



*Dr. Abas Candao (center) of Bangsamoro Development Agency signs Memorandum of Understanding on Social Work Education in Conflict-Affected Areas with Dr. Fred Ahearn (left) of the Catholic University of America and Dr. Steven Muncy (right) of Community and Family Services International. The signing was witnessed by (standing from left) Instructor Mildred Salgen of Cotabato City State Polytechnic College, Prof. Bagjan Aleyssa Abdulkarim of Western Mindanao State University, Prof. Edna Tubilan of Mindanao State University and Noraida Abdullah Karim of CFSI. The Catholic University has agreed to waive all tuition fees representing a counterpart contribution of 70 million pesos (US\$1,350,000) over six years in support of the peace process.*

Davao City, Philippines, 15 June 2006—A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the Catholic University of America and a local consortium led by Community and Family Services International (CFSI) and the Bangsamoro Development Agency (BDA). The collaboration aims to contribute towards peace, reconstruction and development in the conflict-affected areas of Mindanao by strengthening social work education and leadership. The local consortium includes the Mindanao State University (MSU), Western Mindanao State University (WMSU), and Cotabato City State Polytechnic College (CCSPC).

The Catholic University of America, in partnership with the consortium, will offer a ten-course Masters degree in Teaching of Social Work (MTSW) in Cotabato City. The course offering is open to social workers teaching and/or working in conflict-affected areas in Mindanao. The course will prepare social work educators and practitioners to become trainers in community development and community-building with the aim of increasing local capacities to facilitate the effective return and resettlement, as well as betterment of individuals and families displaced by armed conflict. Successful students will receive the MTSW degree from the Catholic University of America.

The Catholic University has agreed to waive all tuition fees representing a counterpart contribution of 70 million pesos (US\$1,350,000) over six years in support of the peace process between the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The MTSW programme will open in August of 2007 and will be housed at the CFSI Operations Center in Mindanao, Philippines. The aim is seventy-five (75) graduates by the end of 2014. CFSI is presently trying to raise the US\$187,500 required to meet all the remaining costs expected to be incurred by this programme within this seven-year period. This works out to be \$2,500 per student.

For more information, contact Dr. Steven Muncy, Executive Director, at CFSI Headquarters in Metro Manila, Philippines at [smuncy@cfsi.ph](mailto:smuncy@cfsi.ph), telephone numbers (632)551-1977 and 510-1046, or fax number (632)551-2225.