

PRESS STATEMENT

16 February 2011

JUNK PCOS! CASE OF ANTIPOLO PCOS STILL UNRESOLVED

We, the Pinagkaisang Lakas at Ugnayan ng Mamamayan ng Antipolo (PLUMA), a local campaign network of more than 26,000 Antipolonians, strongly resist the use of the PCOS machines of Smartmatics in the ARMM elections and in the succeeding elections.

We are still seeking for the truth on the 60 PCOS machines found in Antipolo City on whether these machines were used for electoral fraud.

For nine months after the 2010 May Elections, the Antipolo PCOS machines had been in the custody of the Senate for safekeeping, locked behind bars, until February 10, 2011 when it was transferred to Comelec.

These 60 PCOS machines were turned over to the Senate last 19 May 2010 after the ordeal of more than 5,000 residents from Antipolo City who camped for days at the Rizal Provincial Capital under constant threat by the presence of almost 600 policemen surrounding the area to guard the 60 PCOS machines found in the private resident of a Smartmatic technician. They risked their lives to protect the integrity of the 60 PCOS machines, because it holds the truth on whether there was fair and honest election in Antipolo City.

Last August 31, 2010, around 500 leaders from 16 Baranggays in Antipolo City gathered at the Senate to submit their petition, signed by more than 26,000 Antipolonians. They called for the continuation of the forensic investigation to address the preliminary report of the Joint Forensic Team showing irregularities found in the analysis of the PCOS machines from Antipolo City. The Senate heeded our request to continue securing the PCOS machines in the custody of the Senate but not our call to continue the investigation.

We are deeply concerned that the security and integrity of the 60 PCOS Machines will be compromised now that it is transferred to Comelec. These PCOS machines are considered evidence for the annulment of proclamation and protest cases filed in Comelec, and cases filed by organizations such as CENPEG and Might-E in light of the Supreme Court automation disclosure order.

The Supreme Court agreed with the argument of CENPEG that the source code should be disclosed "not only for compliance with the law, and the purpose thereof, but especially in the backdrop of numerous admissions of errors and claims of fraud."

The struggle of the people of Antipolo in protecting the PCOS machines will be rendered moot if the PCOS machines of Smartmatics will be used for the ARMM elections and in the next elections. We are still seeking for redress and for accountability in light of the numerous admissions of errors found using the 60 Antipolo PCOS machines.

We still hope that the truth will come out on the Antipolo PCOS Machines to finally put to rest the doubts of the people of Antipolo as to the integrity of the results of the local elections.