

Tiedekunta-Fakultet-Faculty Valtiotieteellinen tiedekunta		Laitos-Institution-Department Department of Political Science	
Tekijä-Författare-Author Ygot-Riikonen, Maria Sheila			
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<p>Tiivistelmä-Referat-Abstract</p> <p>Christian and Muslim conflict in Southern Philippines intensified during the last few decades although a shared history dates back 435 years ago. The government has so far failed to deliver genuine peace and stability to 22 million people in Mindanao suffering from poverty, displacement, and bloodshed. After the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the international community became aware of Islamic fundamentalist movements in Southeast Asia. The US government linked a Filipino Muslim group, Abu Sayyaf, to Osama bin Laden and Al-Qaeda, justifying the staging in Mindanao of what US Pres. George Bush said as the second largest 'war against terrorism' after Afghanistan. Whatever impact terrorist acts may have from Basilan to Manhattan, peace research is more urgent and significant than ever.</p> <p>This study looks at the causes of violence amongst Christian and Muslim Filipinos and consequently explores areas for peace by asking: "What are the reasons of conflict? Who are the actors and agenda-setters? How can a local conflict become linked to international terrorism? What are the ways and means of effective and immediate conflict resolution in Mindanao?"</p> <p>To acquire firsthand insight, in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted in the Philippines in June-October 2002 using a 60-day participant observation and the triangulation method for data gathering. Through snowball sampling, talks with different groups (government, military, rebels, academics, and NGOs) gave comprehensive and balanced analyses. Second, a quantitative survey of 400 youth respondents gave different views from Muslim and Christian perspectives, especially on concepts of alienation, animosity, and political participation. Finally, international newspaper reports, journals, and local publications were cautiously used as primary sources.</p> <p>Results showed contradictory views on the causes of conflict, whether economic, socio-political, or religious, depending on individuals and groups. Respondents said aggression was caused by economic neglect, frustration with the government, and lack of socio-political influence. Solutions offered are poverty alleviation, tolerance of socio-cultural diversity, strong leadership, and recognition of international peace agreements. Other means of conflict resolution involve empowering citizens, creating a balance of forces, channeling resources at the grassroots level, and cultivating a culture of peace.</p>			
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