

# **On President Aquino's choice of Akbayan Leader Ronald Llamas as Presidential Adviser**

Friday 21 January 2011, by [Akbayan](#) (Date first published: 20 January 2011).

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Dear Friends and Comrades,

Akbayan Party Philippines is celebrating its 13 years! Today we are deeply honored for our very own AKBAYAN President Ronaldo Llamas is named as the new Presidential Adviser for Political Affairs.

Also included are news clippings relevant to the said announcement. Thank you very much.

In Solidarity,

Akbayan's International Committee

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January 20, 2011

Press Release

For Immediate Release

## **On President Aquino's choice of Akbayan Leader Ronald Llamas as Presidential Adviser**

We, from Akbayan welcome the announcement of President Benigno Simeon "Noy" Aquino III concerning the naming of our very own, Akbayan President Ronald Llamas as one of his Presidential Advisers. We are honored by this pronouncement as it proves once more the sincerity, intensity and expertise of our leaders and of our political party in working towards the fulfillment of our people's aspiration of a democratic and people-oriented government committed to reforms.

But beyond this, we warmly receive the announcement, as it is politically extraordinary if not refreshing in many ways.

First, Presidential advisers are usually party mates of the incumbent President to guarantee that political policies are aligned with his/her principles and vision. The decision of President Aquino to name a presidential adviser from its coalition partner attests to the government's pluralist and democratic character of governing. It demonstrates the Aquino government's willingness to democratize and empower the field of governance unlike the previous administration, which greedily consolidated power among themselves, greatly putting the people in the fringes of state governance.

Second, the choice of a reputed progressive leader hailing from the democratic left shows that

President Aquino can actually go beyond partisan ideological politics and extend its hand of solidarity to forces of change willing and fully committed in meaningfully contributing in the deepening of democracy, the eradication of corruption and the fulfillment of indispensable reforms.

More so, it also displays that the democratic left is a serious and relevant political actor capable of making its mark on the political process and in becoming a significant force of change, contributing towards and firmly establishing the hegemony of the people's interest through participatory democracy and governance.

As such, we fully support President Aquino's choice of Akbayan President Ronald Llamas as one of his presidential advisers. We vouch for the integrity, leadership and competence of this person, who for the last thirteen years has been one of the major pillars of our party and an acknowledged leader of the broad democratic left.

Definitely, with his eventual appointment to government, our party will suffer the absence of a seasoned political leader. Yet, the struggle for reforms is more important and bigger than all of us.

Thus, in this just struggle, we offer one of our "best and brightest." We look forward that with Ronald Llamas' absence from our party and his entry to government, it will greatly strengthen the resolve of the new dispensation to fulfill its promise of change to the Filipino People. ###

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### **Pnoy names Akbayan president political adviser**

<http://www.newsbreak.ph/2011/01/20/pnpy-names-akbayan-president-political-adviser/>

PUBLISHED ON JAN 20, 2011

#### ***Ronald Llamas leaving DBP to assume new position***

#### ***President Aquino last night named Akbayan president and former activist Ronald Llamas as presidential adviser on political affairs.***

The President made the announcement at a gathering in Malacanang last night to celebrate the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Liberal Party.

Llamas himself confirmed the announcement with Newsbreak but declined to elaborate, noting that his appointment papers have yet to be signed.

One Palace source quoted the President as saying last night in Pilipino to his party-mates that Llamas has been "our longtime ally and comrade." Llamas, in a short response, vowed to push for political reform that would help government address poverty and corruption.

With his appointment, Llamas will thus have to resign as board member of the Development Bank of the Philippines, a position he got after campaigning for the President.

This is an unusual appointment because presidents usually name their party-mates to this position. But Llamas has been a known close adviser of the President since the campaign. Akbayan is also a coalition partner of the LP.

Before the campaign, Llamas also served for a short time as one of former Sen. Mar Roxas's political strategists.

A source close to the President says Llamas was the choice because he's "acceptable" to the two dominant factions in the Aquino government, the so-called Samar and Balay groups.

A 1982 journalism graduate of the University of Santo Tomas, Llamas was a student activist and campus journalist under the Marcos years. He helped found Bisig (Bukluran sa Ikauunlad ng Sosyalistang Isip at Gawa) in the late 1980s, a political movement of socialists that included *Inquirer* columnist Randolph David and former UP President Francis Nemenzo.

The Bisig core, together with key sectoral groups from labor, the youth, and ex-communist and Muslim guerrillas, later established Akbayan, which won one seat in the first party-list elections in the country in 1998.

The first Akbayan congressional representative was Loretta Ann Rosales, now chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights. Another Akbayan member in government is Secretary Joel Rocamora of the National Anti-Poverty Commission.

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## **PNoy names leftist as political adviser**

By Lynda Jumilla, ABS-CBN News

Posted at 01/20/2011 12:17 AM | Updated as of 01/20/2011 8:04 AM

<http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/nation/01/19/11/pnoy-names-leftist-political-adviser>

MANILA, Philippines - In an unusual move, President Aquino has named a non-party mate as presidential adviser for political affairs.

The President announced his appointment of Akbayan president Ronald Llamas at a gathering in Malacañang on Wednesday night to celebrate the 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Liberal Party (LP).

Akbayan is a coalition partner of the LP, and Llamas himself is a key adviser of President Aquino as well as LP president and former Senator Mar Roxas.

Palace officials present said the President described Llamas as "matagal nang kasama at kaalyado (a long-time ally)."

Llamas, in turn, vowed: "Plano kong seryosong isulong ang mga reporma at mga pampulitikang proyekto ng ating presidente para baguhin ang sistema ng korupsiyon at kahirapan ng ating bansa."

(I plan to seriously pursue reforms and political projects of the president in order to change the system of corruption and poverty in our country.)

Presidential advisers are usually party mates of the President to ensure that political policies are aligned with party principles, and for better coordination with other party members.

Aquino earlier appointed Llamas as member of the board of directors of the Development Bank of the Philippines.

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