



## **IEMC Urges Holding of Scheduled BARMM Polls for 73 Seats**

MANILA , 12 August 2025

The Independent Election Monitoring Center (IEMC), a recognized monitoring group of the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Parliamentary Elections, met with COMELEC Chairman George Garcia and five (5) Commissioners today to dialogue on several critical issues. The IEMC is in support of the COMELEC on the following:

### **1. Proceeding with the October 13, 2025 BARMM Parliamentary Elections for 73 Seats**

- The IEMC strongly supports the COMELEC’s position to hold the BARMM Parliamentary Elections as scheduled, even if the Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA) enacts a redistricting and reapportionment law in the coming days or weeks.
- With the province of Sulu no longer part of BARMM, proceeding with elections for the remaining 73 seats does not infringe on the right of suffrage of BARMM constituents. Voting for these 73 seats constitutes a complete and legitimate exercise of suffrage within the region.
- Further postponement of the elections would unjustly delay the establishment of an elected regional government—a key component of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) and the Bangsamoro Organic Law (BOL). The people of BARMM deserve leaders with a clear mandate from the electorate.

### **2. Addressing Key Electoral Issues**

The IEMC stands with COMELEC in raising and resolving the following concerns to ensure credible and meaningful elections:

- **Vote for “None of the Above”**
  - The Electoral Code and the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) do not provide clear guidance on the implications of “None of the Above” garnering majority votes.
  - IEMC calls on COMELEC and BTA to jointly clarify and resolve this issue to avert failure of elections.

- **4% Threshold for Party Representation**
  - We note the varying interpretation and enforcement of the 4% vote threshold required for political parties to qualify for seats and will support the COMELEC guidelines on the issue.
  
- **Sectoral Representation Guidelines**
  - There is a great and urgent need for the guidelines for the conduct of the assemblies to elect the sectoral representatives to be aligned with the Bangsamoro Electoral Code (BEC) and its IRR.
  - IEMC urges the BTA to promptly address provisions in the guidelines that may be in conflict with the electoral code to ensure lawful and fair sectoral representation in the BARMM Parliament.

### **3. Commitment to Voter Education and Electoral Integrity**

IEMC will continue to support and coordinate with COMELEC and its deputized agencies in implementing information, education, and communication campaigns to ensure the conduct of peaceful, fair, and credible elections. IEMC welcomes and supports the plan of the COMELEC to form provincial task forces headed by Comelec Commissioners in the 5 provinces of the BARMM.

The IEMC expresses its gratitude to COMELEC for facilitating the dialogue with its members. This collaboration is vital to strengthening democratic processes and ensuring the success of the upcoming BARMM Parliamentary elections.

IEMC is composed of eight organizations, namely: Institute for Autonomy and Governance (IAG), National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL), Notre Dame Broadcasting Corporation (NDBC), Notre Dame University (NDU), Notre Dame of Midsayap College (NDMC), Coalition for Social Accountability and Transparent (CSAT), Climate Conflict Action, and Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV) Cotabato City.

*For any questions or concerns on this statement please contact:*

Ms. Aubrey Bahala, email: [a.bahala@iag.org.ph](mailto:a.bahala@iag.org.ph), mobile: 0917 712 5453