

Philippines: Protests after rejection of Government nomination of NDF nominee Judy Taguiwalo

Thursday 17 August 2017, by [SALAVERRIA Leila B.](#) (Date first published: 16 August 2017).

Judy Taguiwalo was nominated social welfare secretary by President Rodrigo Duterte on the proposal of the National Democratic Front. The confirmation of Duterte's nominations by the Congress proved to be a very slow process. She had to be rejected three times by the Commission on Appointments, which explains why the procedure ends only now, more than a year after the constitution of the government.

There are presently two other NDF nominees in the government, Agrarian Reform Secretary Rafael Mariano and National Anti-Poverty Commission chief Liza Maza.

The pro-NDF block in the Philippines is vigorously mobilizing against the rejection of Judy Taguiwalo from the Duterte government. It is supporting (or avoiding denouncing) some of its policies - including the bloody war on drugs and its extra-judiciary executions, while at the same time denouncing its reactionary character and calling for an all-out fight against it. (ESSF)

Palace, militant lawmakers, Joma assail Taguiwalo's rejection

Malacañang and the Left on Wednesday lamented the Commission on Appointments' rejection of the nomination of Judy Taguiwalo as social welfare secretary.

Taguiwalo was the third nominee of President Rodrigo Duterte to be rejected by the appointments commission.

The commission earlier rejected the nominations of Perfecto Yasay as foreign secretary and Gina Lopez as environment secretary.

Taguiwalo was also the first left-leaning leader appointed by Mr. Duterte to his Cabinet to be thumbed down by the appointments commission. The other leftists are Agriculture Secretary Rafael Mariano and National Anti-Poverty Commission chief Liza Maza.

The Left, at loggerheads with the government over stalled peace talks, blamed the administration for Taguiwalo's rejection.

Jose Maria Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), said her rejection was a sign that the Duterte administration was "becoming more and more reactionary and servile to antinational and antidemocratic interests."

‘She made an impact’

Presidential spokesperson Ernesto Abella, however, hailed Taguiwalo’s performance at the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), which in recent weeks has been leading relief efforts for residents of Marawi who have been displaced by fighting between government forces and Islamic State-inspired terrorists who have occupied parts of the city.

“We are saddened by the Commission on Appointments’ rejection of Secretary Judy Taguiwalo. Secretary Taguiwalo had served the Duterte administration with passion, profession and integrity. She made an impact [on] the lives of many Filipinos [during] her tenure as DSWD secretary,” Abella said.

Presidential Communications Operations Secretary Martin Andanar described Taguiwalo as a hardworking Cabinet member, and said he had learned a lot from her.

Andanar paid tribute to Taguiwalo’s dedication to her work and to the country and said he had been optimistic that she would be able to hurdle her confirmation hearing.

As to how Taguiwalo’s departure from the DSWD would affect the department programs, including relief efforts in Marawi, Andanar said the agency’s staff was solid and would be able to continue doing the department’s job.

The Palace has yet to announce Taguiwalo’s replacement.

Taguiwalo’s rejection could make stalled peace talks between the Duterte administration and the communist rebels harder to restart.

‘All-out war policy’

In a statement issued from Utrecht, the Netherlands, the exiled Sison said the actions being taken by the Duterte administration against leftist forces ran “in line with the all-out war policy” of the President.

He said all “patriotic and progressive forces” should “expect more ultrareactionary actions from the Duterte regime.”

Bayan Muna Rep. Carlos Isagani Zarate said he was outraged, as the people being served by the DSWD would be the ones to suffer.

Zarate said members of the appointments commission must have been looking for qualifications other than competence and integrity in choosing a social welfare secretary, because if these were the qualifications required, Taguiwalo’s nomination would have been confirmed a long time ago.

“The poor have lost and those greedy for pork, neoliberal economic managers and pro-US militarists are overjoyed at [Taguiwalo’s] rejection,” Zarate said.

“It seems that she is too good and straight for the [appointments commission],” he added.

Angry party-list groups

Left-leaning party-list groups in the House of Representatives denounced the rejection of Taguiwalo.

Kabataan Partylist lamented President Duterte’s failure to sway his “supermajority” in Congress to confirm Taguiwalo’s nomination.

In a statement, Kabataan said Mr. Duterte allowed Taguiwalo to be rejected in what the youth group called “a victory for corrupt bureaucrats.”

In a separate statement, Gabriela Women’s Party dared members of the appointments commission to disclose their real reason for rejecting Taguiwalo.

Gabriela noted that Taguiwalo opposed “using the DSWD for political patronage, [barred] pork-hungry officials from gaining full access to DSWD funds, and [ensured] that services and relief [were] delivered to those who truly need them.”

Anakpawis Rep. Ariel Casilao said Taguiwalo’s rejection was “a blatant proof that prореform officials will not be tolerated by institutions of traditional politics, hence, is causal of poverty and misery to the people.”

Officials and employees at the DSWD office in Eastern Visayas said they were shocked by Taguiwalo’s rejection. —With reports from Vince F. Nonato, Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Karlos Manlupig, and Joey A. Gabieta

Leila B. Salaverria - Reporter /
@LeilasINQ

* Philippine Daily Inquirer / 07:02 AM August 17, 2017:

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/923354/palace-militant-lawmakers-joma-assail-taguiwalos-rejection#ixzz4pxzBjRoc>

Follow us: @inquirerdotnet on Twitter | inquirerdotnet on Facebook

Taguiwalo details policies of Duterte which she supports

Video by <http://INQUIRER.net>

<http://videos.inquirer.net/?vtnid=OTg0MTE4fHwyMzY4fHwwfHx8fHx8#ixzz4py09GVE4>
