

Frequently Asked Questions on the Decommissioning Process of MILF

What is decommissioning?

How is it different from surrender?

Decommissioning is a **PROCESS** aimed at facilitating the successful transition for the MILF combatants to productive civilian life. The Decommissioning of MILF is a part of the larger Program for Normalization in the Bangsamoro.

In the case of the decommissioning of MILF, they voluntarily choose to decommission their forces and weapons as a part of the agreement.

IDB

INDEPENDENT
DECOMMISSIONING
BODY

Who will do the decommissioning?

The Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), through their peace negotiating panels, created the IDB to oversee the decommissioning of MILF forces and weapons. Its creation is enshrined in the Annex on Normalization of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro.

Who are the members of the IDB?

The IDB is composed of representatives from the Governments of Turkey, Norway, Kingdom of Brunei, and local experts nominated by the GPH and MILF.



What is the role of the Verification and Monitoring Assistance Team (VMAT)?

The VMATs are teams constituted by IDB to assist in the verification and monitoring of the decommissioning process. It is composed of representatives of the GPH and MILF, headed by an international member.

What are the qualifications for the MILF combatant to be included in the decommissioning?

Any member of MILF-BIAF regardless of gender and of legal age who are included in the list submitted by the MILF Panel to the IDB will be decommissioned following the validation and verification process.

Will there be an inventory of weapons and recording of information of the combatants?

The MILF combatants and weapons will be processed during the decommissioning. Each of the weapon will be checked and inventoried. Combatants will also be interviewed individually the Verification Processing Teams (VPT) during the decommissioning process.

What is verification of combatants?



Verification is the process of identification of the combatant by his/her immediate commander as the person recorded in the MILF list submitted to IDB and is validated by the VMAT.

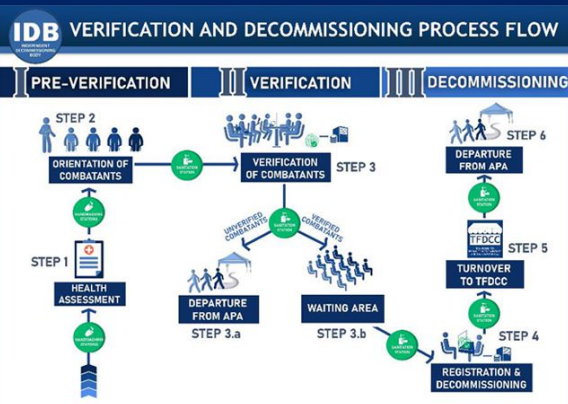
How will IDB ensure the integrity of the registry of combatants?

The IDB Database software is pre-programmed to ensure the integrity of its list of combatants. It guarantees safety through measures such as the collection of biometrics and pictures of each combatant.” There will be a prompt/-flagging in the case of multiple entries of the collected data.

Are woman combatants included in decommissioning?

Woman combatants included in the list submitted to IDB will be decommissioned.

What are the steps in the decommissioning process?



Upon arrival at the Assembly and Processing Area (APA), the combatants will undergo identification and verification. The combatant’s identity will be confirmed by his/her unit commander with reference to the list. This phase is testified by VMATs represented by an international member, the GPH and MILF.

The combatant will then proceed to the registration area where their personal, guerilla and socio-economic information will be registered to the IDB database. After this phase, they will be provided with the decommissioned combatant ID card which signifies that they have already been successfully decommissioned.

What will happen after the combatants are decommissioned?

Decommissioning is a joint effort by the normalization mechanisms. After the decommissioning process of IDB, the combatants will be turned over to the Task Force for Decommissioned Combatants and their Communities (TFDCC). TFDCC will facilitate the provision of the assistance of the decommissioned combatants to ensure their transition to productive civilian life.

What kind of weapons will be decommissioned?

Based on the Protocol of the Implementation of the IDB Terms of Reference, weapons in the context of decommissioning are functional crew-served weapons, high-powered firearms, and ammunition.

What if the weapons submitted for decommissioning are not functional?

Only functional weapons will be accepted for decommissioning. Part of the verification and decommissioning of weapons is safety and functionality test. However, should there be any instances, IDB would receive any weapons not functional, but that it would not count as an official decommissioned weapon.

What if the weapon does not have a serial number?

As long as the weapon is included in the list submitted to IDB and has passed the standards required and completed the verification process, it will be decommissioned.

Why is there a wide disparity of the MILF combatants as against the firearms?

The weapons of the MILF can be classified into three: those that are organizationally owned by the MILF; personally owned, and those that are owned by the sympathizers. As agreed by the parties, IDB will only decommission weapons that are organizationally owned by the MILF.

What are the steps of the weapons verification?

Weapons verification is the process of checking each weapon and ammunition with reference to the list submitted by the MILF. It is consisting of safety and functionality check, specifications collection, registration and tagging by the VMAT. Although undergoing the same procedure, the weapons and

ammunition will be processed separately for safety purposes.



Why only IDB has access to the MILF list of Combatants and Weapons ?

As provided in the Program on Normalization, the MILF shall submit to IDB the list/inventory of combatants and weapons for verification and validation. As provided in Section X of the IDB Terms of Reference, all information, data, or opinions gathered, generated, or exchanged in connection with the work of IDB are confidential and may not be divulged to any organization, individual or entity.

What will happen to the weapons after the decommissioning?

As soon as the registration is complete, each weapon will be provided with a unique tag. The IDB will then take custody of the weapons, this signifies that the weapons are decommissioned. The weapons will be transported and stored at the Secured Arms Storage Area (SASA) until such time it will be put beyond use.

What is the current stage and update on the Decommissioning Process?

As of 10 August 2023, IDB completed the third phase of the decommissioning process of MILF combatants and weapons. The breakdown are as follows:



Phase 3

(Completed in August 2023)

- Decommissioning of 13,987 combatants
- Decommissioning of 2,450 weapons
- Disposal of 2,937 ammunition/explosives

Phase 2

(completed in March 2020)

- Decommissioning of 12,000 combatants
- Decommissioning of 2,100 weapons
- Disposal of 3,480 ammunition/explosives



Phase 1

(completed in June 2015)

- Decommissioning of 145 combatants
- Decommissioning of 75 weapons
- Disposal of 476 ammunition/explosives



Cumulative Figures:

- 26,132 combatants (65% of the target)
- 4,625 weapons (66% of the target)
- Disposal of 6,893 ammunitions/explosives (100%)