

MESSAGE OF
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ON THE FIRST BYC EN BANC MEETING
February 2, 2021

Assalamo Alaikom Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuhu.

Alhamdulillah, we are finally here. Though I have been looking forward to this day, the feeling is still surreal. (OA ko noh? Hehe) Kidding aside, Alhamdulillah, we are gathered here in one setting, and having our first ever Bangsamoro Youth Commission En Banc Meeting. Of course, I would like to welcome and acknowledge first our Commissioners: *Commissioner Pratima H. Sabal Samsaraji of Tawi- Tawi, Commissioner Hamdie Tanjil of Basilan, Commissioner Mohammad Faizal Sali of Sulu, and of course Commissioner Nasserudin Dunding of Maguindanao.*

Since my assumption in this office, the then, OBYA (Office of the Bangsamoro Youth Affairs), we had worked hard for the establishment of the Bangsamoro Youth Commission. We started series of consultations to translate how the Youth envisions the Bangsamoro Youth Commission. We then submitted proposed organizational structure and staffing pattern of the Commission. My legal team went so much from the crafting of the Bangsamoro Act No. 10, to the committee hearings, revisions, plenary deliberations before its final approval by the Parliament on February 28, 2020.

At this point in time, we are just thankful that this Commission is now assembled and ready to start the work. It took a while for our appointments; understandably because of addressing the pandemic which has become the priority of the Bangsamoro Government. And hopefully, the soonest possible time, the hiring of the permanent working force of the Commission shall commence.

I am very happy of the composition of this Commission because I know that each one of you have been working so much and so hard for the Bangsamoro Youth. I know that you have so much experience dealing with Youth related matters. You have known our Bangsamoro Youth already; their needs, what was lacking before and what can we do to fill in that previous gaps. And now that you are Commissioners, I am confident that together we can do a lot; we can now put our visions into policies; being the main work of this collective body.

Having Commissioners in each of the provinces of BARMM ensures that the BYC reaches each Bangsamoro Youth within the region. That is the main difference between OBYA and BYC. We are now here and each of us can focus on our province and we may echo their needs to this august body. Needless to state, this Commission is expected to formulate policies that will capacitate our Youth; will promote and protect their well-being. As a collective body, we shall have a common compass to reach our goal. What can we finish as a Commission will be the face and backbone of Bangsamoro Youth Commission.

To the Secretariat of this Commission, good luck. You will be working with five workaholic people (Hehe). I know that we have a lot of things to do today in our first En Banc Meeting; we have long agenda waiting. So that's all. Let's start working and may we have a fruitful discussion. Thank you.