

## Chapter 17

# Attaining Just and Lasting Peace

The maintenance of peace and security is essential for Central Visayas to attain inclusive development for its constituents. In line with this, the region shall continue to enhance the peace and order situation, which is required for the effective delivery of public services as well as the attainment of economic growth and progress.

## Assessment and Challenges

In the aspect of internal security, Central Visayas has been declared as “conflict-manageable and development-ready” region since 2014, and all the provinces except for Negros Oriental continue to be unaffected by insurgency.<sup>1</sup> However, sectoral organization activities of unarmed left-leaning organizations were noted in these provinces, particularly in Cebu. These activities included meetings, visitations, propagandas, rallies. These provinces also at times provided rest and recreation, medical services and safe haven for the armed operatives. Only Negros Oriental is currently affected by insurgency (CPP/NPA). Most of the affected areas are the hinterlands and mountainous regions of the province. Great strides, however, had been made in addressing the insurgency problems. The province was able to substantially reduce the strength and influence of the communist rebels.

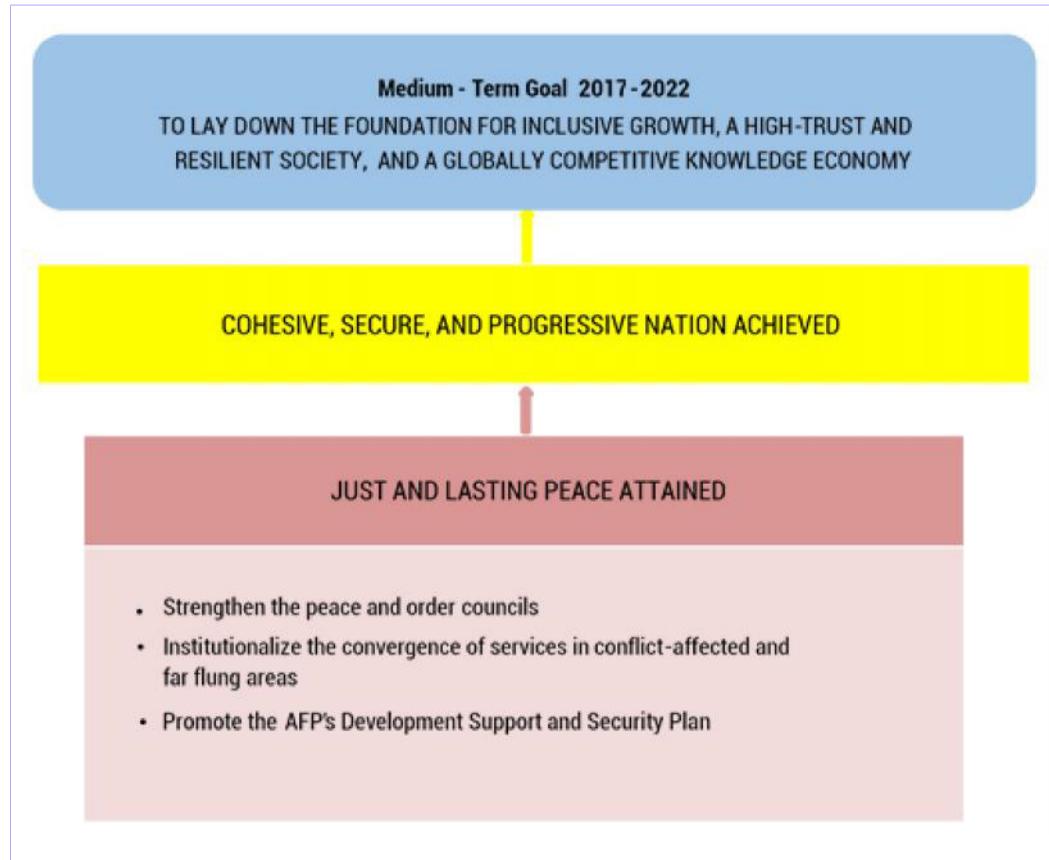
The sub-national peace and order councils (POCs) contributed to making most areas of Central Visayas insurgency-free as they provided the mechanism for the coordination and cooperation of all stakeholders in the maintenance of peace and order at the local level. As of end of 2015, all the provinces, cities and municipalities in the region had functional POCs. The Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) had been providing trainings to these POCs to improve their capabilities. In addition, all barangays in the region had organized their barangay POCs.

The region must continue its efforts to sustain the gains in the attainment of the status of “conflict-manageable and development ready” region. The regional and local POCs must be vigilant for any indication on the resurgence of insurgency in any of its provinces. The region must pay particular attention to the kidnapping threats posed by the Abu Sayyaf group, given the proximity of the group’s operations in the southern part of the region.

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<sup>1</sup> Provinces categorized as normalized and insurgency-free have experienced peace and stability for more than five years with insignificant or non-existence of armed elements and violent incidents perpetrated by the CPP/NPA. Legal fronts and public rallies continue to exist yet non-violent.

**Figure 17.1 Strategic Framework to Attain Just and Lasting Peace**



## Strategic Framework

Peace and security are essential in the promotion of inclusive growth. These serve as the basic platform for transforming the region’s better economic performance into sustainable inclusive growth. In view of this, the region shall endeavor to enhance peace and security to boost investments and improve delivery of services.

## Strategies

**Strengthen the Peace and Order Councils.** To sustain the gains of the region in its anti-insurgency campaign as well as improve law enforcement, the local peace and order councils (LPOCs) shall be strengthened and made operative to do the

following: planning and recommending measures to improve peace and order and public safety; monitoring the implementation of peace and order programs; and making periodic assessment of the prevailing peace and order situation in their respective jurisdictions. The LPOCs are venues for good governance that allow government-private sector collaboration to improve peace and order and public safety.

The LPOCs also provide the venues that allow the local government units (LGUs) and the law enforcement agencies, such as the military and the police, to harmonize and align their respective programs, activities and projects (i.e. implementation of programs in conflict areas) towards the collective goal of promoting peace and order, and internal security.

**Institutionalize the convergence of services in conflict-affected and far flung areas.** The convergence, non-combat counter-insurgency approach will ensure that the delivery of public services by the various government agencies, the private sector and civil society organizations will reach the conflict-affected and far flung areas of the region with the security support provided by the military and other law enforcement agencies.

**Support the implementation of the Development Support and Security Plan *Kapayapaan*.** The Development Support and Security Plan *Kapayapaan*, also known as Oplan

*Kapayapaan*, is the internal security program of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) that is focused on supporting the development efforts of the government to address internal security threat. As an instrument for nation building, Oplan *Kapayapaan* provides the AFP guidance in providing support to the law enforcement authorities in the fight against crime and illegal drugs; in promoting civil-military cooperation; in conducting peace-building advocacy; and in applying military forces against terrorists and other armed threat groups.