

**Konrad-Adenauer Foundation, EU launch public education series
on political party system for Bangsamoro**

MANILA – Thanks to the continuity of the European Union in support of the Bangsamoro Peace Process, Konrad Adenauer Foundation Philippines Office (KAS) was awarded a grant to promote the political development in Muslim Mindanao. Since 2007, the EU has invested more than PHP 650 million in programmes that contribute to the peace process in southern Philippines.

The Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAS) and the Cotabato-based Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG) today launched a project aimed to prepare the future autonomous Bangsamoro entity for a meaningful autonomy.

The initiative, called the Democratic Party Development or DEPAdev, aims at contributing to the establishment of a pluralistic political landscape in southern Philippines.

Specifically, it focusses on raising capacities of Muslim, Christian, Indigenous and other underrepresented groups for active political participation under a parliamentary system.

Mr. Benedikt Seemann, KAS Philippines Office Resident Representative, affirmed that “this 18 month project is a non-partisan approach in which seminars and training activities will be implemented for existing political parties, members of civil society groups and members of both, religious and non-religious groups throughout Mindanao”.

Seemann added: “We want to empower stakeholders and underrepresented groups to transform their interest groups and operate them as functional programmatic political parties or movements based on the rule of law. These objectives build a foundation on which active civil society participation in political affairs within the autonomous region will be possible.”

The education series, in fact, kicks off right after the public project launch at Dusit Thani Hotel Manila. This conference hosted honorable guests from the Diplomatic Corps, Government, Congress, Bangsamoro Transition Commission and stakeholders from Muslim Mindanao. Prominent speakers were EU Ambassador Franz Jessen, Secretary Teresita Deles, Professor Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, Chairman Mohagher Iqbal and Congressman Rufus Rodriguez among others.