



# LEAGUE OF CITIES OF THE PHILIPPINES

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URL: <http://www.lcp.org.ph>

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Focal Mayor for Infrastructure Development

**LINA O. MONTILLA**  
Focal Mayor for Gender and Development

## WE ARE READY FOR PEACE

by

**Atty. Edgardo D. Pamintuan**

GRP Panel Adviser Representing the Local Government Units  
President, League of Cities of the Philippines  
City Mayor, Angeles City

The peace talks between the Philippine government and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines was virtually on a standstill during the administration of former President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino. Like it or not, this was because some of the appointed negotiators operated on the framework of “peace” based on the surrender of arms of the revolutionaries, and not on the political settlement founded on the resolution of the root causes of the armed conflict.

After a hiatus of 6 long years, the peace negotiations with the NDFP was successfully revived after President Rodrigo Roa Duterte gave the go signal for the release on bail of several top-ranking leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Among them are Benito Tiamzon and Wilma Austria-Tiamzon, who are said to be the Chairman and Secretary General of the CPP, respectively.

The first round of talks held in Oslo, Norway on August 20 to 26, 2016 was very successful with the signing of a Joint Statement anchored on major agreements including the unilateral indefinite ceasefire announcements from both sides. This cessation of armed hostilities has been holding and this could lead to the Declaration of a Joint Ceasefire Agreement.

All the Reciprocal Working Groups (RWGs) are functioning well and the Reciprocal Working Committees (RWCs) have conducted meetings too. It is all systems go for the next round. We are ready to accelerate the peace negotiation. We are ready for peace.



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The CPP and NDFP together with its armed wing, the New People's Army, have been waging a nearly 5-decade war in the Philippine countryside. They are pushing for genuine agrarian reform, national industrialization, independent foreign policy and other programs. President Duterte has acknowledged that basic reforms must be implemented. In fact, the choice of progressive individuals in key social reform departments of government was a clear indication that the President is serious in addressing the root cause of the protracted war.

Allow me to salute the RWCs and RWGs of both panels. With the dedication and commitment of everyone – especially of the Chairman and Members of Peace Panel – the road to peace, which has been long and bumpy, is beginning to be paved.