

# 'GMA not afraid of lawsuits when she steps down'

President Arroyo is not afraid of any lawsuit that may be lodged against her after she steps down from office next year, a Palace official said yesterday.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita was reacting to declarations by possible presidential contenders during a public forum last Tuesday organized by ABS-CBN's ANC channel that they would probe allegations against the Arroyos if elected and if evidence warrants.

Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, Pampanga Gov. Ed Panlilio, and Senators Mar Roxas, Francis Escudero, and Richard Gordon attended the forum.

Ermita said the statements of the pos-

sible presidential bets should not be taken negatively, adding that they were just emphasizing the rule of law.

He said Mrs. Arroyo is a "political figure and she knows that those go with the presidency, and not only the presidency but other elective officials such as those in the Senate, the Lower House and the local executives."

"So I can imagine that the President is aware that those things (lawsuits) could very well happen and therefore the President is very confident that even if those things happen she knows where she stands," Ermita said.

- Paolo Romero