



Contact: Rick Bahague
Tel. No.: 02.413.4196
Mobile: +63917.884.0096
Email: secretariat@cp-union.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
30 June 2009

COMELEC should not sell out 2010 Elections to foreigners

"COMELEC should not leave the 2010 Automated Elections in the hands of foreign control," said Mr. Rick Bahague, National Coordinator of the Computer Professionals' Union (CPU) in reaction to the pull out of Smartmatic's local partner, Technology Information Management. CPU has been a vocal critic of the COMELEC's hasty implementation of the Automated Elections.

"As it stands, if the current COMELEC itself tries to implement the automated elections with Smartmatic, it would be nothing short of selling out the 2010 elections to foreigners." explained Mr. Bahague.

"As COMELEC is unprepared and technically incapable to do the automation, it will be blindly following Smartmatic's lead. We fear that whoever has close links with the said firm will most probably win the elections," said Bahague.

As recent as October 2008, COMELEC's own Advisory Council gave the opinion that the current "IT infrastructure of COMELEC is inadequate to meet the complexities of an automated election."

This recent development will further delay the COMELEC's already very short timeline to implement the automation. "This will result in an Automated Election System (AES) that lacks adequate and rigorous testing," asserted Mr. Bahague.

"Machines will break and fail randomly and software will always have bugs. These could only be minimized if these are subjected to rigorous testing" before using it in the field, said Bahague.

The CPU maintains that the AES will not eliminate cheating and fraud in the 2010 elections. Moreover, technology to speed up voting and the canvassing process only becomes relevant and useful if the people behind the technology are credible and will serve to protect the interests of the population in the elections.

"Garci will be back but now with a different modus operandi. Failure to address these issues would put the elections right in the palms of those in power, or worse-- lead to a failure of elections," warns Mr. Bahague. # # #