

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

# House to amend Charter...

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This has led to a storm of protests and outcry against such an assembly, which critics say was primarily aimed at lifting the term limits of incumbent officials, specifically President Arroyo.

Antonino said that by convening a constituent assembly, the House would achieve its goal of

creating a "justiceable cause" to prompt the Supreme Court to come out with a ruling on whether the House and the Senate should vote separately or just as one body in proposing amendments to the Constitution.

"The case filed by lawyer Oliver Lozano and his daughter, Evangelina, with the Supreme Court

is premature because there is no cause of action yet. It will come when we have decided to form a con-ass," said Antonino. "Since there are disparate schools of thought on the con-ass interpretation, the Supreme Court has to decide on this."

Antonino likened the constituent assembly to the people's initiative mode to change the Constitution which was thumbed down, 8-7, by the high court in October 2006 because this mode could be used only for minor and not major changes in the Charter.

"The People's initiative interpretation gave clarity to what should really be the process. In this case they, will declare what they think is the legal interpretation on how to go about con-ass," said Antonino.

Thus all fears and suspicions of term extension and no elections in 2010 were baseless, according to the House majority.

House Speaker Prospero Nograles said that recent events - from poll automation to the merger of Lakas-Kampi - were all geared toward holding presidential elections in 2010. He reiterated his previous declaration that there would be no term extension under his watch as speaker.

Nograles said that Brother Ed-

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