



Joint Special Operations Task Force – Philippines (JSOTF-P)



On January 28, 2002, the United States deployed Special Operations Forces to the southern Philippines in support of joint United States and Philippine efforts to counter the Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiyah — terrorist groups affiliated with al Qaeda.



JSOTF-P works with the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) to advise and assist with their efforts where they are located – on Philippine government bases, compounds and outposts in jungle, village, and urban areas. The command is comprised of members from all branches of the U.S. military, including National Guard and Reserve forces and civilians. These forces work in partnership with other U.S. government agencies, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Justice and the National Geospatial Agency.

JSOTF-P, in coordination with the U.S. country team, advises and assists Philippine Security Forces to defeat Violent Extremist Organizations and neutralize enemy safe havens. JSOTF-P members are temporarily in the Southern Philippines at the request of the Government of the Philippines and only conduct non-combat advisory operations. The efforts of U.S. special forces, along with their interagency partners, and the Government of the Philippines are working. This "Whole of Nation" approach has resulted in a significant degradation of transnational and locally inspired terrorist groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah and the Abu Sayyaf Group and created a region largely inhospitable to terrorists.

Task Force members continue to support the Government of the Philippines as it transfers the role of internal security from the AFP to the PNP to effectively carry on the fight and promote, peace, security and development.



Employing a "Whole of Nation" approach, using the strength of joint AFP and PNP forces, has regionally contained the most violent terrorist threat faced by the local population. U.S. special forces will continue to partner with Philippine security forces as long as they are invited to do so by the Philippine government. Millions of dollars, thousands of subject-matter-expert exchanges, veterinarian and medical civic action programs, and civil engineering projects have made a difference. These contributions have made a difference not only for the access and development of the Philippine Security Forces, but also for the men, women and children in the villages, barangays, and towns of Mindanao. Their lives are better today because of the progress achieved by AFP and PNP, who are truly the protectors of the population.