

## **Summary Report Regional Voters' Education Conferences June to September 2003**

The project of the Regional Voters' Education started right after the National Voters' Education Summit on May 28 – 30, 2003. The Institute for Political and Electoral Reforms (IPER) as the lead organization for its implementation initiated a meeting with the CER Committee on Voters' Education to discuss the details of the regional conferences. Based on the CER agreement, the committee will be tasked to draft the program and provide list of participants in the different regions for the conferences. Series of meetings were done to put in place the conference.

It was agreed that there would be four regional conferences, namely (with the corresponding schedules):

1. Southern Luzon Voters' Education Conference; (Southern Tagalog and Bicol Area) August 26 – 27, 2003 Lucena City
2. Central and Northern Luzon Voters' Education Conference; September 16 – 17, 2003 Baguio City
3. Visayas Voters' Education Conference; and, September 22 – 23, 2003 Cebu City
4. Mindanao Voters' Education Conference September 25 – 26, 2003 Davao City

Forty participants for each conference were targeted. These would be coming from different NGOs, POs, Church organizations, Party list organizations and Social Action Centers. Most of the organizations that were invited are part of the network of CER members.

During the preparations, members of the consortium were asked to submit list of organizations to be invited in the conferences. It took months to finalize the list of invitees. The final list was then approved for implementation. One participant per organization was set as the policy in the invitations. Although, there were some organizations who asked for more representatives to the conferences, but the policy of limited number of representatives stood.

The conference was divided into two, 1<sup>st</sup> was the re-echo of the voters' education summit and 2<sup>nd</sup> was the formation of CER in the local regional/provincial area.

Day 1 focused on the voters' education conference, where the national situation was discussed and the declaration of the National Voters' Education Summit was presented.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> day focused on the formation of CER in the local area. Discussion of the history of CER, its basis of unity and the organizational guidelines in forming CER were presented.

## **Actual Implementation**

### **Attendance**

The number of participants of each conferences is lesser based on the number of invitations released. In each conference, forty to forty-five invitations were released, except for Mindanao wherein fifty organizations were invited.

<b>Conference Area</b>	<b>No. of Invitations</b>	<b>Actual Participants</b>
1.Southern Luzon Conference	40 invitations	24
2.Central and Northern Luzon	40 invitations	26
3.Visayas wide	45 invitations	24
4.Mindanao	50 invitations	37

The possible reasons for the low participation based on the target number of participants are the ff:

- 1<sup>st</sup> invitations were sent 2 to 3 weeks before the actual conference;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> changes of their addresses;
- 3<sup>rd</sup> changes of contact persons.

### **Conference Proper**

On the overall, voters' education declaration was discussed and adopted by the participants. They expressed the timeliness of the agenda. The participants also shared their local experiences.

The participants particularly in Luzon conferences were interested on the issue of LSR. They were asking for a more detailed discussion on the

particular matter. In Bicol, they declared to resolve to work for the implementation of LSR.

In Southern Luzon they resolved to form two areas for CER, the Southern Tagalog area and the Bicol wide area. The Bicol area planned to convene CER this coming October, with the Bicol Region Social Action Center (BRSAC) as the convenor. They planned to invite more organizations with the same perspective.

In the Visayas conference, they were united on the summit declaration. They resolved to carry out electoral reform campaigns not only in the immediate but also in the long-term program. They also resolved to implement community-based voters' education.

The Central Visayas participants particularly expressed to freeze the implementation of the modernization program based on technical problems. Instead, they suggested that pilot areas be adopted for implementation.

On the formation of CER, the Visayas conference resolves to form two interim structures of CER. Region 6 Western Visayas CER which is composed of Negros Occidental and Panay Island and Region 7 Central Visayas CER which composed Cebu, Bohol, Negros Oriental and Siquijor.

In Mindanao, they adopted the summit declaration and resolved to form a Mindanao regional and provincial CER. They also resolved to conduct a voters' education session in and through the Parents-Teachers Associations, peoples' organizations and other organized groups in the areas.

## **RESOLUTIONS AND PLANS OF ACTION**

### **I. Southern Luzon Voters' Education and CER Formation**

#### **On Voters' Education:**

The SLVEC resolved to adopt National Voters' Education Summit Declaration.

They also resolved to work for the implementation of LSR, first time voters and continuing voters' education.

The group also requested for voter's education material that they can use in their work for voters' education. They also express for a popular module for voter's education that CER will develop.

They also resolved to coordinate with the local government for a community based voters' education.

The Bicol Regional Social Action Commission (BRSAC) has pledged their support for a continuing voters' education.

### **On CER formation Luzon**

The group decided to divide Southern Luzon into two area formation namely; 1. Southern Tagalog area and; 2. Bicol wide area

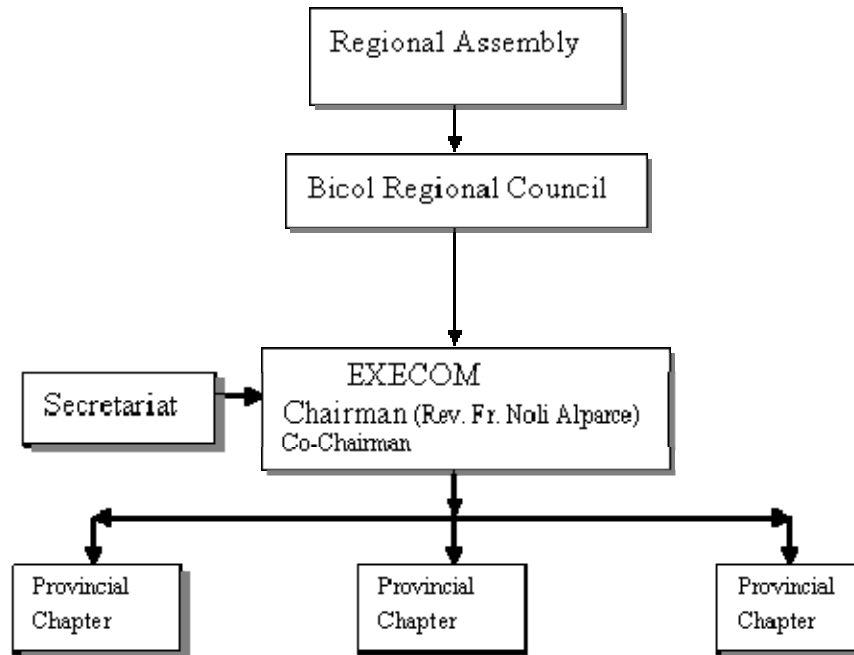
The Bicol area formed an Interim body which is the Bicol Regional Council of CER (BRCC). The physical Center of BRCC will be in Legaspi and its lead convenor is the Bicol Regional Social Action Center (BRSAC). And a secretariat of six members headed by Mr. Joel Calla of the Social Action of Bicol was also formed.

They resolved to reach-out to other provinces in Bicol (Masbate and Catanduanes) and to other NGOs, Pos who are with the same principles that adheres to the declaration of the 2001 Electoral summit.

They planned to call for a Regional Assembly on the first week of October 2003 with the following agenda:

1. National and regional updating;
2. Review of regional module on voters' education;
3. Formalization of BRCC;
4. Localization of electoral program and plans and;
5. Expansion of membership to other provinces within Bicol and to other NGO's.

### **BRCC proposed structure**



The Southern Tagalog area proposed the following resolutions:

Unanimously the group decided to organized the regional CER separate formation from the Bicol Area. They proposed for a coalition type regular formation of CER.

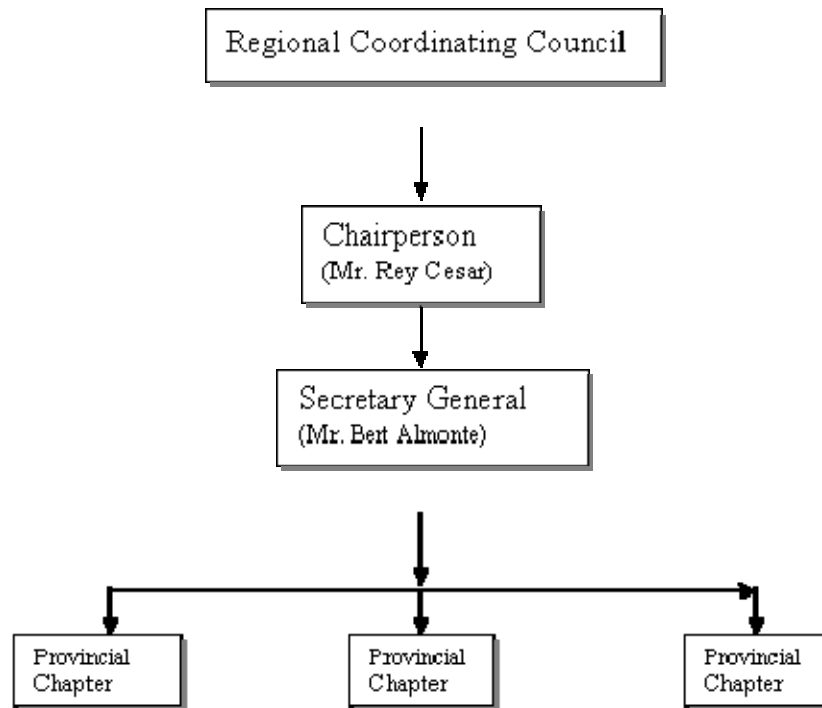
They also adopt the 2002 National Electoral Reform Summit Declaration as the basis of unity in the formation of CER.

The Province of Cavite was chosen as the physical center of CER.

#### Plan of Action

- Pilot testing of IPER Module
- Secure hands-outs from CER/IPER
- Lobbying at the LGU to pass the resolution in support of the Local Sectoral Representation Bill

Proposed organizational structure



## **II. Central and Northern Luzon Voters' Education Conference (CLNLVEC)**

### **On Voters' Education**

The Central and Northern Voters' Education Conference resolved to the following:

1. Approval and adoption of the 2003 National Voters' Education Summit Declaration;
2. Implement continuing voter's education for first time voters. Tapping youth organizations (particularly the e-group) to help for information campaign;
3. Help in cleaning the voters' list (particularly the Social action centers in Northern Luzon);
4. Effective and comprehensive campaign on voters' education and candidate selection;
5. Networking and resource mobilization and organized activities that would educate voters';

The group also expressed the need for material and modules that can be used in their information/dissemination campaign. They asked CER national and its member organization to answer to their needs.

There was a standing proposal that the Social Action Centers in Northern Luzon will be the center for coordination on voters' education. But the Northern Luzon Social Action Center (NLSAC) expressed the need for them to consult their respective dioceses. The concern was accepted by the group. The NLSAC promised that they will consult their respective dioceses within the year. Hopefully, early next year they will be ready for voters' education.

### **On CER formation**

In summary, the Central and Northern Luzon Voters' Education Conference resolved to the following:

1. Common appreciation of the need for voters' education and advocacy for local sectoral representation;
2. Common appreciation of engaging the CER in terms of policy and electoral reforms and providing venues for the resource accessing;
3. Further accreditation of local NGOs-POs at the Local Development Council;
4. Series of consultations by NLSAC with its constituents should be done before they can join CER formation. NLSAC hopefully will be the center of gravity for communication.

NLSAC needs to consult their partners/network particularly their respective Dioceses.

The following members of the NL-SAC to be consulted:

- Diocese of Laog. Laog City
- Archdiocese of Nueva Segovia, Vigan
- Archdiocese of Lingayen, Dagupan
- Diocese San Fernando, La Union
- Vicariate of Baguio, Benguet
- Vicariate of Tabuk, Kalinga Apayao
- Archdiocese of Tuguegarao
- Diocese of Ilagan
- Diocese of Alaminos
- Diocese of Bayombong
- Diocese of Urdaneta
- Diocese of Bontoc, Lagawe
- Diocese of Batanes
- Diocese of Bangued, Abra

### **III. Visayas Voters' Education Conference**

#### **On Voters' Education**

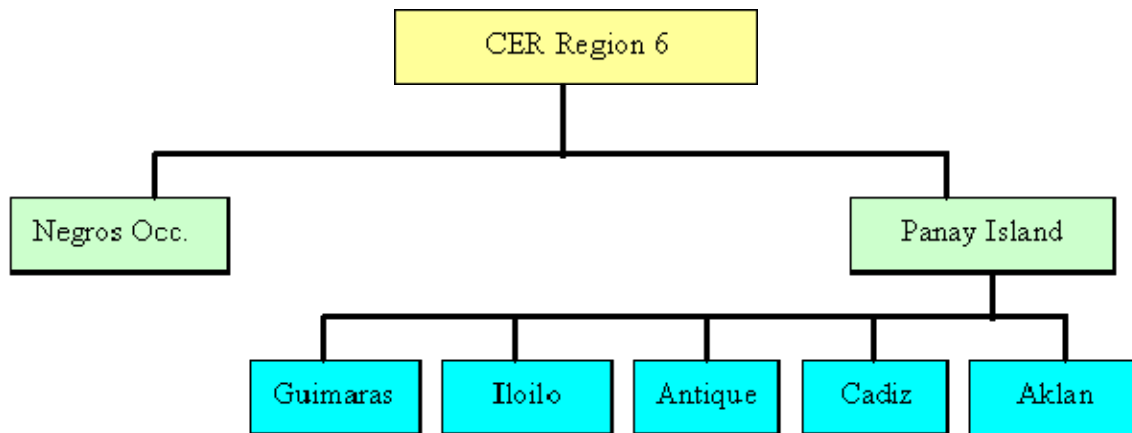
The Central Visayas group came up with this unity:

1. On voters Education National summit declaration
  - Based on the technical problems, modernization program be freezed its full implementation and shall adopt piloting of areas.
  - If COMELEC will pursue its full implementation this 2004 polls, massive voters education be initiated by CER.
2. Community-based voters education:
  - Technical aspect must include poll watching education based on the new technology.
  - Tap capability building fund of LGUs for voters education activities.
3. Proposed Resolutions:
  - Creating CER-Visayas as a 'conferential body' and initiate voters' education conferences to their respective areas.
  - CER-Visayas to pass resolution urging DepEd / CHED to integrate voters education (CER version) in their school curriculum.
  - CER-Visayas to lobby their LGU counterparts to pass a municipal resolution urging congress for immediate approval of the pending LSR bill.



## On CER Formation Visayas

### Interim Structure **Region 6 Western Visayas**



Interim Regional	Co-Chair Persons
Panay .....	Iloilo Code-NGO
Negros Occi .....	Quedan – Kaisahan

Secretariat	
Panay .....	Iloilo Code-NGOs
Negros Occidental ...	Quedan-Kaisahan

Activities  
 Preparatory Meetings ..... Panay  
 ..... October 16, 2003  
 Neg.  
 Occ. .... October 7, 2003  
 CER Formations ..... Panay  
 ..... Nov. 5, 2003  
 Neg.  
 Occ. ... Nov. 6, 2003

## Interim Structure Council

### Region 8

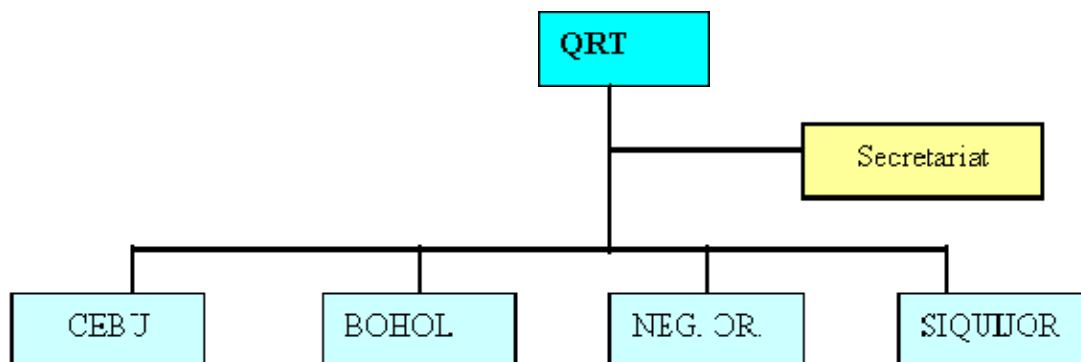
Don Romero ..... Chairman  
 Jojo Abrugar ..... Vice  
 Chairman  
 Sr. Norie Se-it ..... Secretary  
 General  
 Raul Torrechiva  
 Tootsie Maye  
 Target Date ..... October 21,  
 2003

Agenda : Presentation of the 2002 National declaration and the 2003 voters education National summit declaration.

1 CER and the CER Regional Formation needs materials reproduction.

## Interim Structure

### Region 7 Central Visayas



8 District  
District

3 District

3 District

Lone

Activities:

- Provincial Consultation
- Ground Working
- Recruitment
- Caucus Meetings
- Voters Education .....
- CER Version

#### **IV. Mindanao Voters' Education Conference**

##### **On Voters' Education**

##### **Presentation of workshop results, unities and resolutions**

##### **I. Voters' Education/Formation on Electoral Modernization and Absentee Voting**

- targets should be: Elementary pupils, HS students, College students
- shall conduct voter education in and through Parent-teachers Association, People's organization, and other organized groups in the area
- should form as part in the curriculum of HS and College education
- VF- should have along-term program, substantial in its content
- proposes that the CER voter education module be released as soon as possible
- the COMELEC must spearhead in the information drive, re: electoral modernization program
- include other civic groups within the locality
- should consolidate voters' education module, organize a task force for this
- *suggestion*: establish tools or parameters to ensure elected officials in non-partisan campaigns

- on the technical aspect, we have to orient voters on the new forms, accuracy in filling them and the conduct of actual practice
- should be conducted during barangay assemblies to be facilitated by barangay officials

## **II. Church Participation**

- that there will be two sets of ballots- one in Arabic and the other in English
- conduct massive VF to all basic ecclesial communities and parish leaders and members
- CER to link with CBCP, NASSA, and NCCP for a massive VF
- Issue pastoral statement on VF

## **III. Maximize research and extension service programs**

- maximize research and extension of schools to conduct VE and other related activities
- forge linkage with media groups
- maximize personal networks with broadcasters and lobby for guestings

## **IV. COMELEC**

- that the body shall create a commission that will investigate erring officials/personnel

## **V. First time voters**

- coordinate with incumbent officials to provide transportation of first time voters in the 3<sup>rd</sup> district
- accommodate other mechanisms to allow people who live in squatter areas to vote (e.g. issuance of certification from brgy and purok officials of validating residency)

## **VI. Responsibility of the academe**

- curriculum integration (CWTS)
  - encourage researches on governance and electoral reforms
  - community extension (pool of volunteers)
  - partnership between schools and COMELEC and CSOs on technical skills assistance
- note: CER can come as facilitator

## **VII. Responsibilities of Government Agencies**

- GA with workers in voters education program should include such in their performance evaluation and allow state workers to participate in voters' education program
- Clarify electoral laws
- All Gas with common-based programs should integrate voters education in these programs

- Install mechanisms to ensure and maximize voters' participation in the election

### **On CER Mindanao Formation**

Presentation of Workshop Unities, Resolutions, and Plans of Actions

- we accept the Summit Declaration (incorporated with suggestions)
- On the regional set-up, these are to be taken consideration:
  1. Catholic Church
  2. Ulama
  3. Catholic Schools
  4. Youth (Vote for your Future)
  5. Women
  6. Party Lists (Sanlakas and Partido ng Manggagawa, Abanse Pinay, Akbayan)
- identify possible contacts for regional CER formation (4<sup>th</sup> qtr. 2003)
- initiate regional assembly- January 2004 (re: election, agenda building, proposal making)

### **Calendar of Activities:**

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Organizati on</u></b>	<b><u>address</u></b>	<b><u>Activities</u></b>	<b><u>Time Fram e</u></b>
<b><u>Regi on 12:</u></b> 1. Dann y Tinoc o 2. Abdul Abub akar 3. Nesto r Tapia 4. Jun Apare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ AKBAYAN</li> <li>➤ MPPM</li> <li>➤ CRESCEN T</li> <li>➤ TACDRUP</li> <li>➤ PSAC</li> <li>➤ SCC- Institute for Global Educatio n and Int'l</li> </ul>	<b>General Santos</b>  Maguind anao  Kidapaw an City Midsaya p Marbel  Midsaya p	1. Consultati on- provincial re-echo  2. Region- wide re- echo  3. Meetings- finalization of activities	-  End of Nov.  Nov. 15-16  Last week of Octob er

ce	Rel.			
5. Ryan	➤ CMLC	Kidapaw		
Cris		an		
Cabal	➤ PRRM			
lo		Kidapaw		
6. Al	➤ PRRM	an		
Sentu				
rias		Kidapaw		
Jr.		an		
7. Teres				
eita				
Pana				
8. Ameli				
ta				
Talot				
alo				
9. Rosa				
nna				
Alave				

<p><b>Region 10</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Balaod-Min</li> <li>➤ PRRM</li> <li>➤ SAC</li> <li>➤ SAC</li> <li>➤ SAC</li> <li>➤ SAC</li> <li>➤ SAC</li> <li>➤ TRIPEA CEDEV (ic/oz)</li> <li>➤ PASAKA-LN</li> <li>➤ HOPE for CHANGE (IC)</li> <li>➤ KANIB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ CDO</li> <li>➤ Camiguin</li> <li>➤ Malaybalay</li> <li>➤ CDO</li> <li>➤ Valencia</li> <li>➤ Iligan</li> <li>➤ Ozamis</li> <li>➤ Bukidnon</li> </ul>		
<p><b><u>Region 13</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ AKBAYAN</li> <li>➤ KAMMPIL</li> <li>➤ SCFO</li> <li>➤ HEED</li> <li>➤ AID FDTN</li> <li>➤ CONVERGENCE</li> <li>➤ SN. JOSE DINAGAT FOUNDATION</li> <li>➤ LEAF FDTN</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Agusan Sur</li> <li>➤ Butuan City</li> <li>➤ Agusan sur</li> <li>➤ Agusan sur</li> <li>➤ Agusan Sur</li> <li>➤ Agusan Norte</li> <li>➤ Butuan City</li> </ul>		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ ALTERDEV</li> <li>➤ TOUCH FDTN</li> <li>➤ PAKISAMA</li> <li>➤ TCSA</li> <li>➤ SAC/DIOC ESES</li> <li>➤ URIOS</li> <li>➤ SJIT</li> <li>➤ SN NICHOLAS</li> <li>➤ BOMBO RADIO</li> <li>➤ RMN/FAMILY</li> <li>➤ LUMAD</li> <li>➤ PROPEGE MUS</li> <li>➤ NGEI/NGPI</li> <li>➤ PICOP EMPLOYEES UNION</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Caraga</li> <li>➤ Dinagat</li> <li>➤ Surigao</li> <li>➤ Butuan</li> <li>➤ Caraga</li> <li>➤ Surigao City</li> <li>➤ Agusan Sur</li> <li>➤ Tandag</li> <li>➤ Caraga</li> <li>➤ SC/ACT</li> <li>➤ SC/ACT</li> <li>➤ Surigao City, SC/ACT</li> <li>➤ Caraga</li> <li>➤ Butuan</li> <li>➤ Rosario</li> <li>➤ Bislig</li> </ul>		
<b><u>Region 11</u></b>			1. launching	➤



			of V4YF 2. Youth Summit Press Conf 3. <i>Hakot</i> of unregisate red voters (buses to be provided by DACS- for approval yet) 4. Training of speakers (Kumare/K umpare) 5. Accreditati on with Comelec 6. Voters Education (c/o Councilor Galicia project) 7. Expansion of CER 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muslim: Bantay-Bayan Foundatio n</li> <li>• Catholic: Mda-Sulu Pastoral Conf</li> <li>• Davao- Arch Youth Catholic</li> </ul>	Oct 1 (6-12 pm, MTS) ➤ Oct 11  ➤ 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> district s- Octob er  ➤ Oct  ➤ Octob er  ➤ Octob er- Dece mber  ➤ Octob er- Dece mber
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			Ass'n • NGO's: MINCON • Private: YMCA 8. Exchange of materials and directories	➤ October
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## Conclusion

The project in re-echoing the voters' education summit was successfully implemented. There are still many things to be done though in relation to voters' education. Organizations present in each conference resolved that there should be a continuing voters' education. They believed that educating voters is a continuing process.

The CER formation in Regional and Provincial level was well accepted. Although, there were some organizations that expressed that they have to consult their constituents/dioceses, most of the participants agreed to form CER in its interim stage. The Declaration of the National Electoral Reform Summit as the basis of unity in the formation of CER was discussed thoroughly and adopted by the participants.