

PR-846-09, The present Administration has appointed more career Heads of Posts, i.e., Ambassadors extraordinary and plenipotentiary and Consuls General (72.83 percent) than during the Estrada administration (70 percent) and Ramos administration (67 percent).

The appointment of Undersecretary Esteban B. Conejos, Jr. as Philippine Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva is valid as it is also within the limit set by law.

Section 17 of RA 7157 (The Foreign Service Act) sets out the ratio of career and non-career Ambassadors, thus:

In order to strengthen the Career Foreign Service Corps and to enable it to respond to the challenges in the field of international relations, the President shall be guided, as much as possible, by the principle that a majority of diplomatic and permanent missions shall be headed by career ambassadors.

As the law clearly indicates, it suffices that the majority of the diplomatic and permanent mission (50 percent+1) are headed by career ambassadors.

In this administration, the record is clear that there has been strict and ample compliance with the provision of the law.

Therefore, under the present circumstances the law is far from being breached by the appointment of a non-career ambassador. END