

ACSC3 - Singapore Declaration

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Declaration adopted at the Third ASEAN+ Civil Society Conference (ACSC-III) 2-4 November 2007, Singapore. (Final Version).

1. We, about 200 participants from civil society organizations and trade unions across Southeast Asia gathered at the Third ASEAN+ Civil Society Conference (ACSC-III) in Singapore on 2-4 November 2007 to discuss issues of common concerns to people's lives in the context of the upcoming 13th ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) Summit which is scheduled to take action on the adoption of an ASEAN Charter.

2. Based on our deliberations during the ACSC-III under the theme "Moving Forward - Building an ASEAN+ People's Agenda" III as well as in line with the statements adopted at the ACSC-I (Kuala Lumpur, Dec. 2005) and ACSC-II (Cebu in Dec. 2006) and submission of proposals to Eminent People's Group (EPG) and High-level Task Force for the ASEAN Charter by SAPA (Solidarity for Asian People's Advocacy) Working Group on ASEAN, we strongly urge the ASEAN and its member-states to consider our proposals and demands in their deliberations of the proposed draft Charter at the Summit.

a) Universally recognized values, principles and normative standards should be fully enshrined, in all standard-setting processes within the ASEAN, in particular, human rights, social and economic justice, participatory democracy and rule of law, right to development, ecologically sustainable development, cultural diversity, gender equality, peace and people's security and peaceful transformation of conflicts.

b) People-centered regional cooperation and solidarity in accordance with the above-mentioned values and principle should be a key guiding principle for regional integration process in ASEAN.

c) A holistic approach should be adopted that reflects the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of human rights.

d) All key international legal instruments including human rights, humanitarian law and core labour and environmental standards should be ratified and fully implemented.

e) Effective mechanism should be established for accountability and participation of civil society organizations, trade unions, social movements, rural sector and other affected communities in all processes and deliberations of ASEAN and its bodies.

f) Effective measures to eliminate all forms of direct and indirect discriminations and promote substantive equality for the full development and advancement of all disempowered and marginalized sectors, in particular women.

g) Effective measures should be established to prevent conflicts and systematic and gross human rights violations within the ASEAN and within countries in the region including strict imposition of sanctions on violators.

h) Effective measures should be developed and implemented to address the adverse impact of globalization and regional integration.

i) An ASEAN Environment Community should be established to promote and protect ASEAN's environmental integrity and sustainability in line with the other three pillars (Economic, Security and Socio-Cultural).

j) An effective and accountable human rights mechanism for ASEAN in accordance with international standards should be established.

3. We also strongly support the **Statement of the Singapore Civil Society** issued by the Singapore Working Group for ASEAN (SWGA) for the ACSC-III which echoes most of our calls in this Declaration, particularly on the need for ASEAN member-states to ratify key human rights Conventions and prioritize human rights education; guarantee decent work; enable the people to exercise their freedoms of expression, organization and collective bargaining; providing social protection and social security; recognition of the right to self-determination of cultural identity and the rights of indigenous peoples; and ensure the participation of women in politics at all levels.

4. We call on the ASEAN and its member-states to ensure that these fundamental principles and demands are enshrined in the ASEAN Charter towards the realization of a caring and sharing ASEAN Community.

5. Heads of States should **ensure that the following requirements are met before the signing of the ASEAN Charter**:

a) Ensure transparency through the disclosure of the draft ASEAN Charter for meaningful public consultations and discussions, and guarantee substantive peoples participation at the national and regional levels in the adoption of the ASEAN Charter

b) End and prevent all serious breaches of principles that should be fundamental to the ASEAN, including undemocratic change of government and systematic and gross violations of human rights

6. We reaffirm our call for the ASEAN to require democratic referendum process at the national level to allow the peoples in each country to give direct mandate to the ASEAN Charter.

7. We urge the ASEAN to create effective mechanisms for transparency, accountability, people's participation, and Social Dialogue.

8. We reaffirm our strong commitment to work for the creation of a just, people-centered, caring and sharing ASEAN Community that shall be enshrined in an ASEAN Peoples' Charter.

9. Through this Declaration, we are launching the process of drafting the **ASEAN Peoples' Charter** that will embody the shared values and collective aspirations of the peoples of the region. We commit to drafting an ASEAN Peoples' Charter by the ACSC-IV to be held in Thailand in 2008.