



# PRESS RELEASE

*ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY TO PROPOSE A CAMPAIGN ON TIMOR SEA ISSUE FOR TIMOR-LESTE'S FULL SOVEREIGNTY*

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## **ASEAN CIVIL SOCIETY TO PROPOSE A CAMPAIGN ON TIMOR SEA ISSUE FOR TIMOR-LESTE'S FULL SOVEREIGNTY**

### **ABOUT US**

ACSC/APF addresses issues around peace, justice and human rights, development and democratization in ASEAN towards the attainment of sustainable peace and development.

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### **PRESS RELEASE**

#### **For Immediate Publication**

Dili, Timor-Leste - 01-08-2016- Participants of ASEAN Peoples' Forum (APF) have stated their commitment and supports of a fair settlement for the Timorese peoples' unfinished struggle to achieve their full sovereignty as the newest country in South East Asia. ASEAN civil society pledged to propose a campaign on the Timor Sea issue, so that the Timorese people could achieve their full sovereignty.

Gus Miclat, the Executive Director of Initiatives for International Dialogue from the Philippines said they would reaffirm their supports and solidarity to the Timorese people in general and to the Timorese civil society in particular in building their nation and the development progresses.

"We are here to pay tribute to the Timorese people what they have been doing in their nation building. But even before that we, the civil society in the region want to

reaffirmed our supports and solidarity to the Timorese people in general and to the Timorese civil society in particular," he said.

Mr. Miclat affirmed that they would propose and lead a campaign on the Timor Sea issue in the region as part of ASEAN civil society's solidarity to the Timorese people in fighting for their full sovereignty.

"Of course, we are going to propose and lead a campaign on the Timor Sea issue in the region. That is why my organization, which has been in the forth friend of leading East Timorese solidarity campaign for East Timor [Apcet], Asia Pacific Coalition for East Timor and now we have the Asia pacific solidarity within the conference. We will launch the Timor Sea Campaign for the region. This is one of the reason, we are here to show our solidarity to reclaim the seas, which is now being occupied by Australia," he said during a welcoming dinner on Sunday evening (31/7) in Dili.

Atnike Nova Sigiro from Indonesia's FORUM-ASIA said they would push the ASEAN member states to look at the sea border issue in the region not as an internal problem of a country, but it should be considered to be part of ASEAN.

"We hope that through this solidarity, the majority of the peoples in ASEAN, including Timor-Leste to push the ASEAN member states to pay attention to the territorial issue of the region as it is not only about economy, but it is also about people's prosperity," she said.

The August Forum will be the largest ever staged in Dili with more than 800 people scheduled to attend .400 of the participants are coming from ASEAN states.

ASEAN Civil Society Conference/ASEAN Peoples' Forum (ACSC/APF) marks a new history in this region by holding it in Timor Leste. The ACSC/APF 2016 will not take place in Lao PDR, due to concerns over possible restrictions and limited freedom of expression on key issues of concerns of ASEAN which are inconsistent with the agreed ACSC/APF's modality of engagement.

Timor-Leste, a country in Southeast Asia, since its independence, has repeatedly put in its motion to be included in ASEAN. Although ASEAN has not taken any position to ratify the membership of this newly independent country, after a long and thorough process of consideration, we ASEAN Civil Society organizations agreed to organize the ACSC/APF 2016 in Timor-Leste as our show of solidarity.

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