

## **FR. ELISEO R. MERCADO JR., OMI, PHD**

Father Mercado was President of Notre Dame University in Cotabato City, Philippines (1992-2002). He served as the Director for Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation for the OMI based in Rome from 2003-2006. As Congregational JPIC Director, he was also the Permanent Representative of the OMI to the UN as an Accredited NGO at the UN Department of Public Information and at the ECOSOC, both in New York and Geneva.

A recognized expert on the role of Islam in Southeast Asia and the Philippines, Father Mercado was designated Chairperson of the Independent cease-fire Monitoring Committee of the Philippine Government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). He has also been extensively involved in peace process in Mindanao and a month ago he was designated by the President of the Republic as the Chief Peace Negotiator with the Muslim Fronts. He is the Lead Convener of the National Peace Council that work for the resumption of the formal peace talks between the Philippine Government and all rebel fronts including the National Liberation Front.

He had lectured at the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Singapore), the University of Sans Malaya (Kuala Lumpur), Georgetown University (Washington DC), U.S. Institute of Peace (Washington, D.C.) and at the EAPI, Ateneo de Manila University. Father Mercado has published papers on Islam and Mindanao that have been featured in leading publications in the Philippines and abroad.

In 2003-2004, he was chosen as one of the 25 senior scholars worldwide under the Fulbright Millennium Scholars in 2003 on Religions and Conflicts. From March to April 2006, he was a member of the 6-person delegation of the Union of Superiors General that visited the Southern Sudan to formulate the Church response to the urgent pastoral needs following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in January 2005. From January to May 2007, he spent time as Consultant to the Sudan Catholic Bishops Regional Conference on Peace building, Healing and Reconstruction.

Father Mercado holds a doctorate in Divinity and Humanity, Master's degrees in Theology and Philosophy. He completed work in Islamic Studies and Arabic Studies at the Gregorian University in Rome and at the Oriental Institute in Cairo.