The Role of International NGOs in Democratization Assistance in Southeast Asia:
Cooperation with Local NGOs through Election Monitoring Activities

YAMADA Mitsuru

東南アジアの民主化支援における国際NGOの役割
— 選挙監視活動を通じた国内NGOとの連携 —

選挙は紛争後の国家建設において重要な第一歩になる。しかもその実施される選挙は「自由で公正な」選挙でなければ、正統な政府として国際社会から認知されないばかりか、国家建設に向けて必要な国際社会からの支援も得られなくなる。そこで、当該国は外国政府、国際機関や国際NGOに選挙監視を要請する。

東南アジアの政治体制をみると、国家主導の開発独裁体制や軍事政権を過去に経験したり、あるいは現在においても継続している。そのなかで、かつて開発独裁体制下にあったフィリピンやタイの市民社会／NGO（非政府組織）の民主化運動の経験が、他の東南アジア諸国立のそれらに大きな影響を及ぼした。例えば、ハルト開発独裁体制下の民主化運動においてもそれが該当する。

本稿ではハルト開発独裁体制の崩壊を次の三つの市民社会／NGOレベルの支援プロセスから考察する。まず西側諸国政府と連携した西側国際NGOの役割から、次にアジアのトランスナショナルNGOの役割から、最後にインドネシアの国内NGOの役割から考察する。つまり、三つのレベルの市民社会／NGO支援には共通の「グローバル・スタンダード」があるのか。それは、西側先進諸国が目指す「グッド・ガバナンス」に収斂するのか。

また、かつてアジアの権威主義体制を主導した政治指導者が体制擁護に用いた「アジア的価値観」や「アジア的民主主義」を再考する。むしろそれらが、それぞれの地域社会で活動する市民社会／NGOが展開する多様な価値観に裹けられたボトムアップの民主主義とつながるのではないか。つまり、上記三つのレベルの市民社会／NGO支援は民主主義国家建設を目指している点では共通しているものの、他方でその過程に対する宽容度は相違するのではないか。

最後に、西側諸国とイスラム諸国の対立が深刻化している国際関係にあって、多様な価値観を背景に持つ東南アジアの市民社会／NGOは、自らの民主化運動の経験を共有することで、国際を超えた橋渡しの役割が期待されている。

キーワード：国際NGO、市民社会組織、民主化、自由で公正な選挙、グッド・ガバナンス

keywords: International NGO, Civil Society Organizations, Democratization, Free and Fair Elections, Good Governance

* 東洋英和女学院大学 国際社会学部 教授
Professor, Faculty of Social Sciences, Toyo Eiwa University
Elections represent a significant step for the reconstruction of failed states if they are free and fair and monitored by international NGOs as well as foreign governments. It is important that the elections are evaluated by other countries. And then the state has the qualifications to accept assistance from advanced Western countries.

Most Southeast Asian countries are/were authoritarian regimes or developmental dictatorships. Of these countries, the Philippines and Thailand overcame their political systems before others. The roles played by NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs) in the democratization processes of the Philippines and Indonesia were great. As a result, they influenced the processes of other countries for and gave impetus to various movements for democratization. For example, we can understand that the democratization NGO/CSOs caused outside forces to crack down on the Suharto regime.

In this article, I will analyze the role of transnational NGOs/CSOs in democratization. In the first section, I will address the issue of why election monitoring NGOs became forced on this role, examining them from the viewpoint of the influence of globalization toward democratization. In the second section, I focused on the democratic processes of the Philippines and Thailand. The election monitoring, NGOs sided with western society against developmental dictatorships, promoting democratization for “Good Governance.” In other words, the mission of international NGOs was to complete “free and fair” elections as in Western democracy.

In the third section, I explain how the NGOs/CSOs of Southeast Asia basically accepted “Good Governance”, which is a Western concept and part of a global standard which was promoted by Western international NGOs. On the other hand, rapid westernization led to unstable societies. I think the introduction of the “Global Standard” with westernization should be slow and needs the harmonization of “Asian Values”. Finally, the linkages between international NGO and Asian NGOs/CSOs will increase in importance as the number of terrorist groups continues to rise.

I. The Influence of Globalization on Civil Society
1. Globalization of Democracy

After the Cold War, the wave of democratization was getting stronger. However, comparing the case of the Asian region with the East European region, it was not a decisive force which breaks through the developmental dictatorships. Although NGOs/CSOs in Southeast Asia under the authoritarian regimes did not rapidly achieve democratization, they were influenced by those in East Europe.

The wave of democratization spread through the international community because democracy can make peaceful relations among states and within regions. We know the Democratic Peace Theory that teaches there are no wars between democratic states\(^1\). The Democratic Peace Theory suggests the concept of CSCE/OSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe/Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe) whereby the security of one state is connected with that of other states. The OSCE makes much of the concept of “Common Security” and “Comprehensive Security”\(^2\).

The security concept of the OSCE develops a new form of interference towards other states, specifically “democratic interference” after the Cold War. This comprises interference on human rights, peaceful interference on election monitoring and election support, and democratic interference in democratic institutions. Especially, democratic interference is composed of multinational methods through international organizations and transnational methods through NGOs\(^2\).
The globalization of democracy after the Cold War transformed the principles of noninterference from the Westphalian system through “democratization interference”. It was supported by aid strategy from western advanced countries. Advanced Western countries imposed the promotion of democratization and human rights as key conditions for developing countries to receive assistance.

In the Japanese scheme of official development assistance (ODA), which was formed in 1992, “the promotion of democratization” and “the condition of human right and assurance of freedom” are conditions of assistance.

The democratic movement after the Cold War transferred sovereignty from state to nation. It penetrated Southeast Asian countries that faced authoritarian regimes. Although governments in this area kept the “ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Way” of noninterference and consensus, NGOs/CSOs built the social infrastructure for democracy by sharing their experiences and exchanging information through transnational networks. In addition, the democratic movement was supported by Western countries and international NGOs which shared the concepts of “Common Security and Comprehensive Security”.

2. Case Study of the 1999 Indonesian General Election supported by IFES

The “Free and Fair” election is very important for democratization. Therefore, the international community supported the 1999 Indonesian general election after the breakdown of the Suharto regime. Concretely, Western election constants and international election NGOs helped the Indonesian government to make the election laws and assisted with all the election procedures, including planning the election system, voter registration, voter education, and the counting and tallying system. The assistance covered the entire gamut, from hard to soft election systems.

We will take the role of IFES (The International Foundation for Election Systems) as an example. What kind of election supports was conducted by IFES? We can understand the purpose of election support through the assistance of IFES. Additionally, we can discern strategies for diffusing democracy by examining the assistance of IFES.

IFES was established in 1987 by F. Clifton White who supported diplomatic policy of then-president of the US, Ronald Reagan, against both the revolutionary Ortega regime in Nicaragua and the authoritarian Marcos regime in the Philippines.

As Mr. Clifton White was assured of the democratic wave at that time, he made efforts to realize democratization by promoting the slogan of “Ballots, not Bullets”. Therefore, IFES assisted every election procedure from the viewpoint of professional and technical aspects.

How did IFES support the 1999 Indonesian general election? In September of 1998, IFES evaluated the pre-election requirements for the completion of an election. As a result, IFES asked the Indonesian government, provinces, and districts, to begin preparation for an election in the next year. This provided the circumstances for the international community to assist with Indonesian democratization.

IFES made a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Government of Indonesia with regard to election assistance. This included the following: Election Administration, Legal Reform, National Survey, Voter Education, Pollworker Training, Joint Operations/Media Center (JOMC), Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA), and Post-election Evaluation.
First of all, IFES experts have worked directly with the General Election Commission (KPU: Komisi Pemilihan Umum) and the National Election Commission (PPI: Panitia Pemilihan Indonesia) for the administration of international election standards that enhance accountability and transparency in an election process.

Next, IFES performed a thorough assessment of the election law, and provided technical analysis throughout the election process. IFES has produced public affairs television program to inform citizens of important election and governance issues. IFES developed a pollworker training manual and video that served as guides on every aspect of a pollworker’s responsibility.

Finally, IFES carried out the evaluation of the election. In particular, it focused on assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the election management and voter education campaign. The evaluation was submitted to the Government of Indonesia.

The cumulative effect of IFES assistance in completing the international election standard can be seen in the transfer to a Western democratic system after the Suharto authoritarian regime. The IFES efforts were received by Indonesian NGOs/CSOs that aimed at realizing democratization even though they were suppressed by the Suharto regime.

II. The Assistance Process of International NGOs for Democratization

1. The Role of NAMFREL in the Philippines

We can remember the role of NAMFREL (National Citizens’ Movement for Free Election) in democratization because of the “People Power” movement in 1986. NAMFREL became a famous organization for publicizing the unofficial results of the presidential election which contrasted the official count by COMELEC (Commission on Elections) that had declared the victory of Ferdinand Marcos — who had used unjust means. NAMFREL, assisted by powerful movement from civil society named “People Power” or “Edsa Revolution”, exposed the extent of the election injustice.

NAMFREL realized the dual count system supported by civil society and voluntary staffs since breakdown of the authoritarian Marcos regime in 1986. Anders Uhlin said, "The Philippines is important not only because it is a neighbouring country with links to several Indonesia pro-democracy activists, but also because of perceived similarities between the corrupt Marcos dictatorship and the even more corrupt Suharto dictatorship.” Similarly, “The popular and non-violent character of the uprising which led to the Indonesian pro-democracy movement was very weak at the time. If a ‘People Power’ revolution could take place in the Philippines, why not in Indonesia too, many activists asked.”

Indonesian activists for democratization realized “that the Philippine pattern could at least be tried in Indonesia.” In particular, PIJAR (Information Center and Action Network for Reform), which was established by students who were studying on university campuses in Jakarta in 1989 learned the most important lesson from the Philippines. They “became aware that they must get outside the campus and unite with the potentially strongest social forces, i.e. peasants, workers and marginalized city dwellers.”

We could understand the influence of democratization by the actions of NAMFREL toward Indonesian NGOs/CSOs for democratization. NAMFREL managed to mobilize ordinary people through OQC (Operation Quick Count). OQC is based on unofficial count by supporting many volunteers (see Figure 1).
Figure 1: The Difference between the Nature of COMELEC official Count & NAMFREL Unofficial OQC

We hear that NAMFREL still gains financial support from the business world. Mr. Danilo Magbual who is the NAMFREL chairman of Manila city said, “Free and fair election makes stable society. If society is stable, business is prosperous. If so, it makes our profits. That’s why the business world supports NAMFREL.” NAMFREL is supported by the Catholic Church, students, volunteers, other CSOs, and the business world. In observing the 2001 midterm election, I noted that many NAMFREL voluntary staff, who are mainly composed of university students, were deployed as pairs of observers to polling stations (Precincts) in every region (Barangay: the smallest administrative unit under Spanish rule).

NAMFREL influenced the organizational strategies of the KIPP (Independent Committee to Monitor the Elections) which played a very active part in the 1999 Indonesian general election. Firstly, as NAMFREL made use of the Catholic Church network for its activities, KIPP tried to do use the Islamic Mosque network, too. Secondly, NAMFREL mobilized many university students for democratization. KIPP also asked university students to help with election observation in conjunction with international election observers in each district. Thirdly, NAMFREL realized the breakdown of the authoritarian Marcos regime in cooperation with movement of ordinary people who got lots of information from the mass media. KIPP protected “Free and Fair” elections and prevented against unjust, unfair, and illegal election acts in cooperation with mass media supported by international community.

2. The Network Election Monitoring Groups of ANFREL

The democratization process in Thailand had a significant influence on the process in Indonesian, too. The 1992 pro-democracy demonstration resulted in many people being killed by military. Although
Indonesian people could not watch the events on television, they learned of the details by way of the weekly magazine "Tempo." Tempo reported on the large, violence-free demonstrations as "Democratic Confederation" including NGOs, labor unions and student organizations.

NGOs in Indonesia from the end of the 1970s to the beginning of the 1980s were active in the field of development, labor, women, and environments. As these were moderate positions for the Suharto regime, university students showed a different stance from their positions. On the other hand, although student activists had the use of a vital campus network, there was little linkage with other classes. "People Power" in the Philippines, as well as the 1992 blood incident in Thailand, gave the powerful movement for breakdown of the Suharto regime regarding democratization to Indonesian university students. It demonstrated solidarity beyond one class for the same purpose of democratization.

NGOs in the new age, after the end of the 1980s, were active in the field of human rights and democratization.

The NGOs of the new generation set five common purposes for democratization, as follows:

1. the demand for human rights;
2. the view that human rights and basic democratic principles and values are universal;
3. the demand for the rule of law and restrictions of the arbitrary nature of the states;
4. the call for free and fair general elections;
5. a reduction of military's political power by the military.

In the above list of goals, "Free and fair general elections" was included as the fourth goal. International election monitoring NGOs, as well as local NGOs, ranked the important priority for democratization.

ANFREL (Asian Network for Free Election) was established in Bangkok in November of 1997 for the purpose of election monitoring and promoting human rights as a stepping stone towards Asian democratization. The founded body was created in December of 1991 in Manila; named FORUM-ASIA (Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development), the organization promoted Asian human rights in cooperation with other similar organizations purposes. The Headquarter of FORUM-ASIA is now in Bangkok.

ANFREL was originally established to use the experience of struggle in the Philippines and Thailand to protect human rights and promote democratization in the authoritarian and military regime of Myanmar, Indonesia, Cambodia, and Malaysia. In concrete terms, ANFREL declared assistance for democratization as the umbrella organization of election monitoring Asian NGOs.

According to an ANFREL handout outlining the organization's "Mandate and Objectives", the general mandate involves support democratization efforts in the Asian region. In term of specific mandates and objectives, ANFREL is committed to supporting nationally based organizations with initiatives focusing on:

1. Election monitoring/ pre-post election, referenda local elections, and other democracy-related processes.
2. Education and trainings on election and democracy-related processes.
3. Researching election and democracy-related issues and cover electoral and democratic reforms.
4. Conducting campaigns and advocacy work on issues related to democratic processes.
5. Information dissemination and publication of materials related to election and other democratic
processes.

(6) Creation of an environment conductive to democratic development in the spirit of regional solidarity.

ANFREL's election monitoring activities began during the 1998 Cambodian election and has continued through to the 2007 East Timor election and encompassed all of the main elections in Asia. The ANFREL network is comprised of fourteen NGOs from eleven Asian countries. In other words, ANFREL fulfills the role of umbrella organization for election monitoring activity. ANFREL manages election monitoring assistance with the local NGOs concerned acting as in-field coordinators.

Table 1: ANFREL's National Member Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Odhikar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia: CMFREL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Center for Alternate Research in Development: CARID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Komite Independen Pemantau Pemilu: (KIPP)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>InterBand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>National Election Observation Committee: NEOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>Human Rights Commission of Pakistan: HRCP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Institute for Political and Electoral Reform: IPER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Citizen Movement for Free Election: NAMFREL-NCR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Task Forces Detainees of the Philippines: TFDP-Natl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates: PAHRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>Peoples Solidarity for Participatory Democracy: PSPD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Movement for Free and Fair Elections: MFPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People's Action for Free and Fair Election: PAFFREL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Poll Watch Foundation Thailand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How did ANFREL support the 1999 Indonesian election? FORUM-ASIA before establishment of ANFREL sent mission for the field research in Indonesia in 1995. And it published the report named *Indonesia-50 Years After Independence: Stability and Unity on a Culture of Fear*. This report disclosed the suppressive structure and violation of human rights during the Suharto regime in special areas such as Aceh, Irian Jaya (present-day West Papua), and East Timor. This report was published in eight countries, including Thailand, England, Indonesia, Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Japan, and Hong Kong.

In 1997, FORUM-ASIA, in cooperation with ISAI (the institute for the Studies on Free Flow of Information), AJI (Alliance of Independent Journalists) and Article XIX, published *Jakarta Crackdown, Freedom of Expression, The 1997 Election in Indonesia* and started various campaigns for Indonesian democratization.

The seven FORUM-ASIA members from Cambodia, Thailand, and Philippines participated in election monitoring in the 1997 general election. They were acting as election observers in the areas of Medan, Bali, Yogyakarta, Bogor, Surabaya, and Jakarta. And they published *Indonesia: Towards the End of Soehar-
tocracy and held symposium for it in Thailand and Philippines.

After ANFREL was established in 1997, it succeeded the performances of FORUM-ASIA toward Indonesian democratization. In 1998, ANDI (the Asian Network for Democracy in Indonesia) was established by ANFREL in cooperation with KIPP, AJI, LBH (the Legal Aid Institute) and others. ANDI promoted the movement for democratization in the country. ANFREL, with close monitoring and organization by KIPP, AJI, and LBH made three strategies for “Free and Fair” elections: firstly, to send missions for election monitoring; secondly, to have election skills capacity building training for local NGOs; and thirdly, to kick start election support activities in the international community.

According to this strategy, ANFREL, in cooperation with local NGOs, decided on four activities:

1. To have seminars on the role of journalism for election
2. To dispatch missions to observe voter registration
3. To send missions to observe the election campaign and election day
4. To dispatch missions for post-election fact finding

We can understand that the 1999 Indonesian election was supported by Asian NGOs like ANFREL as well as the international community in the long term.

3. The Role of KIPP in Indonesian Democratization

From the end of 1980s, new NGOs promoted Indonesian democratization, including “Free and Fair general elections.” KIPP was established on the fifteenth of March, in 1996 under the authoritarian Suharto regime and was first election monitoring NGO in Indonesia. KIPP was comprised of more than thirty NGOs that were in turn composed of independent journalists, activists for democratization, students, religious groups, laborers, and professionals.

KIPP had been against pro-Suharto organizations such as Golongan Karya (Functional groups) from the military, bureaucrats, and others which had practiced the unjust, illegal and corrupt election. KIPP tried to realize “free and fair” elections by developing voter education nationwide. However, the democratization activities of KIPP were interrupted and restricted by the Suharto government through unjust arrests and intimidation. That is why KIPP found it difficult to recruit election volunteers, just before the 1997 general election, the sociopolitical situations changed. Around 12,000 election volunteers participated in this election, from forty seven cities in sixteen provinces. As a result, KIPP became famous as election monitoring NGO in Indonesia.

KIPP was supported by NAMFREL, AEC (Australian Election Committee), IFES, FES (Friederich Elbert Stiftung in German), and other election organizations with regard to election skills, election training, and so on. FNS (Friederich Nauchmann Stiftung in German), NDI (National Democratic Institute), USAID, TAF (The Asian Foundation), and others supported with financial assistance and provided the opportunity for KIPP staff to participate in elections in Bangladesh, the Philippines, Cambodia, Thailand, Australia, the US, Finland, and the EU, respectively.

KIPP members could learn about election systems, election procedures, democratic systems, voter education and other issues because they received many opportunities and forms of support from international NGOs and the international community. Therefore, KIPP became the core member of ANFREL in 1997 as mentioned above.
The mission of KIPP was to ensure free, fair, and democratic elections in Indonesia. KIPP had three objectives in its election monitoring operation: firstly, to encourage large-scale participation of voters in the election; secondly, to detect election fraud, manipulations, and irregularities; and thirdly, to detect and report election fraud and irregularities, should they occur.

These missions and objectives were influenced by NAMFREL. KIPP prepared many volunteer election observers for the 1999 general election. At this time, it put their capacity training into practice for election procedures and skills nationwide. On the other hand, KIPP completed voter education in every district in cooperation with other domestic NGOs. As a result, 227 KIPP branches were established in 25 provinces and about 260,000 election volunteers were registered before the 1999 general election. Moreover, related organizations such as KIPP Students Branch, KIPP Campus Branch, KIPP Artist Branch, and Women Activist Group from 74 organizations under the Indonesian Women Congress were organized as election monitoring volunteers. In the end, KIPP even recruited volunteers from becak drivers, laborers, vendors, and villagers belonged to the marginal urban community.

Finally, many domestic and international observers besides KIPP participated in the 1999 Indonesian general election. But other big scale domestic organizations such as University President Forum (named Rector Forum), UNFREL (the University Network for Free and Fair Elections), and other small groups — encompassing around 300,000 observers — were permitted to be official election monitoring organizations. And around 600 international observers from international NGOs and foreign governments also participated in this Indonesian election.

III. NGOs/CSOs in ASEAN: Groping for Diverse Values

The Asian Economic Crisis of 1997 was the trigger for the crackdown of the Suharto regime. The Suharto government asked the IMF (International Monetary Fund) to provide some money for Indonesia’s economic reconstruction. In response, the IMF subjected the Indonesian government to certain structural adjustment polices as a condition of finance from IMF. If developing countries in general request finance from International Development Finance Banks, it is natural that they are requested to comply with requests for “Good Governance”.

What is “Good Governance”? According to Human Development Report 2002, good governance is democratic governance from a human development perspective. “Much of the recent debate has focused on what makes institutions and rules more effective, including transparency, participation, responsiveness, accountability and the rule of law”. And moreover, effective institutions should request the eradication of corruption, collusion, and nepotism, while restraining military expenditure in order to enhance the welfare of the people.

In short, the standard of “Good Governance” is democratization, transparency and accountability, rule of law, effective institutes and public service, eradication of corruption, and restraint of military expenditure. In terms of these standards, how many Southeast Asian countries can meet them? As a rule, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia (at present) have successfully met these standards. However, new ASEAN members such as CLVM (Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar) and Brunei are still socialist states or dictatorships. How should Singapore and Malaysia be designated?

In the case of Singapore and Malaysia, high economic growth has supported bureaucrats of a relatively high level of abilities. Singapore, in particular, is ranked alongside other advanced industrial countries in
terms of economic and social performances, despite its limited democracy. Singapore is a strong state which has whole areas under state control. In other word, there is no democratic freedom in Singapore without permission from the government. However, in terms of the ability of bureaucrats, Singapore is the one of best countries because it is categorized alongside countries with some of the highest gross national income in the world.

From the viewpoint of the position of civil society, "ASEAN is government oriented. There is non-recognition of Civil Society Organizations; there is very limited space for CSOs." However, democratization is the most important transnational matter and CSOs are working to eradicate widespread corruption, collusion, and nepotism. Democratization aims at realizing transparent institutes and securing the rule of law. It promotes peaceful and just societies with consideration for education, health, and general wellbeing to the same extent as in western countries.

What differentiates Asian styles of democracy from Western styles? In the first plenary of 2nd ASEAN Civil Society Conference, it was noted that while Western styles place emphasis on Elite democracy, Asian styles are suitable for Direct democracy — people power. Consequently, how can Asian civil societies realize participatory democracy? "Most of ASEAN is elite democracy, where civil society and the people advance and become elite politicians and members of the elite society. How far can these politicians really speak on behalf of the grassroots? It’s the government’s role and duty to provide any human being a decent life.”

The Thailand coup in 2006 disappointed NGOs/CSOs in Southeast Asia because Thailand was one of the best democracies of ASEAN. In the case of Thai coups in history, the most recent incident has many kinds of contradictions. The Thaksin government was elected by elections using the western style of representative democracy. However, he became an authoritarian style leader and started to control people. Finally, Thaksin and his government became corrupt.

Now civil society in Thailand has begun to reconstruct Asian- style democracy, with participatory democracy, but not "the western style of adopting representative democracy.” And civil society is attempting to realize this goal without a military coup.

IV. Conclusion

Southeast Asian countries consist of various ethnicities and values. In particular, there are conflict factors directed towards western counties which are related to Islamic values. In the 1997 monetary crisis, Malaysia had domestic conflict regarding leadership between Mahathir Mohamad and Anwar Ibrahim. As a result, Mahathir expelled Anwar from the political arena. However, Anwar left the movement of “Reformasi (Reformation in English)” . The Reformasi movement promoted initiatives, not only against globalization, but also led the fight against disparities between rich and poor and against corruption, collusion and nepotism.

Although Reformasi had its roots in the Malay Islamic community led by Islamic organizations, it involved NGOs, students, new types of businessmen, and professionals from the Chinese community, the Indian community, and the Malay community. As a result, ordinary people in Malaysia also promoted democracy with justice and fair civil society.

Anwar said, “the emergence of Muslim democracies is something significant and worthy of our attention” referring to Indonesian democratization— an important step for the country with the largest
Muslim population in the world. On the other hand, he concluded "the human desire to be free and to lead a dignified life is universal. So is the abhorrence of despotism and oppression. These are passions that motivate not only Muslims but people from all civilizations".

Kim Dae Jung criticized the fact that authoritarian Asian leaders use of the concept of "Asian Values" to justify and buttress their regime. And he pointed out that Asia has many democratic traditional concepts including Confucianism, Buddhism, and Tonghak. "Clearly, Asia has democratic philosophies as profound as those of the West. Asia also has many democratic traditions," Kim introduced Asian democratic institutions compared with Western's in his articles.

Asian NGOs/CSOs are managed by professionals as well as middle class people. While they are well aware of western democracy, they knew of the common and different issues belonging to each country at the same time. They know all issues can not be resolved by western democracy, too. As a result, their strategies may put the priority on the keep of people's life in spite of freedom. Many NGOs/CSOs are tackling the task of poverty alleviation rather than making freedom their priority. They have emphasized the right to live more than the right to be liberal.

The activities of many local NGOs/CSOs are based on indigenous communities that have maintained endemic custom, culture, values and social systems. Ivan Illich referred to this as "Subsistence", meaning that this is the physical and mental foundation for indigenous people's lives. Although "Subsistence" was used in the field of development, it can be adopted in the process of democratization.

In conclusion, Asian NGOs/CSOs will surely try to promote a western standard regarding democratic systems. However, on the other hand, they do not necessarily think that "Westernization" equals democratization. In particular, they focus on the process for democratization. Southeast Asian countries are composed of different ethnicities and therefore, in the process of promoting and effecting democratization, it is important to remember and respect the concept of "Subsistence" as explained by Illich.

Democratization intervention on the part of foreign governments and international NGOs is getting stronger, and forms part of Democratic Peace Theory. However, the conflicts against democratic values which depend on westernization are increasing more and more. Even though the conflicts among governments increase, the relationship among NGOs/CSOs will be strengthened because they are based on common grassroots issues. In addition, the activities of NGOs/CSOs can be beyond national interests, in which case they are able to take charge of making peace through their own network.

As Asian election monitoring NGOs from the frontline of democratization, they will be expected to also form the bridge between Western and Asian values. In particular, conflicts between Islamic and Western values must be avoided if world peace is to be a reality, and as such, the role of Asian NGOs/CSOs have and will continue to increase in importance.

4 Anders Uhlir, 1997, *Indonesia and the "Third Wave of Democratization": The Indonesian Pro-Democracy*

5 Ibid., p.193.

6 Interview with Mr. Damaso Magbual on 11th of May, 2001.

7 Uhlin, op. cit., p.191. However, Mr. Ikravany Hilaman who is general secretary of Indonesian Legal Aid Institute said, “as the Islamic Mosque was very conservative, it had little networking.” (Interview on 28th of April, 2005).

8 Uhlin, op. cit., p.145.

9 See KIPP’s introduction materials for the 1999 Indonesian general election.


11 Yasutami Shimomura, 2006, Asia no Gabanansu (Asian Governance), Yuhikaku.

12 According to Human Development Report 2006, Singapore is ranked 25th in the Human Development Index (HDI). It therefore belongs to the High Income Group.


14 Ibid., p.20.


17 Kim Dae Jung, 1994, “Is Culture Destiny? The Myth of Asia’s Anti-Democratic Values,” Foreign Affairs, Volume 73, No.6, November/December, p.191. Kim’s article was against “Culture is Destiny: A Conversation with Lee Kuan Yew.” In this article, Lee implied that Western-style democracy was not applicable to East Asia (Fareed Zakaria, Foreign Affairs, March/April 1994, Volume 73, No.2).