

MESSAGE OF

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Chairperson/ Commissioner representing Lanao Del Sur Province with Marawi City

on BYC Week Celebration

April 5, 2021

Thank you to everyone joining us today as we kick off our week-long celebration in honor of the Bangsamoro Youth Commission's establishment exactly a year ago. It has been quite the journey to get to where we are now but each step has surely proved to be rewarding.

Before the creation of the Bangsamoro Youth Commission, or BYC, we assumed office in March 2019 as the designated executive director of what was then the Office on the Bangsamoro Youth Affairs or OBYA.

As we were working at the then OBYA that was formed in the now-defunct ARMM, and in line with the provision in Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL), we eventually found it necessary to create a new office for youth-related concerns that is more in line with the needs of the current state of the Bangsamoro region.

The idea was to more or less pattern this new office on the National Youth Commission while at the same time still exercising the autonomous privilege given to the BARMM. But it wasn't easy lobbying for the BYC's establishment. Establishing the Bangsamoro Youth Commission really seemed like an impossible task. Many challenges confronted us, but we knew in our hearts that this was what the Bangsamoro youth needed so that they could receive the best public service we could offer, so that there would be a government body that would truly listen and cater to the needs of the youth, so that we can sustain the gains of the peace process for generations to come. All this served as our driving force. And so we soldiered on.

Through all our efforts, the BTA-Cabinet Bill No. 28 or "Youth Commission of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Act of 2020" was unanimously approved on its third and final reading in March 2020. A month later, in April 2020, the BYC was born.

And after a year of hard yet worthwhile work, the BYC continues to grow stronger amidst the transition and the current health crisis so that we can better service our constituents. In our time serving as the BARMM's policymaking and coordination unit for youth-related programs and initiatives, we have opened opportunities for youth



development, participation, and engagement that foster unity and solidarity among youth of different backgrounds, religions, and cultures.

It is imperative that the youth become more involved in the Bangsamoro government's efforts and are able to carve out spaces in which they can be seen and heard. It is through your hearts and minds that we may be able to build a society that actively works towards nation-building and in forging genuine and long-lasting peace and development in the Bangsamoro.

On behalf of the entire Bangsamoro Youth Commission, thank you and Wassalam.