

# GMA to keep mum on 2010 political plans

No amount of challenges, threats or constant urging from various personalities could force President Arroyo to reveal her political plans for 2010. Deputy presidential spokesperson Lorelei Fajardo said yesterday that the latest challenge coming from Chief Justice Reynato Puno would not do anything to alter the stand of the President to keep her plans from the public.

Puno, though not naming the President, said that everybody should be honest about their political plans, particularly if these have implications on the government.

"With all due respect to the Chief Justice, I think our judiciary should not be politicized," Fajardo said.

"So we have to leave the plans of the President personal and private," she added.

Even though Puno was speaking from his personal point of view, Fajardo said, "he is still the Supreme Court Chief Justice, so I think the higher your position, the more you have to be more responsible also."

"We cannot reiterate too much that the plans of the President beyond 2010 should remain private for as long as she decides not to share it with the public," Fajardo said.

Various sectors, including former President Fidel Ramos, have called on Mrs. Arroyo to reveal her plans amid reports that

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she is running for Congress to represent her home province of Pampanga.

Ramos asked Mrs. Arroyo "to stop titillating the nation" and declare her political intentions.

He said Mrs. Arroyo has a responsibility to the nation to declare her plans and cannot just keep invoking her right to privacy.

The President, for her part, succeeded in parrying questions on her political plans from the media.

Even her spokespersons have clammed up after Ramos said their statements have only muddled the issue.

Critics said Mrs. Arroyo is not allowed to run for Congress unless she

resigns from the presidency.

Others, however, pointed out that there is nothing in the Constitution that would prohibit her from running for Congress.

The conflicting views and opinions only triggered speculations on her plans for next year's elections.