ASEAN INTER-GOVERNMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION: PROSPECTS AND CHALLENGES

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this project paper is my own except for quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

II June 2010

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ABSTRACT

The study discusses the prospect and challenges of the newly established ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) in promoting and protecting human rights in the ASEAN states. The study attempts to provide a second look at this human rights mechanism for its chances to be successful and the challenges that it may face in promoting and protecting human rights in this region. It traces the available laws on human rights that already provided in the domestic laws of the ASEAN members. The availability of these provisions give better impression to the effort as to whether the states are prepared for the next level. The nature and seriousness of human rights violation within the ASEAN states also tells whether ASEAN needs this body or merely just follow other successful regional organizations in establishing their human rights mechanism. The biggest hurdle that this regional body has to face is the acceptance of universal values and the standards of human rights promoted by the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. These values, which are assumed by the Asians as the ideas of the West, may not be fully accepted here. After all, the ASEAN states consist of different historical backgrounds, cultures and norms have their own set of values that may only be understood by them. Will the ASEAN states and AICHR ready to practice human rights as promoted by ASEAN depends very much on the states' priority, human rights over national interest or otherwise.
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