



PCVF Secretary General Ma. Isabel Tobias and DFA Undersecretary Rafael Seguis sign a MOA on the holding of a one-day civil society event on interfaith dialogue, parallel to the SNAMMM to be hosted by the Philippines on March 16-18. (photo by Benjamin Remo, DFA-PISU)

9 February 2010 - Recognizing the crucial role the civil society plays in promoting interfaith dialogue, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) and the Presidential Council for Values Formation (PCVF) agreed on the holding of a parallel civil society meeting during the *Senior Officials Meeting of the Special Non-Aligned Movement Ministerial Meeting on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation for Peace and Development (SNAMMM)* on March 16.

The Philippines will host the SNAMMM on March 16-18 at the Philippine International Convention Center.

A memorandum of agreement (MOA) on the holding of the civil society event was signed today by DFA Undersecretary for Special and Ocean Concerns Rafael Seguis and PCVF Secretary General Ma. Isabel G. Tobias.

Under the MOA, PCVF will organize and host the "International Workshop of Faith-Based Groups and Civil Society: Strengthening Partnerships with Governments on Interfaith Dialogue and Cooperation" on March 16, parallel to the Senior Officials' Meeting of the SNAMMM.

"The civil society workshop will be a good opportunity to share experiences and best practices

among members of civil society from 118 NAM member countries, 17 NAM observer countries, and 10 NAM observer organizations," Undersecretary Seguis said.

The one-day interfaith event will focus on the role and contributions of faith-based groups to peace and development in partnership with Governments. Its specific objectives are:

- Analyze the issues on the global environment that threaten peace and development;
- Map out current initiatives and collaborative efforts of the faith-based groups of members-states in promoting peace and development;
- Share effective practices, learning and issues encountered in adopting the approach of interfaith dialogue; and
- Identify and recommend top priority issues for NAM to address.

The participants will be coming from the religious advisers included in the delegations of NAM members and guest countries who have current initiatives on interfaith dialogue, as well as international religious NGOs.

Meanwhile, the DFA has partnered with the Miriam College Center for Peace Education for an academic forum on interfaith dialogue on February 22. Entitled, "A Forum on Promoting Interfaith Understanding and Cooperation", the event will highlight government-civil society partnership in the promotion of interfaith initiatives in the Philippines and in the international stage. END