



LAKAS
KAMPI
CMD

PRESS RELEASE

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PUNO ANNOUNCES 2010 VICE PRESIDENTIAL BID AS KAMPI APPROVES MERGER WITH LAKAS-CMD

Secretary Ronnie Puno of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) yesterday announced his plan to run as the administration's vice-presidential candidate in the 2010 national elections under the would-be unified political powerhouse of Lakas-KAMPI CMD.

Puno's announcement before the National Council of the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), where he sits as chairman, received instant applause and overwhelming support from its members, prompting Rep. Rodolfo Antonino to call for a vote of acclamation in support of the DILG chief's bid.

But Puno himself stopped Antonino from moving for such a vote, saying that he does not want to preempt the future decisions of the incoming Lakas-KAMPI CMD party and would abide by whatever choices it would make with regard to its national candidates in the 2010 polls.

"I would like to inform all of you and ask your permission to vie for the nomination as candidate for Vice President of the merged Lakas Kampi CMD party when a convention is finally held on this matter," Puno said before the members of the Kampi National Council. "I will be going around and talking to you because I want to be your personal candidate as well as the candidate of Kampi."

Puno said he would submit himself to the nomination process of the merged Lakas-KAMPI CMD and "like a good soldier," will abide by whatever decision is reached by the unified party and would support whoever is chosen as its vice-presidential candidate, "but I will work very hard to get the nomination."

"I am known more as a campaign manager than a candidate. I believe that with my vast experience in government and my loyalty to the people I serve, I can, and have the capability to, help the next President lead the country beyond 2010," Puno said.

At the same time, the National Council, which is the highest policymaking body of Kampi, unanimously approved a joint resolution with Lakas formalizing their merger tomorrow (Thursday) to give rise to a unified political party to be called "Lakas-Kampi CMD" and empowered President Arroyo to appoint the interim members of the merged party's National Executive Committee.

Two separate resolutions were also unanimously approved by the Council ratifying the new set of Constitution and bylaws of the merged Lakas-Kampi CMD and committing Kampi to abide by, and support the, unified party's choice and selection of national candidates in the May 2010 synchronized polls.

The party also unanimously adopted a resolution commending the President for "successfully steering the country towards economic recovery and resiliency amid the global economic crisis and expressing strong support for her continuing efforts to achieve sustained economic empowerment and national development."

More than 60 party officers and members attended the National Council meeting at the Annabel's Restaurant in Quezon City.

The party's endorsement of Puno as its vice presidential bet comes on the heels of its impending merger with Lakas-CMD, which is expected to transform the two parties into an unbeatable political powerhouse in the 2010 polls.

The meeting was called primarily to discuss the forthcoming merger of Kampi with Lakas which Puno said would lead to a new era of transformational politics that would lead to the political maturity of the entire nation.

Lakas-CMD and Kampi are set to formalize their historic merger tomorrow during a joint convention to be held at the Manila Hotel

Kampi, which was founded in 1997, has evolved to become one of the country's dominant political parties whose fast growing membership gives it a decisive role in the upcoming 2010 national elections.

The party has as among its prominent members a senator, 54 congressmen, 17 governors, 24 city mayors, 469 municipal mayors and hundreds of other local elective officials in the country.

Puno is widely known as one of the country's most successful and reliable political campaign strategists, but his extensive work experience of over 35 years also encompasses the fields of business, public relations, foreign diplomacy and public administration.

Puno served as Assistant Secretary and Head Executive Assistant at the Office of the Secretary in July 1974 when it was then known as the Department of Local Government and Community Development (DLGCD). He also served as program director of the Barangay Brigades and chairman of the Performance Audit Team of the DLGCD. He was also a member of the Tripoli Technical Committee during the Philippines' negotiations with Libya on the Muslim Mindanao issue in 1977.

In May 1982, Puno was appointed minister-counsellor of the Embassy of the Philippines in Washington DC. He also served as Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Transportation and Communication and was later named Deputy Minister of the Office of Media Affairs.

Puno briefly left the government service to become the first Filipino to work as senior political consultant at the prestigious Black, Manafort, Stone & Kelly firm from 1989 to 1991. He was also consultant at the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company for two years and chairman of the Board of Administrators of Broadcast City from 1992 to 1993.

He served as a consultant of Micron Public Affairs Co. and president of Micron Overseas Marketing before returning to the DILG on July 1998 under the administration of former President Estrada.

Puno was DILG undersecretary until 1999 and also sat as chairman of various attached agencies of the department as President Estrada's representative, who was then the DILG chief in a concurrent capacity.

President Estrada named Puno as DILG Secretary in April 1999 and stayed in his post until January 2000.

He left the government service to return to his private endeavors after his stint at the DILG and was elected in 2004 as member of the House of Representatives representing the first district of Antipolo City. Puno earned his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from the Ateneo de Manila University and Masteral Credits from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.