

**Parties set deadline of 2016**  
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MANILA: President Benigno Aquino hailed the peace accord as a chance to "finally achieve genuine, lasting peace" in the region, which had seen 150,000 people killed over a four-decade conflict.

Aquino has been the driving the peace process since assuming office in 2010.

Fittingly, the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) have set 2016 as a deadline because Aquino will have to step down by then after serving a six-year term.

He thanked those involved in the provisional accord.

Aquino said the signing was a commitment to peace that would be sustained through democratic ideals, which would heal and empower a peace that recognised the many narratives of Filipinos and would weave them into a single, national aspiration for equitable progress.

To a loud applause of appreciation, he said: "I empathise with our Bangsamoro brothers and sisters, and can only vow to work as hard as I can to see that the culture of impunity is dismantled, and that the foundations of righteousness and cooperation are laid.

"We will give our people what is truly due them: a chance to direct their lives towards advancement in a democratic, peaceful and safe society."

MILF chairman Al Haj Murad Ebrahim also delivered a speech before joining Najib and Aquino in witnessing the signing.

Najib arrived at the palace boulevard at 10am, accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

He was accompanied by Aquino in inspecting a guard of honour, before introducing to the president the Malaysian delegation, which includes Foreign Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Anifah Aman and International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed.

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