
Regional Solutions to Restore Democracy and Protect Human Rights in Myanmar

I. Introduction

On February 1st, 2021, a military crackdown occurred in Myanmar after detaining a famous democratic figure as well as the leader of the elected government of the National League for Democracy so-called "NLD" party, Aung San Suu Kyi along with her colleagues. (Jasmine C., 2021). According to recent reports, citizens of Myanmar around the nation began to protest against Tatmadaw, and demand a free and fair election. The clashes between military forces and the civilians have been going on until now, which resulted in 20 lives of local people had been murdered during the battle. (Reuters, 2021). ASEAN was criticized for not taking any actions to deal with human rights violation incidents in Myanmar; therefore, this essay will illustrate as well as provide some possible regional solutions so that ASEAN will be able to address the issue more effectively.

II. Body

The very first solution for ASEAN to help Myanmar citizens claim their basic rights back is to address the issue as "human right violations" rather than "internal affairs", and prioritize the citizens' lives over the non-interference policy. According to BBC News, it is reported that security forces in Myanmar have been suppressing the local protestors by using brutal methods including spraying water, shooting, bombing, destroying civilians' shelters as well as media censorships. (Christopher, 2021). This demonstrates that ASEAN must take tough action against Myanmar's military government in order to assist those protestors, and save them from the inhumane actions of Myanmar security forces, as well as enhancing human security in Myanmar through guiding the paths for protestors to claim their foundation rights.

Therefore, ASEAN leaders should address this issue through peaceful means such as convincing the Myanmar military government to a cease-fire since it is breaching the ASEAN charter if any member states tend to involve directly in Myanmar domestic matters. For instance, despite the violating of the ASEAN Charter, and directly demand any changes in Myanmar, ASEAN leaders, as well as the Myanmar government, have agreed at the special ASEAN summit on April 24th, 2021, which focuses on five points consensus including (1) the

immediate cessation of violence in Myanmar, (2) constructive dialogue among all parties concerned to seek a peaceful solution in the interests of people, (3) mediation to be facilitated by an envoy of ASEAN's chair, with the assistance of the secretary-general, (4) humanitarian assistance provided by ASEAN's AHA Centre, and (5) a visit by the special envoy and delegation to Myanmar to meet all parties concerned. This agreement will somehow be able to tackle the human rights violations as well as stop the violence in Myanmar. (Muhammad, 2021).

Furthermore, on July 5th 1997 ASEAN had faced a similar overthrowing government incident in Cambodia, and ASEAN member states' foreign ministers including Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand have created "ASEAN Troika" to mediate the internal conflict in Cambodia. (Sorpong, 1998). Therefore, it is possible that ASEAN could act as a mediator to peacefully resolve the political crisis in Myanmar through calling for the conflicting parties to negotiate peacefully, as well as conducting a thorough inspect shall there be a national election to secure a free and fair process, and restoring democracy in Myanmar.

In addition to the two mentioned resolutions, ASEAN could also undertake the issue through economic sanctions, and other possible solutions which require ASEAN's bodies and principles reformation including amending the non-interference principle when it comes to human securities, advancing the capability of the Political-Security Community to become a defense arrangement and have a peacekeeping role, as well as reaffirming the 2012 ASEAN Human Rights Declaration so that ASEAN could become a more effective and reliable organization in the region.

III. Conclusion

In conclusion, ASEAN could take further steps toward restoring democracy, as well as assisting Myanmar citizens to claim their basic rights through peacefully requesting Myanmar military government to cease fire, acting as a mediator in negotiating between the two conflicting parties, putting economic sanctions, reaffirming the 2021 ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, and improving APSC roles in securing human rights, and political stability to ensure peace and prosperities in the region.

IV. Reference

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