



PRESS RELEASE

PRESS STATEMENT

Center for People Empowerment in Governance

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Organized vigilance needed to ensure a peaceful transition of power

The uncertainties attending the preparations for the May 10 elections make the poll automation more vulnerable to political plots. While the problem-riddled election preparations will most likely bring about election failures and voters' disenfranchisement, it is political conspiracies that will decisively set back the peaceful transition to power and the installation of a new government leadership.

Elections are a means toward making democracy work and the coming automated election is no exception. In the Philippines, however, elections are decided not by the electoral process per se but by various political forces linked to ruling political dynasties that are out to subvert this exercise by means of fraud and violence in order to grab - or retain - political power.

Whether the elections are manual or automated, there have been sinister moves made over the years by forces identified with the administration in a bid to install permanent rule thereby insulating powerful leaders from their accountability to fraud, corruption, human rights violations, and other misdeeds. Equally dangerous, however, are insinuations of a military intervention due, so it is claimed, to a possible election failure.

Election failure will most likely result in a constitutional crisis to which there are legal processes that can be resorted to. But military intervention will bring back authoritarian rule that will undermine constitutional processes and civilian supremacy.

These conditions and dire scenarios require greater vigilance by citizens' groups and the rest of the Filipino people. Greater vigilance by an aware, critical, and organized citizenry will ensure not only the guarding of votes and prevent widespread voters' disenfranchisement. More than ever, greater vigilance is needed today to ensure the peaceful transition of power based on the sovereign will of the people.

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