

Tagum Declaration

Mindanao Forum on Indigenous Peoples' Education and Learning Systems
PCU Convention Center, Magdum, Tagum City, Davao del Norte, Philippines
August 15 – 17, 2005

We, the delegates to the Mindanao Forum on Indigenous Peoples' Education and Learning Systems, coming from the different Indigenous Peoples Organizations, Institutions, Government and Non-Government Organizations, Academe and Advocates, collectively affirm and uphold that education is a basic human right.

Since time immemorial, the life of the “ Lumad” has been inextricably linked to land and its resources. They have developed the needed capacity to nurture, defend and sustainably use their ancestral domain.

Following this, the right of Indigenous peoples to education should support their struggle to self-identity and self-determination as defined in the Indigenous peoples rights act as well as in international instruments and standards.

We believe that the culture-sensitive education is the concrete manifestation of this right since it promotes the following principle of education.

1. Indigenous education supports the right of IPs to their ancestral domain
2. Indigenous education recognizes Indigenous knowledge systems and practices as a critical element of education for IPs
3. Indigenous education enhances critical awareness among IPs on the issues and concerns they confront in their communities and empowers them to serve as instruments for their long-term resolution
4. Indigenous education builds sustainable Indigenous cultural communities (ICCs) within the principle of self-determination

It is therefore, our collective interest to suggest the following strategies to respond to this challenge :

1. Uphold peace and harmony among peoples and denounce militarization and any form of injustice and oppression as primary basis for a just education system for Lumads in Mindanao
2. Support the empowerment of IPs toward self-determination while considering their significant link with non-IPs in an evolving world
3. Encourage and enhance the capacity of IPs to define for themselves the objective of education in the context of the ancestral domain sustainable and protection plan, record and transmit their Indigenous knowledge systems and practices (IKSPs) and sustain education as a collective community action and struggle for their rights
4. Advocate effort as different levels (International, Regional, National and Local) with different Institutions toward promoting quality and culture –sensitive education at all levels in all circumstances as interlinked with other concerns of Lumads primarily the protection and development of ancestral domain as material basis of their education system.

- Ratify ILO 169 as a critical law promoting education and land rights
 - Recognize and accredit Lumad education program on IKSPs
 - Promote education assistance program based on the situation of IPs founded on the principles of merit and fitness not patronage
 - Encourage IP participation in curriculum development
 - Raise Government commitment to Indigenous education
 - Resolve conflicting provisions of law and issuances for clarity of implementation at the local level
 - Re-orient manpower working for ICCs/IPs at the national and local levels
 - Train school administrators, teachers and para-teachers from among the IP group
 - Set up networks of schools, national agencies, NGOs and other groups to facilitate education programs (provincial level)
 - Build linkages and networks
 - Promote viable income generating projects and enterprises that will redound to effective protection of natural resources within AD research support initiatives and monitor changes
5. Advocate the creation of an office directly responsible for Indigenous education within DepEd at different levels

Done this 17th Day of August, 2005