

GMA back from US visit but without investment commitments

President Arroyo is expected to arrive today from her five-day visit to the United States, but without any significant investment commitments to show for her efforts.

Deputy presidential spokesperson Anthony Golez, in an interview over dzRB yesterday, said that the President was able to promote the interests of the country during her visit to New York where she addressed the United Nations General Assembly.

Golez, who was with the

President, noted that Mrs. Arroyo was the fourth world leader who addressed the body and was able to show the world that the Philippines is doing well in addressing rising food and oil prices.

"It is a very, very successful trip. I can say that because the President was again able to raise the flag of our country. It's a proud moment for the entire Filipino nation and the entire Filipino race," Golez said.

Unlike most of her previous foreign visits, the trip did not produce investment commitments.

"What the President did achieve in this visit was to highlight the resilience of the Philippine economy at this time when the world is reeling from the financial turmoil being experienced by the United States," Golez said.

During her stay in New York, she met with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Organization of Islamic Conference Secretary-General Ed-meleddin Ihsanoglu, and the world's women leaders in a forum hosted by US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

By MARVIN SY

At the forum, she called on women world leaders to fight for women empowerment and pursue justice, dignity and equality for women.

The President noted that during this time of global financial and economic crisis, women are experiencing "triple burdens" as single heads of households, lesser healthcare, and soaring prices of fuel and food.

The President also took the opportunity to campaign for the bid of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago for a seat in the

International Court of Justice.

The President noted that the term of the woman presiding officer in the ICJ will expire this year.

Meanwhile, Press Secretary Jesus Dureza stayed behind for one day in New York after suffering from gastritis.

Golez said Dureza was rushed to the New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center's emergency room after complaining of stomach pain.

Dureza was supposed to attend a dinner hosted by Philippine Permanent Representa-

tive to the UN Hilario Davide and another dinner for the accompanying Philippine media, but had to miss the two events because of his condition.

In a statement, Dureza said that the attending physician ordered pain relievers and then ran some laboratory tests, which showed negative results.

The medication gave him relief from the pain and he was able to sleep soundly.

Golez said that Dureza had to undergo an endoscopy procedure yesterday so he had to stay behind for one day while waiting for the results.