

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Plan to postpone RP polls in 2010 exposed

PAGE A1 ◀

The resolution seeks to extend the term of House members to four years and other elected local officials, except those at the barangay level.

Colmenares said the Mandanas resolution was one of 10 measures pending in the committee, all seeking to amend or revise the Constitution.

Initial denial
La Union Rep. Victor Ortega, chair of the committee on constitutional amendments, initially denied the existence of a resolution seeking term extension for Ms Arroyo or other elected officials.

But Ortega later acknowledged that HR 550 had been formally accepted by his committee.

Palace against extension
Anthony Golez, deputy presidential spokesperson, said Mandanas was free to file HR 550, but said it was too premature to talk about it.

Asked if Malacañang would exercise its "moral suasion" to talk its allies out of moves to extend Ms Arroyo's term, Golez said: "We've said time and again that the President is stepping down in 2010."

Golez reiterated that Malacañang would back moves to lift the restrictive economic provisions of the Constitution, but not the limit on the term of the President.

"If you ask the Palace, we will not agree to a term extension of any elected official," he said in reaction to a survey showing that a majority of Filipinos are opposed to Charter change amid fears it would be used to extend the President's term.

He said Malacañang would block any efforts to extend the term limits of any elected official, including the President.

Lawmakers' call
But Golez said it was up to lawmakers to decide when to go

ahead with Charter change. "We'll be leaving it up to Congress to tackle Charter change because it begins and ends there," he said.

Deputy Minority Leader Risa Hontiveros on Tuesday sought Ortega's commitment that the public would not be in for a "surprise" on the Villafuerte resolution and "wake up one morning with the Constitution already changed."

"That is correct. Personally, I do not like surprises," Ortega replied.

Supreme court
Sought for comment, Majority Leader Arthur Defensor said there was "no way" that the Villafuerte resolution would skip the procedures of the House and go straight to the Supreme Court.

Himself a signatory to the resolution, Defensor said the measure would basically seek the high court's ruling on whether the Senate and House of Representatives should convene as a constituent assembly--and later vote--jointly or separately in amending the Constitution.

"Whatever happens, it will pass through the regular process of the House," he told the Inquirer.

"I signed the resolution because I was looking for a trigger mechanism that will force the hand of the Supreme Court to rule on the two basic issues."

Three modes
Convening Congress into a constituent assembly is one of the three modes of amending the Constitution. The others are the people's initiative and constitutional convention whose delegates are elected.

Ortega said the Villafuerte resolution would be referred to his committee in case it was filed and submitted to the plenary by the committee on rules headed by Defensor.

In HR 550, Mandanas noted that the 1987 Constitution "does not specify the need to call for a constituent assembly or joint session of Congress for proposals for amendments to, or revision of, the Constitution."

He instead went by the House rules, stating that "proposals to amend or revise the Constitution shall be by resolution which may be filed at any time by any member."

"The adoption of resolutions proposing amendments to or revision of the Constitution shall follow the procedure for the enactment of bills," says Section 140 of the rules.

Copy of resolution
Hontiveros challenged Villafuerte and Ms Arroyo's son, Pangpanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, to present a copy of the resolution to lawmakers opposed to Charter change.

"In light of the administration's attempt to evade accountability over charges of fraud and corruption, any attempt to unilaterally amend the Constitution by an administration-dominated House of Representatives spells term extension for (Arroyo)," she said in a statement.

Courting protests
The President's allies are courting a major protest action if they insist on tinkering with the Constitution, Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said Tuesday.

Cruz said the public did not buy the congressmen's claim that they would only change the Charter's economic provisions once they convene Congress into a constituent assembly.

"That is a lie. What they would like to change is anything there that can make the incumbent person continue her tenure of office no matter under what title," Magulo 'yan (That will create trouble)," Cruz said at a news forum Nov. 25.

He said he would not advise them to proceed with (the constituent assembly) and vote on it, then try to go to the Supreme Court. "If they do that, and I think that is the plan, this might be the trigger that I'm talking about," he added.

His contacts among the civil society groups have been telling him that "many groups are preparing" to move in case the House succeeds in turning itself into a constituent assembly in order to amend the Constitution, the archbishop said.

Cruz said lawmakers favoring Charter change could not attribute the poverty and corruption in the country to the Constitution's provisions. ■

AN INCREDIBLE VALUE IN TV ENTERTAINMENT. NO GUESSING REQUIRED.



*Includes TFCDirect™ and PREFERRED CHOICE™ packages. Price reflected includes a \$18 bill credit for 12 months after entire or phone-in rebate. PREFERRED CHOICE package requires activation of any WorldDirect service. PREFERRED CHOICE regular price \$32.99/mo. TFCDirect regular price \$25.99/mo. Offers end 3/3/09 and are based on approved credit, credit card required. New customers only (lease required). Must maintain programming, DVR and/or HD Access. Lease fee \$4.99/mo. for second and each additional receiver.

Plus get GMA Pinoy TV with FilipinoDirect™ package

WorldDirect customer must first subscribe to DIRECTV BASIC (\$9.99/mo.) or any DIRECTV base package (\$29.99/mo) or above.

Enter for a chance to win up to **\$10,000 in cash** or a trip to the Philippines by March 1, 2009.

For details, visit www.bigaytodosweepstakes.com

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Open to legal U.S. residents who are 18 years of age or older at the time of entry. Void in Puerto Rico, Guam, Virgin Islands, U.S. Territories and Possessions and where ever prohibited. The odds of winning any prize depends on number of eligible entries received. These are abbreviated rules; participation in Sweepstakes is subject to Official Rules. For Official Rules, visit www.bigaytodosweepstakes.com. BIGAY TODO Sweepstakes begins 12:00-01 A.M. ET 10/27/08; ends 11:59:59 P.M. ET 3/1/09. Sponsored by ABS-CBN International, 150 Shoreline Drive, Redwood City, CA 94065.

Act now. Call DIRECTV at 1-866-875-8749 or ASTI an Authorized DIRECTV Retailer, at 1-702-421-2135

MEDICAL AESTHETICS TREATMENTS

- Blue Light Acne Treatment
- Skin Rejuvenation
- Skin Tightening
- IPL Photofacial
- Fractional Wrinkle Reduction
- Painless Hair Reduction
- Body Contour with VelaShape
- Cellulite and Fat Reduction
- Miracle Vela-Lipo (Tumescent Liposuction)
- Chemical Peels
- HydraFacial
- Microdermabrasion
- Cosmetic Injection
 - * Botox
 - * Restylane
 - * Perlane
 - * Juvederm
 - * Radiesse
 - * Mesotherapy
- Skin Care Products
- Many More...
- * Payment Plan Available

BEFORE

AFTER

Miracle Lipo (Tumescent Liposuction)
utilizes tumescent technique to permanently remove the unwanted fat in the office. It's safe, effective, and painless.

3131 W. Charleston Blvd. Ste. #150, Las Vegas, NV 89102
FREE CONSULTATION (702) 614-3131
www.miracle-image.com

LIN LAW GROUP

A Law Firm with Medical Knowledge and Experience

Focus in Personal Injury and Auto Accident

- Wills, Trusts, and Estate Planning
- Contract, Business Formation
- Bail
- Family Law, Divorce, Prenuptial
- Immigration
- Naturalization, Green Card
- Incorporation, LLC
- Criminal Defenses
- Traffic Tickets (\$100.00) (No Point No School) in most cases
- All Types of Civil Litigation / Disputes

For Consultation: 702-871-9888

MICHAEL M. LIN, D.C., Esq.
Nevada, Federal District Court Attorney
UNLV Boyd School of Law, Santa Clara University, California, Arizona Licensed
College, Doctor of Chiropractic

ERIN QUE
Legal Assistant

TAWAGAN LANG PO NINYO ANG INYONG KABABAYAN

The call that takes care of your questions and troubles!

24 Hour Injury Hotline: (702) 824-8866
We speak: Tagalog, English, and Mandarin
5288 Spring Mtn. Road, Ste 103, Las Vegas, NV 89146
Facsimile: (702) 648-0888

You may have to pay the opposing party's attorney fees and cost in the event of a loss