

11 January 2010 – The Philippines will host the Special Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting (SNAMMM) on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace and Development on March 16-18. Originally scheduled for 1-3 December 2009, the Ministerial Meeting was postponed to a later date so that the Philippine Government could concentrate on relief and rehabilitation efforts in the wake of two devastating cyclones that struck the country in the latter part of 2009.

As of January, more than 40 NAM countries have already confirmed their participation in the conference. The Philippines expects more countries to send high-level delegations to the Ministerial Meeting in view of the number of inquiries and feedback it has been receiving.

The Ministerial Meeting will be held at the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) in Manila. A one-day Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) will be held on March 16 2010 to finalize the conference's draft outcome document.

The convening of the Special NAM Ministerial Meeting is consistent with the Sharm El Sheikh Declaration by NAM Heads of State or Government to 'identify and pursue necessary measures and contribute positively in further promoting dialogue of civilizations, culture of peace and interfaith dialogue'.

At the 15th

Summit of NAM in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt on 15-16 July 2009, the Heads of State or Government and Heads of Delegations issued a "call for an active participation and engagement of all NAM members in the Special NAM Ministerial Meeting (SNAMMM) on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace and Development to be held in Manila, Philippines on the initiative of the Government of the Philippines."

The Philippines considers that intercultural and interfaith dialogue policy framework paves the way for the coming together of people of different cultures and faiths to build, through dialogue and action, a shared environment of peace and security based on mutual understanding, trust and respect.

The Philippines has been leading international initiatives on interfaith dialogue and has hosted three global events on the subject matter since 2005. These are: the Philippines' successful chairing of the First Informal Meeting of World Leaders on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace in the United Nations in September 2005; the hosting of the Second Dialogue on Regional Interfaith Cooperation for Peace, Development and Human Dignity on March 2006 in Cebu; and the launching and chairmanship of the Tripartite Forum on Interfaith Cooperation for

Peace. END