

OPENING REMARKS

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It is a phenomenon worth noting that this is actually the third time that the Philippine Political Science Association has sponsored a conference — whether on a national or regional basis — in which Mindanao has been the focus of attention.

The first time was dubbed a "Dialogue" between academics, public administrators and political leaders. It was virtually the second regional conference of the Eastern Visayas Regional Chapter of the PPSA (Leyte-Samar), but since the theme was "Regional Autonomy," Autonomous Regions 9 and 12, both in Mindanao, occupied center stage in the discussions. In fact, I have brought with me a xeroxed preliminary copy of the No. 11 issue of the Philippine Political Science Journal, which features the papers and proceedings of that Conference, to be reproduced for your use here as relevant background papers for the forthcoming discussions.

The second occasion was last year's national/general conference, which was held in Zamboanga City, on a date which coincided with the previous observance of Constitution Day (i.e., February 8, re the 1935 Philippine Constitution). It was also the occasion for establishing the Western Mindanao Regional Political Science Association, just as this Conference is designed, among other things, to provide the opportunity to set up a Central and Northern Mindanao Regional Chapter.

And now, once again, the theme is similar, "Development Politics: Focus on Mindanao."

To discuss politics is difficult enough; to tackle the question of "development politics" is an undertaking that only political scientists would dare to embark upon. I do not know whether this is a mark of their superior expertise — or whether they are again behaving like the proverbial and well-meaning "fools" in the cliché "(who) rush in where angels fear to tread" as "development politics" in Mindanao.

The concept of "development" itself is already quite involved. Proof of this are the many dimensions of development that the

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speakers in this conference are going to deal with. But I shall not jump the gun on Dr. Fulgencio Cañedo who is going to deliver a concept paper on "development."

Suffice it to say that, amidst the warm hospitality of the faculty, students and friends of Mindanao State University — all or most of whom, we hope, are members of the PPSA, or at least its sympathizers and supporters — and the cool refreshing country air of Marawi City, I have the pleasure to declare this 6th National Conference of the Philippine Political Science Association *open*.