Non-Traditional Security, Securitization, and Human Rights in East Asia: Considerations for a Human Security Agenda

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57 ATENEO L.J. 325 (2012)

Subject(s): HUMAN RIGHTS, NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY
Keyword(s): HUMAN RIGHTS, NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY, SECURITIZATION, HUMAN SECURITY, ASIA

Security, as an important interest of every State, has been traditionally understood as that which is needed to protect a State from external or internal forces which threaten the safety and stability of a country and its people. In other words, the common notion of security, especially in the South East Asia and East Asia region, is geared toward a militaristic approach. Mainly, its purpose is to guard State interests against warfare and terrorism.

However, due to globalization and other events or phenomena which have far-reaching ramifications with respect to the interrelations of different States, a new understanding of “security” has emerged. This new understanding is not merely limited to militarization. Thinkers have already extended the understanding of “security” as that which considers the political, economical, and societal forces that affect the world at large.

In that respect, the development and emergence of Non-Traditional Security has gained enough momentum, particularly in South East Asia and East Asia, to effect its integration in the very laws and policies governing the region as well as in each component state found therein.

Yet, despite Non-Traditional Security gaining recognition, its actual implementation has encountered many obstacles mainly due to the diversity of cultures in said regions. As a result, a greater participation of civil society, not merely the government’s, is needed to propel the implementation and enforcement of this alternative form of human security.