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Malacañang replaces Philcomsat nominees

By **Daxim L. Lucas**

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT yesterday appointed a fresh set of nominees to the controversial Philcomsat group of companies, signaling a potential end to one of the most acrimonious disputes on the local corporate scene.

The new government nominees on the board of the Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. (Philcomsat) are former National Telecommunications Commission chief Abraham Abesamis, businessman Ramon Jacinto and Lakas-CMD Deputy Secretary-General Rodolfo G. Serrano.

Also appointed by Malacañang as directors of the parent firm, Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp. (POTC), are retired Justice Santiago Ranada, lawyer Daniel C. Gutierrez and labor leader Allan S. Montano.

They replaced the previous set of government nominees Enrique Locsin, Manuel Andal, Julio Jalandoni and Guy de Leon.

During yesterday's stockholders' meeting, the government was represented by Presidential Management Staff Undersecretary Enrique D. Perez and lawyers of the Department of Justice who were responsible for voting the state's 35-percent stake in the firm.

Other Philcomsat directors elected during the meeting were Erlinda Ilusorio-Bildner, Honorio Poblador III, Katrina Ponce-Enrile, Pablo Lobregat, Marietta Ilusorio and Lorna Kapunan. Bildner, Poblador, Ponce-Enrile, Lobregat, Ilusorio and Federico Agcaoili were also named POTC directors.

Yesterday's event marked the first time in five years that the government and the private stockholders agreed on a unified board of directors, Bildner said in an interview.

"We are now a unified board and our next step is to take control of Philcomsat Holdings Corp. which is under the control of this imposter group," she said, referring to the previous set of government nominees.

"They should have been out of the picture a long time ago, but this time, they're officially out of the picture," she added.

Bildner said the new board would like Philcomsat to reassert itself in the telecommunications business, although it remains unclear which segment the company would enter into.

"What we want to do is to create value for our stakeholders, which includes the government," she said.

According to a statement released by Bildner's camp,