



Press Statement

1 July 2015

## **MBC STATEMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENTS AT THE MAKATI CITY HALL**

The Makati Business Club expresses its concern at the developments that continue to unfold at the Makati City Hall. While we recognize that the mayor has decided to leave city hall as ordered by the Office of the Ombudsman, we note that it took a significant period, two orders from the Ombudsman, and instances of near-violence between the mayor's supporters and law enforcement officers before the mayor made his decision, when such an order was immediately executory.

MBC believes that no one should be above the law—and the demand to respect the rule of law is more heavily levied on elected public servants. Indeed, affected officials are free to avail themselves of all remedies provided under our system. However, they must ultimately and immediately submit themselves to the demands of the law at the first instance an order is given.

The developments at the Makati City Hall clearly illustrate the costs of defying a suspension order, which has almost become common practice of officials facing cases from the proper authorities. As part of our democratic processes to address possible wrongdoing, suspension is not a punishment, nor does respecting a suspension order mean an admission of guilt. In this instance, the defiance of the suspension order up until the mayor's decision to ultimately vacate city hall has created an environment of uncertainty and instability in the country's financial center. Such a situation is unnecessary and is counterproductive, especially at a time when the economy is steadily growing and that there is renewed investor interest in the Philippines.

Now that the case is in the judiciary, it is our hope that the courts will render a fair decision swiftly and in accordance to its merits.

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