

CA confirms Teehankee's nomination to the DFA, bypasses DAR Secretary Castriciones



The last session day before Congress adjourned for the Lenten break yielded the Commission on Appointments (CA) confirmation of the nomination of Manuel Antonio Javier Teehankee as Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Philippines to the World Trade Organization in Geneva Switzerland, with the salary and emoluments of a Chief of Mission, Class I.

Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Sen. Panfilo M. Lacson recommended Teehankee's nomination for confirmation at the plenary, duly seconded by Senators Miguel Zubiri and Ralph Recto, following two committee meetings, wherein Teehankee answered and clarified the issues raised against him. CA Chairman and Senate President Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III sealed Teehankee's appointment before declaring the session's adjournment.

Meanwhile, Secretary John Rualo Castriciones was subjected to almost two grueling hours of questioning from the members of the CA Committee on Agrarian Reform chaired by Senator Grace Poe. His *ad interim* appointment had already undergone the Commission's prior hearing and deliberation last March 14, 2018. For his part, the appointee eloquently answered all queries on his qualifications, DAR programs and policies. Thereafter, the CA committee suspended the public hearing and went into executive session. Thereon, the committee did not

submit any recommendation for plenary action until the sessions adjourned for the Holy Week recess.