condition of the people at present necessitates the creation of an office focused mainly on addressing the harsh economic condition of the people.

As to whether or not, the creation of the BASAC would pre-empt the creation of a mechanism or economic tool for the region to actively participate in programs to alleviate the poverty related incidence, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema responded that it would not actually pre-empt, explaining that it was within the power of the Parliament to legislate anything it wants.

As to how to draw the line if there were two (2) separate offices being created, in order not to have an overlapping functions and mandates between the two, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema explained that if the proposed Bangsamoro Regional Development Council (BRDC) and the BASAC will be both created, and that the Chief Minister is a member of BRDC. He further explained that when the Chief Minister attends the BRDC, he would be equipped because there are people who advised him on what to bring into the BRDC meeting.

As to whether the BASAC has recommendatory power, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema gave an affirmative answer.

Hon. MP Ziaur-Rahman A. Adiong concluded his interpellation by stating that there would be an advisory council and Bangsamoro Regional Development Council under the Office of the Chief Minister which basically and essentially have the same functions. He then expressed his hope that the proponent would really set a direction to delineate the functions, so there would be no overlapping of functions between the two (2) offices.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP ATTY. MAISARA D. LATIPH

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Maisara D. Latiph manifested that she would like to be a co-author of the BTA Parliament Bill No. 11, explaining that there was really a need to have a focused agency that could tackle poverty at its roots. She also manifested that she would like to include under Section 4 of the bill the participation of the following marginalized sectors in the government decision-making process, to wit: 1) farmers and landless rural workers; 2) fisher folks; 3) rural poor; 4) Indigenous people; 5) workers in formal labor and migrant workers (OFW); 6) workers in the informal sectors; 7) women; 8) youth and students; 9) senior citizens; 10) persons with disabilities; 11) victims of disaster and calamities; 12) NGOs; and 13) Cooperatives.

Hon. MP Atty. Maisara D. Latiph proposed to include in the original composition twelve (12) commissioners representing the grassroots and the marginalized sectors so that genuine poverty alleviation or reduction plan can be had. She emphasized that they could not just rely on technocrats' top to bottom approach, saying that they have to do a

bottom-up approach. Thus, she inferred that BASAC is a bottom-up approach and she lauded the BTA Parliament Bill No. 11. She reiterated that she would like to be a co-author of the very lofty Bill No. 11.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP BAI MALEIHA B. CANDAO

When recognized, Hon. MP Bai Maleiha B. Candao expressed that she shared the same passion as Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema which was to look for solutions to poverty. She stated that she also respected the opinions of her colleagues in the BTA Parliament who interpellated the proponent. She pointed out that the body was talking about poverty in relation to infrastructure projects which, according to her, was not the main problem.

Hon. MP Bai Maleiha B. Candao suggested to the body to choose the words “grassroots mechanism”. She informed the body that there were many poor people who have raised the same issue, the same needs but they were not organized, adding that they did it individually. So, she inferred that the poor people do not have the mentality of being unified. In view thereof, she asked if what kind of law the body would pass to address the problem on how to organize the poor people and to strengthen those already organized. She added that before coming up with infrastructure, there is a need to instil among the poor Bangsamoro people that they have a counterpart and to inject social and Islamic responsibility, which is where religion should come in.

Hon. MP Bai Maleiha B. Candao stressed that the Members of the BTA Parliament have to coordinate their efforts, come up with laws that were sensible, strengthen their Islamic values, inject these into projects and then they should go back to the grassroots.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP MUSA DIAMLA

Upon recognition by the Chair, Hon. MP Musa K.S. Diamlam manifested that his, was not an interpellation to the proponent, but he would like to raise some issues considering that the BTA Parliament Bill No. 11 was intended to address poverty. He pointed out that there were some important matters which have not been included in the activities or programs indicated in the bill. He stated that if they go back to basic, they

can say that poverty was due to non-utilization of land; maximum or optimum utilization of the land; the labor sector was not productive; and the lack of necessary capital as well as entrepreneur. Thus, he suggested to the proponent to include among all the programs and activities in the bill the following, to wit: 1) to improve land productivity, which was the job of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Agrarian Reform (MAFAR); 2) labor training, which was the job of the Ministry of Labor and Employment as well as TESDA; 3) capital, which was a matter of inviting capitalists and investors to the community; and 4) entrepreneur, which was the responsibility of the Ministry of Trade, Investments and Tourism.

Hon. MP Musa K.S. Diamlala concluded his manifestation by informing the body that in the previous administration they had a program called One Town One Product (OTOP).

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP ROMEO SALIGA

When recognized, Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga congratulated Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema for sponsoring BTA Parliament Bill No. 11. He stated that he found it very relevant, especially that the issue of poverty was to be addressed. He informed the body that when he looked at the aim and purpose of the bill, he saw a lot of agencies involved, saying that he saw the role of civil society organizations (CSOs), the role of Ministry of Social Service (MSS), the role of TESDA, and the role of Ministry of Labor and Employment. He added that all different agencies were present in the said bill.

Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga opined that in addressing poverty, they should have joint efforts of all the concerned agencies and the people, themselves as well as the different sectors mentioned by Hon. MP Atty. Maisara D. Latiph, including the business sectors. He concluded his manifestation by saying that if there is really a need to push through with the bill, the body should look at all the sectors and the different agencies which have roles to play in addressing poverty.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP ZUL QARNEYN M. ABAS

When recognized, Hon. MP Zul Qarneyn M. Abas manifested his support for the BTA Parliament Bill No. 11. He informed the body that poverty was one of the major



social determinants of health. He opined that the bill sought to integrate all the programs and activities of all the ministries and other agencies of the government in order to focus only in alleviating poverty. He stressed that it is a very good bill.

#### REFERRAL OF BTA PARLIAMENT BILL NO. 11 TO APPROPRIATE COMMITTEES

Thereafter, on the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the BTA Parliament Bill No. 11 was referred to the Committee on Social Services and the Committee on Appropriations.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At this point, on the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the session was suspended until the following day, September 20, 2019, at nine o'clock in the morning.

It was 5:25 P.M.

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

On September 20, 2019 at 9:17 A.M. the Speaker, Hon. Atty. Ali Pangalian M. Balindong declared the resumption of session.

#### INVOCATION

Upon the request of the Chair, Hon. MP Abdulwahab M. Pak led the invocation.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CHAIR

At this juncture, the Chair announced that the Interim Chief Minister Ahod Balawag Ebrahim was on official mission abroad and that Hon. Minsiter Abdulraof A. Macacua was designated as OIC Interim Chief Minister.

#### AMENDMENT OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Thereupon, on motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the Order of Business was amended by including the Proposed Resolutions No. 103 and 104 in item No. VII.

#### CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 103

Thereafter, the body proceeded to consider the Proposed Resolution No. 103, entitled:

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING STRONG OBJECTION TO HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 333 WHICH CALLS FOR THE CREATION OF NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS IN THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO

Authors: MP Atty. Paisalin P. Tago, MP Abraham T. Burahan, MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena and MP Atty. Nabil A. Tan

READING OF THE TITLE OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 103

Upon the direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of Proposed Resolution No. 103.

MOTION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

When recognized, the Majority Floor Leader moved that Proposed Resolution No. 103 be treated as a simple resolution and be included in the Business for the Day.

OBJECTION OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA M. ALAMIA

Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia objected to the foregoing motion of the Majority Floor Leader. She suggested that Proposed Resolution No. 103 be referred to the proper committee, explaining that there are technical and legal implications on the passage of the said proposed resolution.

COMMENT OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

When recognized, the Majority Floor Leader commented that the Proposed Resolution No. 103 is a mere expression of sentiment to the House Resolution No. 333 and does not involve any matter which will be considered by the appropriate committee.

SUSPENSION OF SESSION

The Chair *motu proprio* declared a one-minute suspension of session at 9:26 A.M.

RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 9:32 A.M., the session resumed.

CLARIFICATION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Thereafter, the Majority Floor Leader, when recognized, clarified that the issue was whether or not the Proposed Resolution No. 103 be treated as a simple resolution so

that it could be part of the Business for the Day. He explained that the said resolution is very important considering that they are in the Autonomous Region and the National Department of Public Works and Highways under House Resolution No. 333 will put an office in the BARMM which, according to him, will affect the autonomous entity of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. He emphasized that the proposed resolution is an expression of sentiments of the Members of the BTA Parliament. He stated that if the Minority Floor Leader would not agree that it be treated as a simple resolution, he would move for the division of the house.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA A. ALAMIA

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Laisa A. Alamia manifested that as to the first motion of the Majority Floor Leader that the Proposed Resolution No.103 be treated as a simple resolution and be discussed in the Business for the Day, the minority did not have any objection.

#### REITERATION OF MOTION BY THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Consequently, the Majority Floor Leader, when recognized, reiterated his motion that the Proposed Resolution No. 103 be treated as a simple resolution and be moved to the Business for the Day for further discussion.

The foregoing motion, being duly seconded by Hon. MP Atty. Laisa A. Alamia, and there being no objection, was approved.

#### TREATMENT OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 104 AS SIMPLE RESOLUTION AND ITS INCLUSION IN THE BUSINESS FOR THE DAY

On motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the Proposed Resolution No. 104 was treated as a simple resolution and included in the Business for the Day after its title was read by the Secretary General, entitled:

RESOLUTION PROTESTING THE DELINEATION IN MAGUINDANAO PROVINCE, URGING THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES TO CEASE AND DESIST THE DELINEATION PROCESS AND THE PROCEEDING FOR THE ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF

ANCESTRAL DOMAIN TITLES IN THE PROVINCE OF MAGUINDANAO,  
AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO

Authors: All MILF Members of the BTA

BUSINESS FOR THE DAY

At this point, the body proceeded to consider the item under the Business for the Day.

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 98

Whereupon, the body proceeded to consider Proposed Resolution No. 98, entitled:

RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING, RESPECTING AND PROTECTING THE TIME  
IMMEMORIAL PACTS, TREATIES, AGREEMENTS, AND MUTUAL  
COVENANTS BETWEEN AND AMONG THE MEMBERS OF MUSLIM  
FILIPINOS AND NON-MORO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Authors: MP Romeo C. Saliga and MP Melanio U. Ulama

READING OF THE TITLE OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 98

Upon the direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of Proposed Resolution No. 98.

INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP BAIN TAN A. AMPATUAN

When recognized, Hon. MP Baintan A. Ampatuan clarified from the proponent as to what were those Time Immemorial Pacts, Treaties, Clarification, Agreements and Mutual Covenants to be recognized, respected and protected. She asked the proponent to give basic information of all those things that were to be respected. She stated that if they would approve the proposed resolution without knowing those facts, they would be adopting something which is blank.

COMMENT OF THE CHAIR

Thereupon, the Chair commented that Hon. MP Baintan A. Ampatuan was correct. The Chair asked the proponent to furnish the Members of the BTA Parliament copies of the treaties and the documents that would be discussed by the body.

RESPONSE OF HON. MP ROMEO C. SALIGA

In his response, Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga, one of the authors of Proposed Resolution No. 98, stated that the clarification of Hon. MP Baintan A. Ampatuan was quite true. He explained that the intent of the said resolution is really to recognize and

respect existing treaties being practiced up to the present. He informed the body that the case in point was the one he attended in Carmen, North Cotabato wherein their Iruanan Manubo brothers and sisters have a pact with their Moro brothers and sisters or Muslim Filipinos. He said that they have a practice of commemorating the said pact every year and the pact defines the relations and boundaries of their territory.

Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga gave another concrete example which was the history of Mamalu and Tabunaway, where there was actually an agreement to unify against a common enemy, adding that, part of that agreement was about the exchange of products, the reason there is a Teduray term “sawit”. He explained that in the exchange of products, the Mamalo descendants from the upland areas bring the first harvest of their upland rice as a present to their brothers in the lowland and the Tabunaway descendants from the lowland exchange the said present with bladed weapons, *malongs* and even salt which was lacking in the upland. He emphasized that such practice was very important in support of the intent to promote good relation and peace within the Bangsamoro region.

#### COMMENT OF THE CHAIR

Whereupon, the Chair stated that the body understood the importance of the resolution, but what the Chair and other Members of the BTA Parliament wanted to know were those pacts, treaties, agreements and mutual covenants. The Chair emphasized that before they could act on the resolution, they would like to have copies of those pacts, treaties, agreements and mutual covenants, saying that they could not just generalize.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP BAIN TAN AMPATUAN

When recognized, Hon. MP Baintan A. Ampatuan manifested that in line with the thought of the Chair, before the approval of the simple resolution, the body would need to have copies or inventory of those treaties, so that they might not be overusing the term. She stated that as far as the documentation of the agreements of the IPs is concerned, the body might as well have an inventory of all those agreements.

#### REQUEST OF THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair requested the Majority Floor Leader to move for the deferment of consideration of Proposed Resolution No. 98, unless the Members of the Parliament have the furnished copies of those documents.

#### MANIFESTATION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Thereafter, the Majority Floor Leader manifested that he was in support of Proposed Resolution No. 98, considering that previously he was the Chairman of the Bangsamoro Task Force on IP's Concern which was organized by Chairman Mohagher M. Iqbal during the Bangsamoro Transition Commission, he informed the body that he has more knowledge and had been researching about those pacts, treaties, agreements and mutual covenants. He, however, said that he had one comment on the proposed resolution and for the purpose of consistency, he advised the proponent to replace the words "Muslim Filipino" with the word "Moro" to be consistent with the other part which says "Non-Moro Indigenous People".

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 9:47 A.M., the Chair *motu proprio* declared a one-minute suspension of session.

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 9:53 A.M. the session resumed with Hon. MP Ziaur-Rahman A. Adiong presiding.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER SEMA

When asked by Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema, if he is aware of the unwritten agreement implemented by the Non-Moro and the Moro people, Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga answered affirmatively, saying that the practices of the Indigenous Peoples were done in oral and verbal traditions.

When asked to cite an example of the unwritten agreement, Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga requested his co-author, Hon. MP Melanio U. Ulama, to respond to the query of Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema.

Hon. MP Atty. Omar Sema informed the body that there were unwritten agreements between the Moro and the Non-Moro, particularly between the

Maguindanaon and the Teduray, like the concept of “*sawit*” as mentioned earlier by Hon. MP Romeo C. Saliga. He said that, whenever they have harvest, they go to the places of their brothers to share their harvest. He also informed the body that in their area in Cotabato City, some Teduray came to his family to share their harvest, and that in return his family also gave something in return, saying that it is actually the treaty between Mamalu and Tabunaway.

When Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema asked Hon. MP Melanio U. Ulama if he was aware of the unwritten agreement between the Maranao and the Indigenous People in Lanao, Hon. MP Melanio U. Ulama responded that in their belief as Teduray, they considered the Tarsila as Sacred Covenant, saying that the covenant was for all the Muslims.

#### FURTHER MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER C. SEMA

At this juncture, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema stated that he supported the manifestation of Hon. Speaker Atty. Ali Pangalian M. Balindong on the submission of documents to the BTA Parliament.

#### REQUEST OF THE CHAIR

At this juncture, the Chair requested Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema to wrap up his interpellation and asked Hon. MP Melanio U. Ulama to go directly to the point in responding to the question.

#### CONTINUATION OF THE RESPONSE HON. MP MELANIO U. ULAMA

When still recognized, Hon. MP Melanio U. Ulama proceeded to response. He informed the body that in their place, they call the Muslims “Renawen” without identifying whether they are Maguindanaons or not. He explained that the Sacred Covenant is not only for the Tedurays and Maguindanaons, but for all Muslims as well.

He also informed the body that when Shariff Kabunsuan arrived, Tabunaway was Islamized and Mamalu went up to Tantawan. But before the two parted ways, Tabunaway called his brother Mamalo and talked to him saying that religions should not come in between them. He stated that in their forefathers’ talk, Tabunaway said that, time will come and they will need each other; that his problem will become his problem too

(vice versa); and that Tabunaway's enemies will be Mamalu's enemies too (vice versa). In view thereof, he appealed to the Members of the BTA Parliament to support the passage of Proposed Resolution No. 98.

#### COMMENT OF HON. MP ZUL QARNEYN M. ABAS

When recognized, Hon. MP Zul Qarneyn M. Abas manifested that he sensed the good intention of Proposed Resolution No. 98. He, however, stated that it is not a simple matter. Thus, he suggested that there should be an enumeration and comprehensive review of those pacts, treaties, agreements and mutual covenants to determine whether or not they were still applicable at present.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP DATU TUCAO O. MASTURA

When recognized, Hon. MP Datu Tucao O. Mastura manifested that he was listening to the statements of their brothers from the Highlanders, and that he would give the body historical information. Then stated that legally the body cannot consider the unwritten agreement, but for purpose of unity, they should know those pacts, particularly the unwritten pacts about the history of Mamalu and Tabunaway. He informed the body that his statement was based on traditional history handed down from generations to generation and from the past datus that there was really an unwritten agreement. He also informed the body that he just relayed the sentiments of their brothers from the Highlanders about the relationship between the Moros and the Non-Moros.

Hon. MP Datu Tucao O. Mastura narrated, when Shariff Kabunsuan landed in Tantawan in Sultan Kudarat, the first people he met at the mouth of Rio Grande River were the two brothers, Mamalu and Tabunaway. He stated that while Tabunaway was converted to Islam, Mamalu did not embrace Islam. He said that they should know that there are lowland Moros and highland Moros.

Hon. MP Datu Tucao O. Mastura concluded his manifestation by appealing to the body that they should also recognize the Tedurays as Bangsamoro.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA M. ALAMIA

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia manifested that she would not ask question but she would speak from the view point of a lawyer, being a human rights



lawyer, who's also for the rights of Indigenous People. She emphasized that the rights of the Indigenous People have been clearly stated under Section 9, Article IV of the Bangsamoro Organic Law which states that "the Bangsamoro Government shall recognize and promote the rights of Non-Moro Indigenous peoples within the framework of the Constitution and national laws." She pointed out that in the Proposed Resolution No. 98, they talked about pacts, treaties, agreement, and mutual covenants which, according to her, have legal implications. In view thereof, she manifested that while they support and recognize the Non-Moro Indigenous peoples in the BARMM, they should also protect and promote their rights. She, however, stressed that when it comes to pacts, treaties, agreements and mutual covenants upon which legal rights may arise, they should review those first as to what are the legal implications the moment the same are recognized.

#### COMMENT OF THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair commented that the terms used in the Proposed Resolution No. 98 would have legal implications and shared the observation that the said resolution would need further and extensive discussion to really identify what are those pacts, treaties, agreements and mutual covenants to be recognized.

#### DEFERMENT OF CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 98

On the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the body deferred consideration of Proposed Resolution No. 98 until the next session of the BTA Parliament.

#### CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 101

Subsequently, the body proceeded to consider Proposed Resolution No. 101, entitled:

**URGENT RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (DILG) THROUGH MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (MILG) TO CLARIFY THE MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NUMBER 2019-121, RE: DIRECTING ALL PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS, MAYORS, PUNONG BARANGAYS AND BARMM REGIONAL GOVERNOR TO CLEAR ROADS BY ILLEGAL STRUCTURES AND CONSTRUCTIONS**

Author: MP Sittie Shahara I. Mastura

## READING OF THE TITLE OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 101

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of Proposed Resolution No. 101.

## SPONSORSHIP REMARKS OF HON. MP SITTIE SHAHARA I. MASTURA

In her sponsorship remarks, Hon. MP Sittie Shahara I. Mastura stated the act of some local chief executive was no longer removing road obstructions, but already road widening which requires compensation from the government. She informed the body that other local chief executives interpreted 15 meters from the center of the highway was still a right of way. Thus, she stressed that all obstructions therein whether with or without land titles must be removed. In view thereof, she inferred that there was a need to clarify further the matter or issue regarding the width of the public road, so that an official written statement from the Department of Interior and Local Government, especially from the Ministry of Interior and Local Government will be issued as soon as possible to all the LGUs and for appropriate information of the Bangsamoro constituents, considering that the deadline of the memorandum was fast approaching.

## INFORMATION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Whereupon, the Majority Floor Leader informed the body that DILG Secretary Año emphasized during his interview with PTV News, Thursday, September 19, 2019 that DILG Memorandum Circular 2019-121 was only for the removal of road obstructions and not applicable to the road widening purposes and that the said memorandum circular was in compliance with the directive of the President: “To return to the public the use public roads”. He also cited that according to Secretary Año, “MC 2019-121 cannot be used to justify road widening projects because it was covered by different set of rules, like the taking of private property for road widening purposes requires expropriation proceeding and the payment of just compensation after due notice and hearing”.

## PERIOD OF DEBATE AND INTERPELLATION

Thereafter, on motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the period of debate and interpellation was opened.

#### CLARIFICATION OF HON. MP BANTAN A. AMPATUAN

When recognized, Hon. MP Bantan A. Ampatuan clarified as to whether the memorandum read by the Majority Floor Leader was circulated throughout the country, or it was an official memorandum given to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region only.

#### RESPONSE OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

In response to the clarification of Hon. MP Bantan A. Ampatuan, the Majority Floor Leader stated that actually the Memorandum Circular 2019-121 was controversial, considering that the BARMM is an autonomous region which has its own Ministry of Interior and Local Government, adding that soon there will be an intergovernmental relations body. He informed the body that it was the reason the Hon. Chief Minister went to Malacañang that week to clarify the coverage of the powers of DILG over the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

#### FURTHER CLARIFICATION OF HON. MP BANTAN A. AMPATUAN

Consequently, Hon. MP Bantan A. Ampatuan clarified if the Memorandum Circular 2019-121 was officially received by the Office of the Chief Minister, or was it just circulated in Facebook.

#### RESPONSE OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

The Majority Floor Leader, when recognized, responded that the proper person to answer the clarification of Hon. MP Bantan A. Ampatuan was the Minister of Interior and Local Government.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP BANTAN A. AMPATUAN

When still recognized, Hon. MP Bantan A. Ampatuan manifested that she asked the foregoing question in order to emphasize that they were citing an official document, explaining that they might be speculating that memorandum circular circulating in Facebook as official already. She stressed that if it was not officially received by the

Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, then the BARMM was not bound to implement the said memorandum circular.

#### MOTION OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA M. ALAMIA

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia moved that Proposed Resolution No. 101 be immediately approved by the body, so that it can officially be transmitted to the Office of the Secretary of the DILG at the national level and an official communication would be sent to the Minister of the Ministry of Interior and Local Government.

#### MOTION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Before the ruling on the motion of the Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia, the Majority Floor Leader moved that the period of debate and interpellation be closed.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP ATTY. SUHARTO AMBOLODITO

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Suharto M. Ambolodto expressed hope that the body could already constitute the Committee on Local Government, so that committee could look into the consequences of the acts that have been previously done. He emphasized that, in relation to the proposed resolution, there were already positive acts done on the basis of some understanding. Thus, he stated that the body should look into it in order to provide some measures to address the acts that have been done in good faith by the local government officials.

#### COMMENT OF THE CHAIR

Thereupon, the Chair commented that the manifestation of Hon. MP Atty. Suharto M. Ambolodto was well noted, saying that the approval of the resolution would still be subject to style.

#### CLOSURE OF THE PERIOD OF DEBATE AND INTERPELLATION

There being no objection to the motion of the Majority Floor Leader which was duly seconded, the period of interpellation and debate was closed.

APPROVAL OF MOTION OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA M. ALAMIA TO APPROVE PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 101

There being no objection to the standing motion of Hon. MP. Atty. Laisa M. Alamia which was duly seconded, the said motion was approved and the Proposed Resolution No. 101 was adopted subject to style.

#### CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 103

Consequently, the body proceeded to consider the Proposed Resolution No. 103, entitled:

#### RESOLUTION EXPRESSING STRONG OBJECTION TO HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 333 WHICH CALLS FOR THE CREATION OF NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND HIGHWAYS IN THE BANGSAMORO AUTONOMOUS REGION IN MUSLIM MINDANAO

Authors: MP Atty. Paisalin P. Tago, MP Abraham T. Burahan, MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena and MP Atty. Nabil A.Tan

#### READING OF THE TITLE OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 103

Upon direction of the Chair, the Secretary General read the title of Proposed Resolution No. 103.

#### SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF HON. MP ATTY. PAISALIN P. TAGO

Before delivering his sponsorship speech, Hon. MP. Atty. Paisalin P. Tago stated for the record that Hon. MP Omar Yasser C. Sema and Hon. MP Eddie M. Alih are co-authors of the Proposed Resolution No. 103.

In his sponsorship speech, Hon. MP Atty. Paisalin P. Tago informed the body that the Proposed Resolution No. 103 was the response to the House Resolution No. 333 filed by the Congressmen from the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao which calls for the creation of National Department of the Department of Public Works and Highways in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). He stressed that, first, the filing of resolution by the Congressmen from BARMM was not necessary, because, the Bangsamoro Organic Law provides for a mechanism on how to implement national road, highways and other projects; second, the Bangsamoro Organic Law also provides for a mechanism to address the concerns and issues regarding certain agencies and it was what was called Intergovernmental Relations Body; third, the BARMM is an autonomous region and the BTA should protect its autonomous nature.

He emphasized that although the BARMM was under the general supervision of the national government, the national government should protect the autonomy that the Bangsamoro have been fighting for so many years, saying that it was what they were fighting for.

He informed the body that he filed the resolution as an assertion of Bangsamoro to protect the autonomy which the Bangsamoro have been fighting for and that it was not given to them freely by the national government. He also informed his colleagues in the Bangsamoro Transition Authority that he was not defending the autonomy because he is a member of the BTA, saying that even if he would be appointed in the national level, he would still defend the autonomy of the BARMM.

He cited that in the 1924 Zamboanga Declaration and the 1935 Dansalan Declaration, the Bangsamoro must be granted with the right to self-determination. He concluded his speech by stating that he filed the Proposed Resolution No. 103 to protect the autonomous nature of the current Bangsamoro Transition Authority Parliament.

#### SUPPLEMENTAL SPONSORSHIP SPEECH OF HON. MP ATTY. JOSE I. LORENA

In his supplemental speech, Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena explained that the House Resolution No. 333 was an anathema to meaningful autonomy, contrary to the specific provision of law and an affront to Section 6, Article VI of RA 11054 on the intergovernmental relations body which includes an infrastructure intergovernmental body. He stated that the representative of the national government to the infrastructure body was not a director or an ordinary undersecretary who represents the national government not only the DPWH, but as secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways. He claimed that the House Resolution has also diminished Section 7, Article VI of RA 11054, because the maintenance of roads as stated in Section 37, Article XIII does not only pertains to the all works which are confined in the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Works but to all maintenance of existing roads in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao which might not be implemented necessarily by the Department of Public Works. He stressed that the House Resolution has also diminished the prerogative of the Secretary of the DPWH to either collaborate or

coordinate with the Ministry of Public Works of the BARMM. He pointed out that it was stated in the law that the national government will fund and implement maintenance of existing bridges and roads in the BARMM, but there was a prerogative either to do it by contracting or by administration, or to surrender the implementation, after the allocation of funds to the Ministry of Public Works of the BARMM.

He pointed out that the House Resolution is also a violation of Section 37, Article XIII of RA 11054 which provides that the Bangsamoro Government shall determine the amount of the existing roads to be maintained. He explained that it was not the central government which shall determine what road and how long the road was, but it should be the Bangsamoro Government which shall determine the cost and submit the proposal to the appropriate national agency inclusion of the costs of such maintenance in the latter's budget.

He informed the body that he was reminded of the Executive Order 25 and 25-A which undermine the effectivity of the Department of Public Works and Highways in the previous ARMM stating that the said executive orders provide that the national government can allocate funds for areas within the autonomous region and can implement projects therein. He pointed out that the worse part of it was that after the funds were distributed through other regional offices and not course through the ARMM and that the unfortunate thing was that there were even memorandum of agreement with the district engineers of the ARMM to implement the projects of the national government without the knowledge and foreclosing the prerogative of the Secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways of the ARMM. Thus, he stressed that he does not want a repeat of it. On that note, he informed the body that he was willing to go to court to question any legislation of Congress that undermines the power granted to the BARMM under RA 11054

He appealed to the body to be reminded of the statement of the Mujahideen who wrote in his own blood the following message to his girlfriend "My only regret is I have not seen the sun with you, when you shall be marching with millions of our people down

the road to victory. For me and my comrades in arms which shall go in fighting. Victory or the graveyard.”

#### REQUEST OF THE CHAIR

Thereafter, the Chair requested the audience, including the Members of the BTA Parliament, if possible, to refrain from clapping to avoid disturbances during the exchanges of arguments.

#### PERIOD OF DEBATE AND INTERPELLATION

On the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the period of debate and interpellation was opened.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER HATIMIL E. HASSAN

When recognized, Hon. Deputy Speaker Hatimil E. Hassan commented that RA 11054 establishes the Ministry of Public Works without Highways which means that highways have not been devolved to the BARMM.

He informed the body that the Members of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission who drafted the Bangsamoro Organic Law found out during the public hearing in Congress that some of the public works projects for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao were being implemented by the DPWH Region 9, Region 10 and Region 12.

He opined that the National Department of Public Works and Highways would be of great help to the BARMM in the implementation of programs and projects of the National Government in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, but they should see to it that the new department to be created as proposed by the Congressmen from the BARMM should be under the control and supervision of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

He also informed the body that in the 2020 Budget of the National Government, there was an appropriation of more than P5 billion intended for Public Highways in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and that it was perhaps one of the reasons their Congressmen have come up with House Resolution No. 333. He concluded



his manifestation by saying that the Members of the BTA Parliament should study the House Resolution filed by their Honorable Congressmen.

#### MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP DON MUSTAPHA A. LOONG

When recognized, Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong manifested that the matter was a lot more technical than legal to which the Members of the BTA Parliament must understand. He explained the technical reasons why the body must allow the DPWH National to create office in the Bangsamoro Region which was not necessarily to be called DPWH-BARMM, but it could be DPWH Field Office in the Bangsamoro Region or in any other way. He informed the body that although he was not a lawyer, he finished his Bachelor of Laws and that his advantage was that he is an engineer who has practiced his profession and knows the system and that he also has a legal background.

He gave five (5) reasons why they should allow the creation of National Department of Public Works and Highways in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. These were as follows:

1. It was what the law requires. It was provided in RA 11054 or the Bangsamoro Organic Law, specifically in Section 37, Article XIII which states that the National Government shall fund and implement the construction and maintenance of national roads and bridges. In statutory construction, when the law was clear, there was no need to interpret in any other way. Perhaps, oppositors of the proposal were basing it on the previous ARMM Law. Under RA 9054, Section 20 of Article VI which requires Regional Public Works Act or the approval of the Regional Legislative Assembly of projects funded by the National Government in ARMM. He said, however, in the present Bangsamoro Organic Law, which was prepared by the Bangsamoro Transition Commission and approved and that the jurisdiction over the construction, maintenance of national roads were now clearly vested in the National Government and the agency under the National Government for the Department of Public is the Department of Public Works and Highways. Therefore, under the Bangsamoro Organic Law, it was the DPWH national that was in charge of planning, funding, and maintaining the 992

- kilometers of National Roads. In this first argument, everybody agreed. So he emphasized that it was not a question of autonomy because under the Bangsamoro Law, the National Government will plan, construct and maintain National roads.
2. Another reason was to ensure effective implementation of the law. He stated that it was practically impossible to implement the law without the creation of office that will execute the law. While the provision under the Bangsamoro Organic Law provides that the DPWH National must fund, implement and maintain national roads within the Bangsamoro Region, it does not have any physical offices in the area. Prior to the devolution of DPWH to ARMM, the DPWH National had offices but after the devolution, all these offices went to ARMM and the ARMM was the one maintaining all these national roads as of last year but after the devolution, he stressed that this was critical in understanding as of the case *Disomangcop versus Datumanong* where it was ruled that because of autonomy, a Marawi DPWH cannot be established in Marawi, because as of last year, concurrent jurisdiction over the construction and maintenance of national roads within the ARMM. He explained that despite this, the projects for national roads were implemented not by DPWH-ARMM but by the adjacent Regions 9, 10 and 12. Since 1990 for the past 25 years, DPWH National had already been implementing projects for the national roads. He mentioned, however, that under the Bangsamoro Organic Law, the DPWH National now has exclusive jurisdiction over the funding and implementation of the construction and maintenance of national roads. He concluded that the operational presence of DPWH National in the Bangsamoro was imperative. He stated that it is the reason an office of DPWH National located in the Bangsamoro is very important because starting next year, the funding for national roads maintenance will no longer be in the Bangsamoro but it will be in the DPWH National. He explained that the maintenance of the 992 kilometers of roads requires full office complement with the necessary maintenance, equipment, manpower, administrative support as well as physical office to ensure the delivery of its mandate and its mandate includes

- routine, preventive, emergent maintenance and as well as safety devices. Imagine, next year, if the DPWH national would not maintain the national roads and bridges in the Bangsamoro, the lives of the Bangsamoro will be put in danger, saying that the maintenance of national roads and bridges was the responsibility of the DPWH ARMM.
3. He stated that there was a need for equipment and hundreds of workers to supervise the projects. He stressed that the DPWH National does maintain the national roads in the Bangsamoro, it would be remiss in its mandate as provided for in the Bangsamoro Organic Law. Thus, he inferred that the executives of the DPWH national maybe liable for nonfeasance, explaining that it is the reason for the creation of DPWH National in the Bangsamoro area. He stressed that DPWH National does not want to go into the Bangsamoro region, but it has no choice because it is its responsibility under the law and that it is impossible for DPWH National to do its mandate without an office, manpower and equipment.
  4. He said that there was a proposal from the proponents to delegate the maintenance of national roads to the Bangsamoro Ministry of Public Works which, according to them, was the most appropriate mechanism so that the Bangsamoro will be the one to maintain the national roads and bridges in the BARMM. He emphasized that for a layman, it is okay, but for a career official, an engineer, or those who know COA rules, it is very difficult, as it will require the transfer of budget from one agency that has the financial accountability to another government entity that will do the work. He explained that the double transfer of funds will require double accounting and auditing because the accountability lies with the National DPWH. So, he stressed that if they really want to return maintenance back to the Bangsamoro, there is a need to amend the law and the BARMM has to fund it and pay for it. Then he asked if the BARMM is willing to pay P3 Billion or P5 Billion for the maintenance of the national roads.

#### INTERRUPTION OF THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair interrupted and advised Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong to wrap up his manifestation and go directly to the point in asking question. He reminded the body that Friday Prayer was fast approaching.

#### CONTINUATION OF THE MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP DON MUSTAPHA A. LOONG

When still recognized, Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong explained that one of the causes that hampered the progress of ARMM before was that the national government agency, the main recipient of an appropriation, was transferred to a regional agency for implementation.

#### POINT OF ORDER OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER C. SEMA

At this juncture, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema raised a point of order, explaining that Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong was not interpellating and his speech should be stopped.

#### COMMENT OF HON. MP DON MUSTAPHA A. LOONG

Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong commented that he was giving the reasons.

#### REMARK OF THE CHAIR

Consequently, the Chair remarked that they were in the period of debate and interpellation and that the statement of Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong was an opposition to the Proposed Resolution No. 103.

#### OBSERVATION OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER C. SEMA

In his observation, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema stated that Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong discussed matters that was not in the Proposed Resolution No. 103.

#### REQUEST OF THE CHAIR

Whereupon, informed the body that they should accommodate those who have oppositions or reservation on the proposed resolution, saying that it was a democratic process. He, however, requested the interpellators, if possible, to refrain from making statement. The Chair also requested Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong to wrap up.

#### CONINUATION OF THE MANIFESTATION OF HON. DON MUSTAPHA LOONG

When still recognized, Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong stated that the third reason for allowing the creation of the National DPWH in the BARMM was that the BARMM does not have enough funding for the construction and maintenance of National Roads. He pointed out that if they look at the data, there were still thousands of kilometers of local roads that need to be paved and they would need P100 Billion to pave those local roads. So, he said that if they have money, they could focus on the local roads and let the national DPWH build the national roads.

The fifth reason was the most important why DPWH National must set up offices in the BARMM to implement national roads projects. He said that, if we want six lanes here in the Bangsamoro, it should be DPWH National would implement it.

At this point, Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong asked the proponents of Proposed Resolution No. 103 if they would not allow the National DPWH to set up an office in the BARMM, who will be responsible for the following: Rebuilding of Marawi and implementation of the P30 Billion of infrastructure projects; Implementation of the P4 Billion bridge project in Tawi-Tawi; Construction of the 6 lanes road in the BARMM; and maintenance of the national roads in the BARMM.

#### COMMENT OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

When recognized, the Majority Floor Leader commented on the manifestation of Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong, saying that it was from the point of view of a person who was not involved in the drafting of the Bangsamoro Organic Law.

#### POINT OF ORDER OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA M. ALAMIA

At this point, Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia raised a point of order.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

Whereupon, the Chair *motu proprio* declared a one-minute suspension of session at 11:22 A.M.

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:24 A.M., the session resumed.

#### COMMENT OF THE CHAIR

Thereafter, the Chair commented that the manifestation of the Majority Floor Leader was as valuable as the reply of the proponent. The Chair, however, said that the body wished to hear from the proponent himself.

#### RESPONSE OF HON. MP PAISALIN TAGO

In response to questions of Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong, Hon. MP Atty. Paisalin P. Tago stated that his response is also technical and not legal, saying that the technicalities mentioned by the former were all correct. But, he asked if it was necessary to pass a House Resolution in Congress. He pointed out that Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong said that it was done before and there was a Marawi Extension Office of DPWH but it was done without the resolution coming from the House of Representatives.

Hon. MP Atty. Paisalin P. Tago stated that the DPWH National can put up Administrative Office in the BARMM and there was no question about it. He asked why there was a need to put it on a House Resolution to create a National DPWH in the BARMM. He claimed that the reason for the filing of House Resolution No. 333 was the phase out and not the funding. He added that if they read the House Resolution, it states that because of the phase out the BARMM would not capable of implementing projects. He emphasized that it was a shallow reason which was tantamount to questioning the capacity of the BARMM to implement projects.

#### REQUEST OF THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair requested Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong to limit his questions to only 2, considering that it was Friday.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY RESPONSE OF MP ATTY. JOSE LORENA

In response to the questions of Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong, Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena stated that there was a misleading of the law, particularly Section 37, Article XIII, of the RA 11054 which states that “the National Government shall fund the maintenance and implement it” was correct but the agency was not mentioned. Secondly, he said that he would go technical because the proponents were enjoined by the question of Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong to see to it the road would be paved.

He then asked if it was true that in the maintenance of roads, there's a need of an office, and if the DPWH was not doing some contracting of projects in the maintenance of roads. He explained that it was his response, because if it was necessary to have an office, then the purpose of the office was to program. He pointed out that it was provided in section 37, Article XIII of the RA 11054 that it was the Bangsamoro Government which shall identify and submit the budget to appropriate agency. He read Section 37, Article XIII which provides that "The Bangsamoro Government shall submit proposals to the appropriate National Government agency for the inclusion of the cost of such maintenance to the latter's budget that shall be submitted to the Congress of the Philippines for the inclusions in the General Appropriations Act." He stressed that there was no mention about DPWH.

Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena concluded his response by saying that he supported the efforts of Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong to bring development and to maintain the roads in the BARMM, and that the position of the proponents of Proposed Resolution No. 103 was that the creation of the National DPWH in the BARMM was not necessary, as it limits the provisions of Article VI and Section 37 of Article XII of the RA 11054 because it confines to one department and no longer the national government as whole.

#### PARTIAL ANSWER OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER C. SEMA

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema, co-author of Proposed Resolution No. 103 also gave a partial answer to the questions of Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong. He said that he found it aghast that Proposed Resolution No. 103 has become a matter of technicality as far as the oppositors were concerned. He explained that the Bangsamoro Organic Law was a legal document and before it was passed to the Congress, it had undergone so many consultations, adding that it was ratified by the 5 provinces, 63 Barangays, and 3 cities, including Marawi City.

He stressed that the fact of implementation of National Roads, other national facilities, airports, water ways, irrigation systems has been settled as it was included in Section 37, Article XIII of the RA 11054 and all of those matters should be discussed in an intergovernmental body mechanism. He emphasized that with the passage of the

House Resolution No. 333, assuming that it would be passed by Congress, would give imprimatur to the DPWH to create an Office in the BARMM without asking the inter-governmental body mechanisms. He emphasized also that such imprimatur attacks the very ideals of Republic Act 11054 that there will be self-determination, there will be self-governance, and the principles of subsidiarity that the Bangsamoro people know more of their problems than the people in the national government.

He concluded his answers by reiterating that the House Resolution No. 333, once it is approved by the Congress, will give the DPWH imprimatur to create the Office without passing through the intergovernmental mechanisms and that was totally prejudicial to their right to self-determination.

#### REPLY OF HON. MP DON MUSTPHA A. LOONG TO THE PROPONENTS

When recognized, Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong stated that the point about the House Resolution No. 333, they have the right to give their opinion, explaining that in the first place, the DPWH-ARMM was supposed to write DPWH National that, upon approval of the BARMM, they should set up Offices in the BARMM to implement the mandate that was given to them. He informed the body that next year, the DPWH National will have five (5) Million Projects, and that what the body was telling them was to set up a field office in the area, saying that was his point No. 1; No. 2. the DPWH National should be working together with DPWH-ARMM in the Rehabilitation of Marawi with budget of around ten (10) Billion and in the maintenance of the national roads, but the DPWH National panicked, because we are now in the transition period; No. 3. the inter-governmental body was a board of directors. You ask them to implement projects on the ground but you do not allow them to set up office and to bring equipment in the area. He asked if how they can implement projects, saying that it was practically impossible.

He emphasized where the fund and accountabilities were lodged should be the one responsible to do it. He stressed that it was in addition to the Bangsamoro Block Grants, asking his colleagues to imagine that they have already P70 Billion Block Grants



and have another more than P30 Billion National Government Infrastructure augmentation and support funds.

#### REMARK OF THE CHAIR

Thereafter, the Chair thanked Hon. MP Don Mustapha A. Loong for his manifestation and queries.

#### MOTION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR

Thereafter, the Majority Floor Leader, when recognized, said that it was already 11:30 A.M. and moved for the closure of the period of debate and interpellation. The foregoing motion was seconded.

#### OBJECTION OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA M. ALAMIA

Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia objected to the motion of the Majority Floor Leader.

#### FURTHER MOTION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

In view of the objection to his motion to close the period of debate and interpellation, the Majority Floor Leader moved for the division of the house.

#### POINT OF ORDER OF HON. MP ATTY. PAISALIN P. TAGO

At this juncture, Hon. MP Paisalin P. Tago, when recognized, raised a point of order. He explained that when the Majority Floor Leader calls for the division of the house, the division of the house has priority and that it cannot be objected to.

#### RULING OF THE CHAIR

The Chair ruled that Hon. MP Laisa M. Alamia would be allowed to state her objection, saying that at the end of the day, the body would have to proceed with the voting.

#### POINT OF ORDER OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER C. SEMA

At this point, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema raised a point of order, explaining that the discussion on Proposed Resolution No. 103 has already been closed.

#### INFORMATION OF THE CHAIR

Thereupon, the Chair informed Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema that there was a pending motion to close the period of debate and interpellation and that prior to the

motion, there were Members of the BTA Parliament who were queuing to interpellate the proponents of the proposed resolution. The Chair stressed that the Presiding Officer has to be impartial and fair, the reason why the Chair would give way to the Minority Floor Leader to state her case. The Chair reiterated to go with the decision to divide the house.

#### INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA M. ALAMIA

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia stated for the record that the Proposed Resolution No. 103 did not follow the three-day notice rule under the Parliamentary Rules of Procedures, saying, however, that in spite of that, she did not object in due deference to the proponents. Then she called for sobriety and calmness, so that they could discuss proposed resolution properly without shouting at each other, adding that they are Members of the BTA Parliament.

#### POINT OF ORDER OF HON. MP ATTY. OMAR YASSER C. SEMA

At this juncture, Hon. MP Atty. Omar Yasser C. Sema raised a point of order.

#### COMMENT OF THE CHAIR.

Whereupon, the Chair commented that it was precisely why the Chair was giving way to Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia to explain her objection to the motion to close the period of debate and interpellation, then they would proceed to the division of the house.

#### CONTINUATION OF THE INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA M. ALAMIA

When still recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia stated that earlier the proponent of the proposed resolution raised the issue of the right to self-determination. She informed the body that she would not focus on the technicalities of the creation or the setting up of any field office in the BARMM by the DPWH National, saying that she would focus on the right to self-determination and the legal bases for the creation by the DPWH National of its field office in the BARMM was based on the *Disomangcop vs. Datumanong* case. She requested the proponent to list down her questions and answer the same later on.

#### REQUEST OF THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair interrupted and requested Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia to directly ask one brief question.

CONTINUATION OF THE INTERPELLATION OF HON. MP ATTY. LAISA ALAMIA

When recognized, Hon. MP Atty. Laisa M. Alamia stated that she would go direct to the point and lay the predicate first before asking question. She pointed out that the issue was on the right to self-determination pertaining to the DPWH which was based on a previous case in the ARMM, the Disomangcop versus Datumanong's case. She stressed that it was very clear that what was established by that decision was that the President issued an Executive Order 426 that devolved the powers of the DPWH to the ARMM and transferred everything, and that's why the Supreme Court has cancelled the law and declared the Department Order of the DPWH, creating the Marawi Sub-District Engineering Office not implementable. She explained that RA 9054 established the granting of Political Autonomy by amending RA 6734 and outlined the modality of the budgeting and implementation of infra programs in the ARMM as provided under Section 20, Article VI thereof. Thus, she inferred that the said provision of law talks about the modality and the right to self-determination.

She then asked the following questions: 1) Does the National Government has mandate and jurisdiction on the implementation and maintenance of infrastructure programs in the BARMM as to national roads, bridges, maintenance of airports, sea ports and wharves, saying that RA 11054 was explicit. 2) Considering Section 37, Article XIII of the RA 11054 established the autonomy and jurisdiction of the National Government to implement those roads, can DPWH National, in order to implement its mandate under RA 11054 establish a modality of implementation, does a mechanism can be established in modality? 3) Does DPWH have the discretion to determine the modality of implementation of projects?

REMINDER OF THE CHAIR

At this point, the Chair reminded Hon. MP Laisa A. Alamia that they have agreed for two questions only. Thus, the Chair asked the proponent to respond to her questions.

#### RESPONSE OF HON. MP ATTY. JOSE I. LORENA

In response to the questions of Hon. MP Atty. Laisa m. Alamia, Hon. MP Atty. Jose I. Lorena stated that he agreed that there was a provision, that the National Government shall fund and implement the maintenance of existing national roads and bridges subject to the intergovernmental relation under Article VI and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph of Section 37, Article XIII of the RA 11054 which was the submission of the Budget from the Bangsamoro Government, of the amount, the places and even inclusive of the modality of the implementation.

#### REMARKS OF THE CHAIR

Thereupon, the Chair informed the body that it could no longer accommodate additional questions and that they have to proceed with the division of the house in order not to prolong the discussion in view of the Jum'ah prayer.

#### INFORMATION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

When recognized, the Majority Floor Leader informed the body that before the voting, the OIC Chief Minister, Hon. Minister Abdulraof A. Macacua, would like to give manifestations.

#### MANIFESTATION OF OIC CHIEF MINISTER, HON. ABDULRAOF A. MACACUA

When recognized, the OIC Chief Minister, Hon. Abdulraof A. Macacua, stated that when the expert of the law speaks, they felt drowning. He manifested that since they were about to vote the Proposed Resolution No. 103, there is a need to explain well the proposed resolution, so that the Members of the BTA Parliament would know what they would be voting for. He shared to the body that when they were in Manila, Congressman Mujiv Hataman called up the Chief Minister, Brother Hadji Murad, because he wanted to talk to him regarding the issue which the Members of the BTA Parliament were discussing. He then said that they scheduled a meeting, but sad to say Congressman Mujiv Hataman was not able to appear because some of his colleagues who are co-

authors of the House Resolution No. 333 were not available and the meeting was postponed.

He informed the body that after the meeting was postponed, Congressman Mujiv Hataman texted him and he shared the text message to the body as follows: “ Salam Bapa, I think the BARMM misunderstood us about the resolution but it is not the intention of Congresspersons to complete or duplicate or diminish the essence of autonomy. Hindi po kami kalaban. Kakampi kami. We are just doing our mandate. Anyway I texted CM na one of these days here better mapag-usapan natin ito para maalis ang fitna at misconception.”

In view thereof, he suggested to the body to give way to the request of Congressman Mujiv Hataman to talk to the Chief Minister, saying that after all the Chief Minister is the leader of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and the Bangsamoro Leaders Council in which Congressman Mujiv Hataman is a member. He stressed that it was his proposal, but since there was already a pending motion, left for the body to decide on the matter, saying that after all, the Congressman who filed the House Resolution No. 333 were the son of the BTA Speaker, Congressman Mujiv Hataman, Congressman Toto Mangudadatu and Congressman Roonie Sinsuat were also their allies.

#### SUSPENSION OF SESSION

At 11:43 A.M. the Chair *motu proprio* declared a one-minute suspension of session.

#### RESUMPTION OF SESSION

At 11:46 A.M. the session resumed.

#### MANIFESTATION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

Thereafter, the Majority Floor Leader, when recognized, manifested that he supported the statement of the OIC Chief Minister Abdulraof A. Macacua that the Chief Minister and Congressman Hataman would talk about the issue, saying that whether the body would approve the Proposed Resolution No. 103 or not, such meeting would proceed. Thus, he stated that the body should proceed with the division of the house.

## MOTION OF THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER

At this juncture, the Majority Floor Leader, when recognized, moved that the division be done through nominal voting by standing.

The foregoing motion, having been duly seconded, and there being no objection, was approved.

## NOMINAL VOTING ON PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO. 103

Whereupon, the Chair conducted the nominal voting by asking first the Members of the BTA Parliament who were in favor of the Proposed Resolution No. 103 to stand and directed the Secretary General to count the votes and requested those who voted in favor of the proposed resolution to sit down..

Subsequently, the Chair likewise asked the Members of the BTA Parliament who were not in favor of the Proposed Resolution No. 103 to stand.

## RESULT OF THE VOTING

The result of the voting was as follows:

Forty-one (41) Members of the BTA Parliament voted in favor of the approval of Proposed Resolution No. 103 and ten (10) Members voted against.

## QUERY OF HON. SPEAKER ALI PANGALIAN M. BALIDONG

When recognized, Hon. Speaker Ali Pangalian Balindong inquired if how his vote was registered, saying that he did not vote because being the Speaker, he should not vote unless there is a tie.

## QUERY OF THE CHAIR

In view of the query of Hon. Speaker Ali Pangalian M. Balindong, the Chair asked the Secretary General if the vote of the Speaker was registered, to which the Secretary General responded that vote of the Speaker of the Parliament was not counted.

## MANIFESTATION OF HON. MP ROMEO K. SEMA

Thereafter, Hon. MP Romeo K. Sema informed the body that he abstained from voting.

## MANIFESTATION OF HON. OIC CHIEF MINISTER ABDULRAOF A. MACACUA

Thereupon, Hon. OIC Chief Minister Abdulraof A. Macacua likewise manifested that he abstained from voting, in view of his previous position to give way for a meeting between the Chief Minister and Congressman Mujiv Hataman.

#### SECOND ROUND OF NOMINAL VOTING

In view of the foregoing manifestations of Hon. MP Romeo K. Sema and Hon. OIC Chief Minister Abdulraof A. Macacua, the Chair conducted a second round of nominal voting on Proposed Resolution No. 103.

When the Chair asked again the Members of the BTA Parliament who were in favor of the approval of Proposed Resolution No. 103 to please rise, forty (40) Members of the BTA Parliament rose; when the Chair asked those who were opposed to the proposed resolution to please rise, nine (9) Members of the BTA Parliament rose; and when the Chair asked who abstained to please rise, seven (7) Members of the BTA Parliament rose.

With forty votes in favor, nine (9) against and seven (7) abstention, the body approved Proposed Resolution No. 103.

#### DEFERMENT OF CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION NO.104

On the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection, the body deferred consideration of Proposed Resolution No. 104 until the next session.

#### ADJOURNMENT OF SESSION

Thereafter, on the motion of the Majority Floor Leader duly seconded, and there being no objection the session was adjourned until Wednesday, September 25, 2019 at one o'clock in the afternoon.

It was 11: 56 A.M.

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I hereby certify to the correctness of the foregoing.

**PROF. RABY B. ANGKAL**  
Secretary General

**Approved:**