

## **Akbayan Estrada's pardon honor among thieves**

Sunday 18 November 2007, by [Akbayan](#), [HONTIVEROS Risa](#) (Date first published: 26 October 2007).

AKBAYAN condemned today the granting of executive clemency for former President GMA, saying that it reflects not national unity but honor among thieves.

"She treats justice like a mere transaction among thieves. Who else but the most incorrigible of thieves who would not hesitate to do a shameless act like this? This mockery of justice is unpardonable," Rep. Hontiveros said.

"This act normalizes corruption, sending a wrong message to the youth and other public officials," Rep. Hontiveros added. "Who else is she willing to forgive? The Marcoses?"

She added that releasing Estrada is an ultimate betrayal of People Power. "We can still hold her accountable for Hello Garci, bribery, and corruption, but what could reverse this act? This damage cannot be undone," Rep. Hontiveros said, adding that Estrada's conviction has proven that high officials could be held accountable for their acts.

"Our laws against corruption and abuse by high officials are for naught. What's the use of having the likes of Joc-Joc Bolante, Nani Perez, Benjamin Abalos and Virgilio Garcillano if they would just be granted executive clemency? Indeed, pardon for Estrada means that other acts of corruption, including those committed by the current administration, are forgivable," she said.

"Executive clemency undermines the rule of law. In one swift act, she demolished the integrity and credibility of our anti-corruption institutions. There is no doubt that she has done this to break the growing opposition against her administration," Rep. Hontiveros said. "Like the Glorietta blast, this political bomb, which caught many by surprise, is meant to divert the attention of public from the NBN controversy and allegations of bribery in Malacanang."

AKBAYAN, one of the groups that spearheaded Estrada's ouster, said that GMA's betrayal would not be forgotten. "We will hold her accountable for this," Rep. Hontiveros vowed.