

Press release

European Union in the Philippines, the Bangsamoro Government and UNOPS Join Forces to Set up the Chief Minister's Satellite Office in Tawi-Tawi

1 March 2024, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi - The European Union joined the Bangsamoro Government and UNOPS today at the groundbreaking ceremony for the construction of the Chief Minister's Satellite Office in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.

The construction of the new office is funded by the EU's Support to Bangsamoro Transition (SUBATRA) Programme, managed by UNOPS. The program aims to assist the Bangsamoro Transition Authority's work to set the legal and institutional framework for the governance of the region. The establishment of the Satellite Office in Tawi-Tawi is a clear signal of the Bangsamoro Government's resolve to improve the delivery of government services across the region.



During the ceremony, the EU Ambassador to the Philippines, H.E. Luc Véron, reiterated the EU's support for the aspirations of the Bangsamoro region. "We are proud to stand with the Bangsamoro Government as they work towards peace and development. This office is a symbol of our solidarity and shared goals," he stated.

For his part, Senior Minister Abunawas Maslamama spoke of the transformative potential of the new office. "With the EU and AECID's support through the SUBATRA programme, not only are we opening an office; we are renewing our pledge to serve the public with greater fervour and dedication in pursuit of Moral Governance," he said.

Meanwhile, Presidential Adviser on Peace, Reconciliation, and Unity, Secretary Carlito Galvez, Jr., through his representative Joint Task Force Tawi-Tawi Deputy Brigade Commander Col. Joel PN(M) GSC, highlighted the national government's support and stated, "The opening of this satellite office underlines our dedication to peace, reconciliation, and unity in the Bangsamoro region. It's about bringing the government closer to the people, making sure their voices are heard and their needs are met."

Also present at the event were Mindanao Development Authority (MinDA) Chairperson Secretary Maria Belen S. Acosta, Province of Tawi-Tawi Governor Yshmael I. Sali, Municipality of Bongao Mayor Jimuel S. Que and UNOPS Project Manager for SUBATRA Cristina Elisse Capistrano.

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Notes to the editors:

About SUBATRA

Support to Bangsamoro Transition (SUBATRA) is a five-year programme funded by the European Union, through an Agreement with the Government of the Republic of the Philippines with a value of EUR 26 million or over PHP1.5 Billion.

Implemented by UNOPS, SUBATRA contributes to a smooth and timely undertaking of the transition through capacity building of the three branches of the Bangsamoro Government (executive, legislative and judicial) and civil society organizations. The programme works to promote an enabling good governance environment and support the efficient implementation of policies set up by the transition plan, focusing on capacities critical for the sound functioning of interim institutions. These include:

1. capacity of the BTA's executive branch superstructure to drive and coordinate key transitional policies;
2. capacity of the Parliament to exercise its law-making and oversight functions;
3. capacity of the Justice System to adjudicate litigations and improve access to justice, and
4. capacity of the civil society to contribute to a peaceful transition to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

For more information about SUBATRA, visit: www.subatra.org



About UNOPS

UNOPS mission is to help people build better lives and countries achieve peace and sustainable development. We help the United Nations, governments and other partners to manage projects, and deliver sustainable infrastructure and procurement in an efficient way. Read more: www.unops.org