Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City, Metro Manila

Eighteenth Congress
Second Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 1506

Introduced by
HON. MUJIV S. HATAMAN

A RESOLUTION
DIRECTING THE APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INQUIRY, IN AID OF LEGISLATION, ON THE BANGSAMORO TRANSITION AND ITS LISTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS, ONGOING PROGRAMS, AS WELL AS EXISTING CHALLENGES, AND CONCOMITANTLY IMPLEMENT A SPECIAL AUDIT ON SOME INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS OF THE NOW-DEFUNCT ARMM, BY MEANS OF MIDTERM REVIEW, WITH AN END GOAL OF INSTITUTING NECESSARY LEGISLATIVE INTERVENTION FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE BANGSAMORO

WHEREAS, Congress has recognized its fundamental role in the process of bringing just and lasting peace to Mindanao by passing Republic Act No. 11054 or the Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM);

WHEREAS, RA 11054 was signed into law by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte as a commitment to address the historical injustices committed against the Moro people, ushering in a new era of peace and development not only in Mindanao but throughout the country;

WHEREAS, the passage of RA 11054 and the inauguration of the BARMM in March 2019 constituted also the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA), the body tasked to deliver results that the Bangsamoro people expect: peace and security, reduced poverty, development of business and jobs, and stability among ethnic clans and economic classes, among others;

WHEREAS, BTA serves as the interim government in the BARMM during its transition period and is expected to be dissolved once the first elected Bangsamoro Government will be in place by 2022;

WHEREAS, no less than Bangsamoro Interim Chief Minister Murad Ebrahim has said that he and BTA, need more time to build bureaucracy, pass foundational codes, and help former Moro Islamic Liberation Front combatants improve their quality of life;
WHEREAS, the proposed Bangsamoro transition has resulted to the unintended division of the BARMM, with some local governments supporting the same\(^1\) and some expressing their strong disapproval, the unlikely circumstance that is a total contradiction to the intention on the creation of the BARMM region;

WHEREAS, a recent press statement issued by BARMM Public Works Minister Eduard Uy Guerra and picked up by a well-circulated publication indicated that there were alleged anomalous disbursements in some ARMM infrastructure projects, adding that there are more than 3,000 ARMM projects supposedly amounting to Php 107 billion that are now the subject of a special audit;

WHEREAS, there is a need to ascertain the veracity of the claims of Minister Guerra, given that he cited the figures that do not jive with those of former ARMM officials;

WHEREAS, all infrastructure projects of the now-defunct ARMM were and still are accessible in the BARMM website: https://mpw-barmm.org/, which provides that from 2012-2018, or in a span of seven (7) years, only an estimated total cost of Php 50 billion were spent for such projects, thereby clearly indicating a discrepancy from what was contained in the press statements or news reports;

WHEREAS, ARMM has institutionalized transparency in its endeavors in the region, and even has GIS mapping of the projects to which the BARMM has adopted for its use. With reports citing differences in the amount of billions of pesos, it is right to further the call for transparency and investigate the claims of Minister Guerra, as transparency is the cornerstone of the ARMM administration;

WHEREAS, the Commission on Audit (COA), in its annual audit report released last January 11, 2021, has also called on BARMM to fast-track the implementation of the P2.34-billion shelter projects that were supposed to benefit internally displaced persons who were affected by the armed conflict in the region, and initiated during the time of the ARMM;

WHEREAS, COA said these shelters under the under ARMM’s Bangsamoro Regional Inclusive Development for Growth and Empowerment or BRIDGE program - set for construction in the provinces of Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi - involved contracts for the construction of 6,650 units of permanent shelters and were awarded to three companies in 2018. COA indicated that these shelters remained unfinished, even as the agreed date of completion in the contracts have lapsed;

WHEREAS, a call for special audit on the said infrastructure projects mentioned by Minister Guerra, as well as a probe on the COA findings on the ARMM BRIDGE Program, are very good endeavors, and should be undertaken to identify if there are erring contractors or public officials involved in these projects, as this will help in identifying the challenges and hurdles experienced by the transition leadership in project management and implementation, and to see where Congress can rightfully exercise its oversight function;

WHEREAS, it is most essential to underscore the need to have a holistic approach in understanding the strong need for the proposed transition which can only be achieved through a deliberative discussion of all the stakeholders;
WHEREAS, it is imperative for the proponents bat\r
ting for the extension of the Bangsamoro transition period to present, in clear and attainable sets of goals, a roadmap of what they intend to accomplish if the transitory government is to be extended;

WHEREAS, a roadmap of the proposed extension should include the timeline for short- and long-term programs, activities, and projects, thereby providing Congress the necessary input to shepherd the urgent need to extend the BARMM transition period, as the case may be;

WHEREAS, in the absence of a comprehensive midterm review of the BARMM, the proposed extension of the transition will only be an impractical attempt that will gravely affect the people of the Bangsamoro;

WHEREAS, while it is true that the COVID-19 pandemic has delayed many aspects of the existing transition, it is imperative to conduct a midterm review that will present the triumphs of the interim government and the existing obstacles that the BARMM has to hurdle;

WHEREAS, BARMM may have a long way to go, but the steps in realizing the true meaning of peace has already set in place, and only through active participation of the concerned local government units and other sectors will produce the voice reflective to the aspirations of good governance for the people of the Bangsamoro;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, to direct the appropriate House Committee to conduct an inquiry, in aid of legislation, on the Bangsamoro transition and its listed accomplishments, ongoing programs, as well as the current challenges, and concomitantly implement a special audit on some infrastructure projects of the now-defunct ARMM, by means of midterm review to institute the necessary legislative intervention on the same.

Adopted,

HON. MUJIV S. HATAMAN
Representative, Lone District of Basilan