

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr. (PDP-Laban) today urged Malacañang to make a complete and truthful report to the Senate on the peace agreement it has hammered out with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front amid reports that the agreement will practically lead to the creation of a state and require an amendment to the Constitution.

Senator Pimentel raised this question in the face of reports that the agreement on ancestral domain that both sides will sign August 5 will practically lead to the creation of a state "with a defined territory and a system of governance acceptable to" the Bangsa Moro.

NEWS FLASH: Statement of Senator Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr. on agreement on ancestral domain, as issued on Aug. 4, 2008: "Malaysia may well be advised that the supposed Memorandum of Agreement between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front is flawed and will face constitutional and legal challenges in the Senate and in the courts. Forewarned is forearmed."

"I don't have a copy of the supposed agreement. But if it is true, we need to follow the procedures outlined in the Constitution. One can't assign parts of the Philippine territory by mere executive fiat," he said.

Senator Pimentel has advocated the strengthening of autonomy for Muslims in Mindanao to end the secessionist conflict through the establishment of a Bangsa Moro Federal State.

The senator from Mindanao stressed that any peace pact the government and MILF will sign should comply with constitutional principles and procedures.

Senator Pimentel Says Peace Accord Will Require Amendment to Charter - MabuhayRadio

Written by Senator Pimentel's Press Office

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Senator Pimentel says that a Bangsa Moro Federal State is where Filipino Muslims can live by and preserve their Islamic way of life and develop their own natural resources to improve their economic condition.

But his proposal calls for the establishment of a federal system wherein the Bangsa Moro state will be one of the 11 component states in the country.

This is embodied in Joint Congressional Resolution 10, supported by at least 16 senators, which seeks to convert Congress into a Constituent Assembly to amend the Constitution and put in place a federal system.

Mr. Pimentel said he and other senators expect administration officials involved in the peace process to render a complete explanation on the agreement on ancestral domain and other accords already concluded in the peace negotiation during a Senate hearing Monday.

He said practically all senators are opposed to the Malacañang proposal to postpone the August 11 elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao which is being demanded by the MILF. He said he does not see any softening of the senators' position on the issue as a

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result of the briefing from Malacañang officials. # # #

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