



Republic of the Philippines
Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AUTHORITY PARLIAMENT
Bangsamoro Government Center, Cotabato City



SECOND REGULAR SESSION

RESOLUTION NO. 413

**RESOLUTION HUMBLY AND EARNESTLY APPEALING TO HIS
EXCELLENCY FERDINAND R. MARCOS, JR. TO GRANT
PRESIDENTIAL ABSOLUTE PARDON TO FORMER ARMM
GOVERNOR DATU ZACARIA CANDAO, FORMER ARMM
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY DR. ABAS CANDAO, AND MR. ISRAEL
HARON**

WHEREAS, Datu Zacaria Candao, his brother Dr. Abas Candao, and Mr. Israel Haron were convicted of malversation in 2009 for acts committed during the former governor's tenure in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM);

WHEREAS, Datu Zacaria Candao, now 80 years old, and Dr. Abas Candao, now 77 years old, are presently in frail physical health;

WHEREAS, prior to their conviction, Datu Zacaria, together with Dr. Abas, as prominent figures in the Bangsamoro movement, spent decades fighting for peace in Mindanao, risking life and limb, exhausting all legal means and private resources, and representing multi-factions of the Muslim community in endless negotiations - all without personal gain;

WHEREAS, it cannot be denied that the efforts of Datu Zacaria were hugely instrumental in ending the Mindanao conflict, saving thousands of lives, bringing peace to hundreds of communities, alleviating the lives of Muslims throughout Mindanao, and bringing their aspirations for a better life to fruition;

WHEREAS, it also cannot be denied that the malversation charges against Datu Zacaria resulted from the lapses of the administrative staff of the then newly-formed ARMM, and that aside from having endorsed the checks, there was no evidence of where, how, and who actually benefited from the unaccounted funds;

WHEREAS, the truth is that even during his term as ARMM Governor, Datu Zacaria relentlessly continued his peace and order campaign and maintained unofficial ties with many different sectors in the Muslim community in order to foster peaceful co-existence amongst them, and to salvage or safeguard peace agreements, with expenditures that cannot be accounted for in the conventional form;

WHEREAS, while the Supreme Court has already passed on the malversation cases against them and there is no point in revisiting the same, it is grossly unfair that their excessively long prison sentences not, at the very least, be mitigated by their lifelong efforts which resulted in a more peaceful Mindanao – a gargantuan task that has eluded the government through several administrations for more than 50 years and an outcome that cannot be measured in terms of money alone;

WHEREAS, Datu Zacaria, Dr. Abas, and Mr. Israel, while considered in hiding and are fugitives from justice, are certainly suffering from their deprivation of mobility and experiencing grave remorse for their oversight in the conduct of the administrative affairs of the ARMM during the latter's tenure as Governor;

WHEREAS, Datu Zacaria and Dr. Abas are both professionals, being a lawyer and doctor respectively, and despite their convictions, are honorable men at their most basic definition, and hence,

never did and do not constitute threat of any kind, manner, or form to the government or society at large;

WHEREAS, justice has already prevailed and further incarceration can no longer punish Dr. Zacaria, Dr. Abas, and Mr. Israel, more than they have already suffered as fugitives and granting them pardon under the context of the normalization process under the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro, will give credence to the process of healing and transitional justice objective of the normalization process;

WHEREAS, in addition to all the foregoing, our innate humanity may recognize that they are like all men who just want to be relieved of their darkest hours, to live out the short remainder of their lives, and finally, to die as free men, surrounded by family and friends;

WHEREAS, it is hoped that as a son who endured the agony of watching his own father wither away and die in a foreign land, your Excellency may take mercy on Datu Zacaria, Dr. Abas, and Mr. Israel before it is too late for them as well;

WHEREAS, forgiveness is a divine attribute that, in pardoning Datu. Zacaria, Dr. Abas, and Mr. Israel can only be construed as a further recognition of the aspirations of the Moro community which they have peacefully served for most of their lives;

WHEREAS, absolute pardon has been granted to murderers, plunderers of more substantial amounts, and coup plotters who caused many deaths and directly and frontally attempted to topple the government;

WHEREAS, His Excellency President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. has the sole power, discretion, and authority to grant absolute pardon to Datu Zacaria Candao, Dr. Abas Candao, and Mr. Israel Haron upon the recommendation of the Bureau of Pardons and Parole, which has favorably endorsed it:

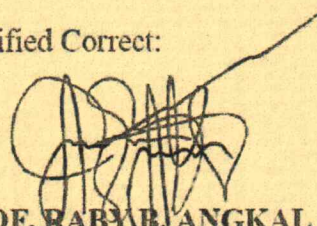
NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, as it is hereby resolved by the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, To humbly and earnestly appeal to His Excellency Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. to grant presidential absolute pardon to former ARMM Governor Datu Zacaria Candao, former ARMM Executive Secretary Dr. Abas Candao, and Mr. Israel Haron.

RESOLVED, FURTHER, To forward this Resolution to the Office of the President, Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr., Malacañang Palace, Manila, for His Excellency's information and appropriate action.

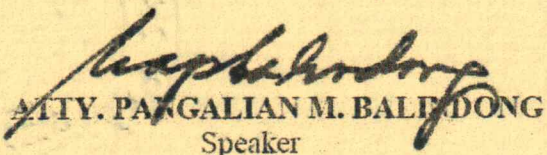
ADOPTED, *Rabi Al-Akhir* 09, 1445/October 24, 2023.

Certified Correct:



PROF. RABY B. ANGKAL
Secretary-General

Attested:



ATTY. PANGALIAN M. BALIDONG
Speaker

XXX