

MEME NA MINDANAW

(A lullaby for peace in Mindanao)

This lullaby is composed and produced by Albert Alejo as part of his peace advocacy.

*Meme na, O Mindanaw
Iduyan-duyan ko ikaw.
Sa gubot di maminaw
Aron dili ka mapukaw.
Damguhon mo ang kalinaw
Sa umaabot nga adlaw
Ugma pohon makalakaw
Ngadto sa wala na'y mingaw.*

*Sleep now, my dear Mindanao,
I will cradle you to sleep,
Don't allow the fighting outside
Awaken you from slumber.
Dream, dream of peace
In the coming days
Tomorrow, who knows, you can walk
To where there are no more tears.*

(Humming)
*Ssshh! Ayaw mo pagsaba
Mapukaw ang bata!
Ssshh! Ayaw na mo pag-away
Ang bata madamay!*

*Husssh! Don't be noisy
You might disturb the child asleep
Hussh! Stop all this fighting
You might also hit the child!*

*Damguhon mo ang kalinaw
Sa umaabot nga adlaw
Ugma pohon makalakaw
Ngadto sa wala na'y mingaw*

*Dream, dream of peace
In the coming days
Tomorrow, who knows, you can walk
To where there are no more tears.*

*Pasagdi ang bata intawon
Magdamgo nga malinawon.*

*Please let the child sleep
And let him dream in peace*

*Magmata na, O Mindanaw
Ania na ang kalinaw.*

*Wake up, my dear Mindanaw
Peace is coming to us now*

Albert Alejo is a Filipino Jesuit priest who worked with trade unions and informal labour groups in Manila before earning a doctorate degree in anthropology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. A published poet and philosopher in his native Tagalog language, he is now based in Mindanao where he engages in advocacy for indigenous peoples' rights and in dialogue with Muslim civil society, through the Mindanawon Initiatives for Cultural Dialogue which he heads. He teaches graduate courses in anthropology, philosophy and development studies at the Ateneo de Davao University, where he serves both as director of its Research and Publication Office and Rector of the Jesuit Religious. He spearheads the emerging nationwide Ehem! Anti-corruption Movement and guides the Amuma Cancer Support Group which he founded. His recent publications include "Generating Energies in Mount Apo: Cultural Politics in a Contested Environment." Forthcoming are a book on the spirituality of integrity in public service and an anthology of mystical poems in translation.

This article is based on an interview that Isis International-Manila held with Albert Alejo.