

A Peacebuilder's Journey: Some Reflections on the Colombia Trip

(1) A call, the journey began swiftly
As the wind of summer off so quickly
A excellent opening, a new journey
For great learning we have a community

(2) From Mindanao I come, I move
With interest on the military and civilians
Their inter-action, relations and cooperation
For peacebuilding and conflict transformation

(3) Two months in preparation
Coordination and communication
Interaction as well as determination
Committed to pursue the collaboration

(4) Then June Colombia the cold place to visit
A nation to look its peace and conflict
With warm people I get know and see
Especially the women with comfort and glee

(5) Strong mujeres determined and true
Women for rights, justice and peace
Never thought how brave they can be
To be with us women was intimate and never blue

(6) Meeting the academic individuals and groups

One morning with a peace negotiator

Dialogue with some local indigenous peoples

All wonderful fruitful opportunity

(7) The knowledge, wisdom and experience

The peace and conflict situations

Similar as they seem in my country

Some decades of violence many will agree

(8) Yet the peace process in Colombia

Largely controlled and ruled by the military

Far from the dream of the Civil society

A peaceful solution to end violence in the country

(9) 'Twas quite an experience to meet some military

In a war college of mostly uniformed men so stiff and edgy

Of traditional minds in dealing with the enemy

Unknown of peacebuilding, not even in their vocabulary

(10) Disappointed I may be, but that is the reality

Gen. Medina has quite a big task to do

Yet with the continuing dialogue on peace with the military

I see peace to work in a small but fundamental and true

(11) Indeed many facts are available

and intelligent analysis as well

by Colombia's peace department

and state policies as complement

(12) But local peace processes are not recognized
Even successful ones were not identified
It was in our dialogue with some people of Samaniego
Processes like this, they say, are wanted so

(13) Involving local peace were pleasing
community and leaders develop understanding
negotiation with armed groups worth pursuing
yet not a goal but a process to me peacebuilding

(14) Thus it is essential to see peacebuilding
not in the perspective of ending
the armed conflict that is on going
but rather a process that should be sustaining

(15) A process that is mindful of security
economic, political and cultural stability
A process that lessens violence
And sustain the gains and not hostility

(16) Dialogue among key actors
open, unfolding and continuing
Paradigm shift in policies
Peaceful and transforming

(17) Closing stages, finishing off the exchange
But my journey still continues even the day's end
wherever I go I see peace in Colombia
just as I see peace in Mindanao as well as in Asia.
Belle Garcia