

**February 23, 2010**

**CSAFP AWARDS MEDALS TO SOLDIERS AT SOLCOM**

CAMP AGUINALDO, QC – Two military officers who led the arrest of the 43 New People’s Army members in Rizal on February 6 were awarded today at the 23rd Southern Luzon Command Founding Anniversary celebration in Camp Nakar, Lucena City.

202nd Infantry Brigade Commander Colonel Aurelio Baladad and 16th Infantry Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Jaime Abawag were awarded with the Bronze Cross Medal for their contribution to the military’s campaign against insurgency.

“The Bronze Cross Medal we awarded to you is a testament of our complete trust in your competence, professionalism and dedication to our sworn duty as the protector of our country, people and democracy,” said SOLCOM Commander Lt. Gen. Roland M. Detabali in a speech.

“I know our soldiers have been accused of torturing and sexually molesting the detainees. Such accusations are plain propaganda against the AFP and the PNP, aimed to deceive the people, sway public opinion to their favor and downplay the tremendous debacle that the CPP/NPA/NDF suffered as the result of their arrest,” he added.

Lt. Gen Detabali strongly stands behind his men: “I will not dignify the lies of the left by commenting on them. A case has been filed before the courts and I believe in our justice system. It will eventually affirm that we have been telling the truth.”

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Victor S. Ibrado, the guest of honor of the event expressed his confidence that the military is on target in reducing insurgents’ capabilities by June this year.

Ibrado recognized the SOLCOM’s achievements during his leadership: “The accomplishments of SOLCOM translate much to what the entire TEAM AFP has achieved during my stint as AFP Chief of Staff. At ako ay nagpapasalamat sa bawat isa sa inyo sa sipag at husay na inyong ipinakita sa pagtupad sa iyong tungkulin. Isang karangalan ang makasama kayong lahat sa paglilingkod sa ating bayan at mamamayan.”

Ibrado also thanked SOLCOM for its programs, most especially its non-traditional approaches in dismantling of one guerilla front and the successful downgrading of four others this year.

“It is my belief that these people-oriented programs instituted by SOLCOM were instrumental in the capture of the so-called ‘Morong 43.’ The people have already been enlightened on the treacherous and deceitful ways of the CPP/NPA. The information provided by the people themselves led to the capture of ‘Morong 43’ which we consider as a major debacle of the CPP/NPA and another unprecedented achievement of SOLCOM,” Ibrado said.

This year’s SOLCOM founding anniversary theme is dubbed as “TEAM SOLCOM: Kaagapay at Sandigan ng Mamamyan Tungo sa Mapayapa at Maunlad na Bayan.”

## CSAFP Awards Bronze Cross Medals to Two Military Officers



Photo by: Sgt. Gildo M. Cabalo

**Testament of competence, professionalism and dedication.** Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff, Gen. Victor S. Ibrado awards a Bronze Cross Medal to Colonel Aurelio Baladad, Commander of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade in recognition for his exemplary leadership that led to the arrest of 43 New People's Army members in Morong, Rizal last February 6. The Bronze Cross Medal is awarded to military and civilian personnel of the AFP for heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy. The Armed Forces remains confident in reducing insurgents' capabilities by June this year.



Photo by: Sgt. Gildo M. Cabalo

**Testament of competence, professionalism and dedication.** Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff, Gen. Victor S. Ibrado awards a Bronze Cross Medal to Lt. Col Jaime Abawag, Commander of the 16<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion, in recognition for his exemplary leadership that led to the arrest of 43 New People's Army members in Morong, Rizal last February 6. The Bronze Cross Medal is awarded to military and civilian personnel of the AFP for heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy. The Armed Forces remains confident in reducing insurgents' capabilities by June this year.