



Press Statement

16 February 2011

**ON THE SUPREME COURT DECISION ON THE IMPEACHMENT COMPLAINTS
AGAINST OMBUDSMAN MERCEDITAS GUTIERREZ**

The Makati Business Club welcomes with great relief the Supreme Court's decision to dismiss the petition filed by Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez to have the two impeachment complaints currently lodged against her at the House of Representatives declared as unconstitutional.

It is unfortunate that the five-month suspension of the impeachment process allowed the Ombudsman to inflict more harm on the Filipino people with her office's disastrous handling of the Carlos Garcia plunder case, leading to the former military comptroller's release on bail last December. The recent testimony at the Senate of former COA auditor Heidi Mendoza simply served to underline the anomalous nature of the plea bargain agreement with Mr. Garcia that the Ombudsman allowed the government prosecutors to pursue.

Thus, we urge the House Committee on Justice, chaired by Congressman Niel Tupas, to pursue the impeachment proceedings without further delay. For far too long, one person has stood in the way of the Filipino people's overwhelming desire to advance the fight against corruption and punish corrupt public officials. We appeal to our legislators, put an end to the incompetence and repeated subversion of justice, and take this necessary step toward rebuilding the people's trust in our justice system.

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