

The appointment of non-career ambassadors is well-settled in Philippine constitutional practice, just like in the U.S. and many other countries.

The Foreign Service Act (R.A. No. 7157) sets the ratio between 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 the diplomatic and permanent missions shall be headed by career ambassadors.*

As the law clearly states, it suffices that “as much as possible” the majority of the diplomatic and permanent missions (50 percent plus one) are headed by career ambassadors.

This administration has appointed more career Heads of Posts, i.e., Ambassadors extraordinary and plenipotentiary and Consuls General (72.83 percent) than during the Estrada and Ramos administrations ((70 percent and 67 percent, respectively).

In this administration, the record is quite clear that there has been strict and ample compliance with the law. Under the present circumstances, the law is far from being breached by the number of non-career ambassadors.

Moreover, four of the most recent vacancies in the foreign service, namely Brussels, Pretoria, Islamabad and Hanoi, were all filled up with career diplomats, with their appointments approved by the Commission on Appointments on 14 October.

Non-career ambassadors complement the career corps and have historically enriched the Philippine Foreign Service with their deep experiences and wide backgrounds, notably business, journalism, military, labor and migrant workers advocacy. They have helped advance

Statement on The Appointment of Non-Career Ambassadors

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the country's strategic national interests in the international community. END.