



LAKAS  
KAMPI  
CMD

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **RONNIE: NO MORE TIME FOR CHA-CHA, 2010 POLLS TO PUSH THROUGH**

Interior and Local Government Secretary Ronnie Puno yesterday said that amending the Constitution before the 2010 elections is now virtually impossible even as he dismissed opposition claims of a no-elections or No-EI scenario in 2010.

Puno pointed out in a foreign media forum in Makati City that his decision to vigorously seek the nomination of the administration party as its vice presidential bet is proof that the nation's next balloting will push through as scheduled next year.

He told the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines (Focap) during its regular forum at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel that current moves in the House of Representatives to convene a Constituent Assembly (Con-Ass) are merely being pursued to seek a clarification on how such a method should be legally and properly carried out, considering that the Constitution is ambiguous when it comes to implementing this mode of amending the Charter.

According to Puno, pro-administration members of the House of the Representatives, which include 45 members of the erstwhile Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi), have informed President Arroyo of the purpose behind current moves to push the Con-Ass route to make it clear to the Chief Executive that they were not going against her recent declaration assuring the public that the elections will be held in 2010.

"Mark my words and trust me, there will be elections in 2010 in accordance with the Constitution and our existing laws," Puno said during the Focap forum.

"As you have heard, I have offered myself to be the vice presidential candidate of the Lakas Kampi-CMD," he said. "My actions will probably indicate that there will elections. I'm dead serious in participating as one of our party's candidates in the national elections."

He said ongoing moves to amend the Constitution in Congress will have no impact at all on the 2010 elections as there is simply no time left to go through all the processes needed to push through with a constituent assembly.

Describing claims of a "No-EI" scenario as "frivolous," Puno advised the opposition to stop wasting their time thinking about this improbable situation.

Moreover, Puno noted that the Philippines will completely lose its credibility before the international community if it flip-flops on its assurance on the holding of elections next year.

No less than the President, Puno recalled, had assured the public that there will be elections in 2010 during last week's ceremonies at the Manila Hotel officially sealing the merger of Lakas and Kampi.