

## ABSTRACT

Through Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II) which was resulted at 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Bali, ASEAN leaders proclaimed the formation of ASEAN Community consisting three pillars: ASEAN Security Community (ASC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) which relates and strengthen each other to reach common goal in order to guarantee a sustainable peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region. This paper will then focus on the second pillar, ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), more specifically related to ASEAN Free Trade Agreement (AFTA). It attempts to discuss how ASEAN can move forward towards the realization of AFTA to reach a single economic community. The discussion will be divided into three main sections. The first section will explain about AFTA and its relations to AEC. AFTA is an important part in the formation of AEC since AFTA lays the foundation of AEC, i.e. trade liberalization towards an ASEAN single market and production base. The second section will analyze the main challenge facing ASEAN in realizing AFTA. The serious development gap is found out to be the main challenge for ASEAN towards a single economic community. The gap between ASEAN-6 (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines) and new ASEAN member countries as namely CMLV (Cambodia, Myanmar, Lao and Vietnam) will be elucidated in this section. The final section will relate the economic nationalism perspective of Friedrich List to the occurring economic development of ASEAN countries by taking Indonesia as an example. The concept of mental capital will be emphasized in this section.

*Key words: AFTA, AEC, development gap, economic nationalism, mental capital*

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### I.1 Background

*"Today's global economy is genuinely borderless. Information, capital and innovation flow all over the world at top speed,...."*

*-Kenichi Ohmae-*

The statement above strengthens that globalization is able to ease the information, capital and innovation flows from one to other countries. In this era, every state is required to gain such a good competitive edge so that it can get advantages of globalization. Facing this, many countries try to strengthen regionalism so that the bad impact of globalization can be faced together. The interaction of history and geography may favour the emergence of regional cultural, economic, legal, and political commonalities, which may help neighboring countries to reach agreement over difficult issues, particularly those related to regulation and the distribution of costs and benefits.<sup>1</sup> In Southeast Asia, regionalism has its own history. Firstly, Southeast Asia's regionalism was addressed to prevent foreign ideology (communist) influence to the region and prevent further open conflict between its member states. The visible Southeast Asian regionalism is in the form of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). ASEAN member countries have expanded from five founding countries became ten member countries whose cultures and ideologies vary. From year to year, ASEAN has been trying to develop towards a single community.

In 7<sup>th</sup> October 2003, through Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II) which was resulted at 9<sup>th</sup> ASEAN Summit in Bali, ASEAN leaders proclaimed the formation of ASEAN Community consisting three pillars: ASEAN Security Community (ASC), ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) which relates and strengthens each other to reach common goal in order to guarantee a sustainable peace, stability and shared prosperity in the region.<sup>2</sup> The paper will then focus on the second pillar,

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1 Fawcett, Louise and Andrew Hurrell. 1995. *Regionalism in World Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 82

2 CPF. Luhulima, et.al. 2008. *Masyarakat Asia Tenggara Menuju Komunitas ASEAN 2015*. Jakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.

ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). In realizing AEC, ASEAN has set up an agenda as namely ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) since 1992. Under AFTA, one can expect intra-regional trade to rise significantly in absolute terms.<sup>3</sup> It is hoped that the increase of intra-ASEAN trade could make ASEAN survive in the middle of international economic shock. AFTA is targeted to be fully reached by 2010 for developing countries group (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines) and by 2015 for less developing group (Cambodia, Lao Myanmar and Vietnam).<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, what has been achieved so far is still far from the target. In 2003-2005, intra-region trade has only reached about 20% of ASEAN total trade.<sup>5</sup> One of problems facing AFTA is the development gaps<sup>6</sup> among ASEAN countries.

## I.2 Research Question

How ASEAN member countries should act as related to the serious development gaps which become a major problem in the realization of AFTA towards an ASEAN Economic Community?

## I.3 Conceptual Framework

### Productive Powers Perspective in Friedrich List's Economic Nationalism

Economic nationalism perspective was firstly introduced by Friedrich List on his book entitled *The National System of Political Economy* in 1841 which bears the motto '*Et la patrie et l'humanité*'<sup>7</sup> There is such a wrong tendency in seeing nationalism as Nazism and Facism, so

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3 Arief, Mohamed. 2000. *Trade, Investment and Interdependence*, in Simon SC Tay, Jesus Estanislao and Hadi Soesatro (eds.), *A New ASEAN in A new Millenium* Jakarta: Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). p. 51.

4 Presented by Chilman Arisman, Director of Dialogue Partner and Inter-Region ASEAN, Department of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Indonesia at 19<sup>th</sup> National Summit of International Relations Students in Universitas Al-Azhar Indonesia, Jakarta – December 11, 2007.

5 Based on the table in *ASEAN Baseline Report: Measurement to Monitor Progress towards the ASEAN Community*. Providence: ASEAN Secretariat, 2005. p. 4. accessed on March 29, 2008. <<http://www.aseansec.org/ABR.pdf>>

6 *Development gaps* is the main challenge for ASEAN integration. There is great disparity in terms of economic development, health, and environmental issue among ASEAN member countries. (see *United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) Press Release No. N/65/2007*. accessed on June 19, 2008.

<<http://www.unescap.org/unis/press/2007/nov/n65.asp>>

7 The motto expresses the deep concern of a devoted German patriot and liberal about the backward, pre-industrial state of Germany in his day. (see Levi-Faur, David. 1997. *Economic nationalism: from Friedrich List to Robert Reich*, in the *Review of International Studies*. *British International Studies Association*. p. 360.)

nationalism in terms of economic is often related to socialist economic.<sup>8</sup> Whereas, in his book, Friedrich List insists that economic nationalism is very different compared to liberalism or economic socialism.<sup>9</sup>

In terms of *productive power*<sup>10</sup>, List defines three distinct types of capital: natural capital, material capital and mental capital. From these three types of capital, he believes that mental capital is the most important capital in the creation of wealth compared to other types of capital. He rejects the assumption of economic liberalism, that mental capital is inferior to natural and material capital in the creation of wealth. List argues that the creation of wealth is the outcome of the interaction between human skills, industry and initiatives on the one hand, and the natural and material world on the other.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, List believes that economic policy making which is aimed at the development of mental capital, all other things being equal, will result in better performances than economic policy that aims to enlarge the development of natural and material capital.

In explaining the importance of mental capital, List elucidates two families, each with a farm and five sons. The father of the first family deposits his savings in the bank and maintain his sons in manual labour, while the father of the second family exploits his savings for the sake of his son's education and grants them both time and encouragement for their own personal cultivation. Two sons in the second family receive training aimed at turning them into competent landowners, while the others learn trades and other professions. Upon the death of the fathers, List argues that the condition of the two families will be very different. The first family must divide its estate into five parts and tended just as before. The area of cultivation will now have to supply the needs of those five sons. Therefore, the fate of the first family will be that of poverty and ignorance. By contrast, the second family will have very different fate compared to the first one. Upon the death of farther, the estate will be split only into two, and due to the good husbandry of these trained heirs, each half will be able to yield as much as the whole yielded before. The other three brothers will get job related to the education and training they got.

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8 See JSTOR: Baughn, Christopher C. and Attila Yaprak. 1996. *Economic Nationalism: Conceptual and Empirical Development*, in *Political Psychology Vol. 17 No. 4*. International Society of Political Psychology. p. 764. accessed on June 19, 2008.

<<http://www.jstor.stable/3792137>>

9 See opcit. p. 370.

10 The source of the power of nation is their *productive powers* (see ibid. p. 361)

11 Levi-Faur, David. 1997. *Friedrich List and the political economy of the nation-state*, in *Review of International Political Economy*. Routledge. p. 157.

List argues that there are four characteristics of economic development: (1) the collective nature of economic activity in a developed economy where there is collective effort towards common development target; (2) societal conflict in a developed economy where the deeper the specialization becomes, the greater the fragmentation of interest and identities; (3) time preferences in developed economy where the more developed, the actors are required to have long-term framework; (4) culture and the productive powers. List believes that state has important roles in political economy. He argues that state has very significant roles dealing with four characteristics of economic development, i.e. to protect productive power a state has, prevent or solve societal conflicts occur, etc.

On this paper, List's point of view will be linked to the obstacle facing ASEAN in the struggle for AFTA. One of the serious obstacles is the existence of development gaps among ASEAN countries. List's point of view will then be used to determine what ASEAN countries need to do dealing with this obstacle towards a stable ASEAN Economic Community.

#### **I.4 Core Ideas**

To reduce development gaps among ASEAN countries, every state is justly required to improve its national development. However, most of ASEAN countries are trapped in Adam Smith's classical economic paradigm prioritizing on material capital in the creation of wealth. ASEAN countries have to change that paradigm and more prioritize on mental capital development so that they will be able to maintain natural and material capital. By doing so, each country will be ready to innovate, initiate and compete towards AFTA 2015.

## CHAPTER II

### CONTENTS

#### II.1 AFTA and AEC

1980s was the dark era for the economy of the world. The economic slowdown, international debt crisis, the associated reduction in North-South capital transfer and the rise of protectionist sentiment in the United States occurred. The rise of protectionist sentiment was caused by *yendaka* case<sup>12</sup>. Those situations gave big difficulty for ASEAN as a newly established regionalism in Southeast Asia at that time. ASEAN countries tried to find ways of boosting export and maintaining foreign exchange earnings. Facing this situation, the Philippines came out with a proposal to expand intra-ASEAN trade by further cooperation measures. It was formally proposed to reduce intra-ASEAN tariffs and an external common tariff at the ASEAN Economic Minister Meeting in Manila in 1986.<sup>13</sup> However, Indonesia and Singapore were very vocal in opposing the proposal. Indonesia rejected the proposal due to the given deadline in implementing the proposal, while Singapore disagreed to raise its external tariff. Singapore has been much benefited in trading with its outside partners from its low external common tariff. It means that the increase of external common tariff might result on the declination of Singapore's external trade. The intra-ASEAN trade at that time was around 20% of total ASEAN trade.

Around five years later with intra-ASEAN trade even lower, a new proposal to form a steady economic cooperation as namely ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) was proposed by Thailand. The proposal was then agreed by other ASEAN countries. ASEAN countries noted that intra-ASEAN trade affected their national economic development directly or indirectly.

ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) was established in January 1992 to eliminate tariff barriers among the Southeast Asian countries with a view to integrating the ASEAN economies into a single production base and creating a regional market of 500 million people.<sup>14</sup> AFTA has conventionally been explained as a project of open regionalism adopted by ASEAN member

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12 *Yendaka* case was a terrible thing at that time in which Japan's Yen currency was more than any other currency. Yen currency was going up, from \$1=¥300 became \$1=¥130-150. It was caused by trade deficit between US and Japan.

13 See JSTOR: Bowles, Paul. 1997. *ASEAN, AFTA and the New Regionalism*, in *Pacific Affairs Vol 70, No. 2*. University of British Columbia. Hlm. 222. accessed on 15 May 2008.

<<http://www.jstor.stable/2760773>>

14 *Southeast Asia, A Free Trade Area*. 2002. Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat. p. 1. accessed on June 19, 2008.

<<http://www.aseansec.org/pdf/afta.pdf>>

governments to attract foreign direct investment to the region through ‘carrot’ of the single regional market.<sup>15</sup> Specifically, AFTA is an effort of ASEAN member countries to raise intra-ASEAN trade through reduction of tariff barriers and elimination of non-tariff barriers. The Agreement on the Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) Scheme for the AFTA requires that tariff rates levied on a wide range of product traded within the region be reduced to no more than five percent.<sup>16</sup> AFTA is targeted to be fully reached by 2010 for developing countries group (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines) and by 2015 for less developing group (Cambodia, Lao, Myanmar and Vietnam).<sup>17</sup> However, as we can see that intra-ASEAN trade is still far from the target. Intra-ASEAN export declined dramatically from \$ 23.1 billion in the first quarter of 1997 to US \$ 13.4 billion in 1998 representing a reduction of 24.6%<sup>18</sup>, while up to 2005, intra-ASEAN trade only reached ± 20% from total ASEAN trade<sup>19</sup>.

AFTA is an important part in the effort to reach ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). It will be a starting point for reaching the AEC. AFTA is basically about trade and service liberalization across ASEAN where one another country can conduct any trading activity with meaningless barriers. This is in accordance with what AEC all about. AEC is addressed to make ASEAN as a single market and production base by turning the diversity to be a business opportunity. ASEAN-ISIS (Institute of Strategic and International Studies) report entitled *Towards an ASEAN Economic Community* proposes a ‘common market minus’ approach which is to build a common market by considering disparity among member countries. For instance, a common market is a condition of free trade as well as free flows of capital and employments.

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15 JSTOR: Nesadurai, Helen ES. 2003. *Attempting Developmental Regionalism through AFTA: The Domestic Source of Regional Governance*, in *Third World Quarterly Vol. 24 No. 2*. Taylor & Francis L. p. 236. accessed on June 15, 2008.

<<http://www.jstor.stable/3993511>>

16 see *opcit*.

17 Presented by Chilman Arisman, Director of Dialogue Partner and Inter-Region ASEAN, Department of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Indonesia at 19<sup>th</sup> National Summit of International Relations Students in Universitas Al-Azhar Indonesia, Jakarta – December 11, 2007.

18 See *AFTA Reader, Volume V, the Sixth ASEAN Summit and the Accelartion of AFTA*. 1998, Robert R. Teh, Raymond Yee and Noordin Azhari (eds). Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat. p. 65. accessed on June 19, 2008.

<<http://www.aseansec.org/7665.htm>>

19 See *ASEAN Baseline Report: Measurement to Monitor Progress towards the ASEAN Community*. Providence: ASEAN Secretariat, 2005. p. 4. accessed on March 29, 2008.

<<http://www.aseansec.org/ABR.pdf>>

## II.2 Intra-ASEAN Development Gaps

There are many challenges facing ASEAN in the implementation of AFTA. One of the major challenges is a serious development gaps among ASEAN member countries. Generally, the economic disparity occurs between ASEAN-6 (Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines) and CLMV (Cambodia, Lao, Myanmar and Vietnam). In 2003, CMLV's per capita income ratio was only 17,5% of ASEAN-6. In United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) Report 2007 is noted that serious development disparity takes place among ASEAN member countries. In terms of emission carbon, Brunei's per capita emissions rate is over 60,000 times higher than that of Cambodia. This condition indicates great industrial development on one hand and an extreme backwardness on the other hand. In fact, almost every adult in Brunei has his/her own car, while there are few people who have cars in Cambodia. It was proven during my short talk with a Cambodian and some Bruneians in the breaking time of an ASEAN conference some months ago. Almost every Bruneian student goes to his/her campus by his/her own car. Brunei also enjoys a dynamic infrastructure development; many malls are built, many hotels are reserved during vacation. On the other hand, a country like Cambodia or Lao enjoys very little of its infrastructure development. One of my Lao's friends told me that there is only one big festival held in the city in a year. Something which is impossible to happen in a country like Malaysia, Indonesia or Thailand where many festivals are often held in big events during a year. Motor vehicle, especially car, is still something very prestigious in Lao. In terms of health, the child and maternal mortality in Cambodia, Lao and Myanmar are between 11 to 47 times higher than those of Singapore. It shows us how sophisticated Singapore's health system and technology on the one hand and how Cambodia, Lao and Myanmar are left behind. Those development gaps rate can be seen as follow:

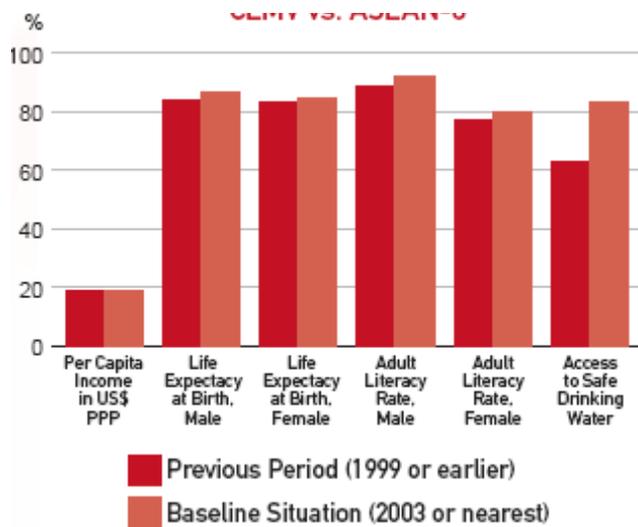


Diagram 1. Ratio of Economic and Human Development Indicator;  
CMLV vs. ASEAN-6<sup>20</sup>

Besides serious development gaps between ASEAN-6 and CMLV, there is also serious disparity within ASEAN-6 and CMLV itself. For example, there is such a great difference between ASEAN-6 countries based on their currency: BND1=Rp 6,800 and Sin \$1=Rp 6,500.

As it has been told, AFTA is addressed to establish a single market where goods, services and people can flow freely across ASEAN region. In this condition, every member country can export its goods or services to other member countries without any limitation. Every ASEAN people, whether professional or common society can visit other member countries with a visa waiver. It means that a Singapore's doctor can work in Lao for a long time, a Malaysian teacher can teach Cambodian students and an Indonesian tourist can visit Thailand every time. These all could catalyze the realization of One Community, for ASEAN society can get closer each other and feel more about ASEAN.

However, it might cause a greater difficulty towards One Community if the development gaps among the member countries are not well tackled. The condition where Singapore's doctors work in Lao might be able to give a knowledge and technology transfer from Singapore to Lao on the one hand, but it might be able to cause the increase of unemployment in Lao. For instance, Lao's doctor must compete with Singapore's doctor, alumni of world class National University of Singapore, for example. Based on recent condition, there would only be the winner and the loser in that competition. The winner that can get a job and the loser that becomes an

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.* p. 8.

unemployed.

Considering this, we can find out that the development gaps among ASEAN member countries will be a potential and dangerous threat in reaching an ASEAN Community. There should be any action to deal with this problem, individually or collectively.

### **II.3 The Importance of Mental Capital Improvement**

Recalling to the previous discussion on this paper, noting that the main challenge in implementing AFTA is the serious development gaps among ASEAN countries, some ways should be found out to tackle the problem. One of the ways to reduce the gap is by improving national development of each member country. In fact, all of ASEAN countries have been pursuing for their national development. However, the matter lies in the methods of the developments.

To improve their national economic development, most of ASEAN countries tend to struggle for material capital instead of other types of capital. It is such a common perception that high economic development can be grasped by gaining as many as capital, either from inside or outside. This kind of perception leads to the capitalism where a state tends to get as many as it can get without thinking about others. Capitalism emphasizes on the possession of material capital. In today's context, material capital can be in the form of foreign direct investment, fresh money, etc. This kind of thinking might become very beneficial for a short time, but not for a long time. As what Stephen R. Covey told in his book entitled *The 7<sup>th</sup> Habits of Highly Effective People*, what a successful businessman needs to do is to take care the chicken that produces the golden egg rather than to take care the golden egg only, because if the businessman has a healthy chicken, then he will get more eggs produced by his chicken. Material capital-emphasized development is like taking care the golden eggs, not the chicken. In a short term, a person might be able to accumulate more and more material capital from day to day, but it will not be everlasting since he/she doesn't look after the producer.

One of material capital-emphasized development which causes bad impact to the national development is like what happened in Indonesia. It has been a long time for Indonesia to have an agreement contract with Exxon. For Indonesia, Exxon is thought to be the savior dealing with development problems facing Indonesia. Indonesian acceptance upon Exxon is hoped to be the sign that Indonesia is an open and attractive for the investors. However, the fact that Exxon has

just exploited Indonesian nature and requested much of cost for the operation indicates that Exxon actually harms Indonesia. Nevertheless, in Megawati Soekarno Putri's era, Indonesia signed an extension contract with Exxon in the oil exploration in Cepu block which was addressed to perform Indonesia's opened economy image to attract foreign investors.<sup>21</sup> The agreement itself actually let Indonesia be exploited more and more. The so called 'exploitation contract' still prevails until this day. Indonesia seems to face the dilemma of 'the monster that consumes itself' as what Danah Zohar and Ian Marshall explained in their book entitled *Spiritual Capital*. Indonesia seems to be a capitalist state which tries to get as many as capital in a short time by opening its market as broad as it can. However, many companies operating in Indonesia are about making money, exploiting the nature to extract as much as they can get. In this kind of condition, Indonesia is like a wealthy timber merchant named Erisychthon who finally eats himself because of his greedy (capitalism) in the Ovid's tales from Greek mythology. For instance, many countries are trapped in Smith's argument which tends to pretend material capital as the main priority in the development.<sup>22</sup>

Due to that long-term indifference, many countries lost their national assets. If this problem isn't immediately tackled, then AFTA will just become boomerang for the less developing ASEAN member countries. One of the emerging anxieties is like what the Health Minister of Republic of Indonesia, Siti Fadilah Supari said:

*"Jika mahasiswa asing itu nantinya lulus, mereka bisa langsung menjadi dokter di Indonesia tanpa adaptasi, sedangkan dokter-dokter kita bisa jadi kuli. Ini sangat ironis."*<sup>23</sup>

Therefore, what ASEAN countries need to do is to develop their human resources as what Friedrich List stated that prosperity is the result of the interaction between human, his initiatives and natural and material capital. If a country has qualified mental capital, then it can make innovation and initiation. It was proved by one of Japan's top-ranked companies. In an interview, Suzuki's CEO in Japan told that Suzuki 'makes people'. For instance, the company focuses on human resource development so it can innovate, initiate, and compete.<sup>24</sup>

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21 See Batubara, Marwan (eds). 2006. *Tragedi & Ironi Blok Cepu; Nasionalisme yang Tergadai*. Jakarta: PT Bening CitraKreasi Indonesia.

22 See Preston, P.W. 1996. *Development Theory an Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. p. 55.

23 It is delivered by Health Minister of Republic of Indonesia in responding the increase number of Malaysian students in Medical Department of some universities in Indonesia, even in some of universities; the number of Malaysian students are more than the number of domestic students. On *Semakin Banyak Mahasiswa Asing di Fakultas Kedokteran Negeri* column Humaniora, p. 13. KOMPAS, June 19, 2008.

24 Japan and International Economic Order Class. Department of International Relations, Universitas Gadjah Mada. April 23, 2008.

Therefore, each ASEAN country needs to change its paradigm which merely prioritizes on material capital to a paradigm which emphasize on mental capital. If every ASEAN country has qualified human resources, then it will automatically be able to make an innovation which can improve its national development and finally can reduce development gaps as the main challenge in realizing AFTA. One of the visible ways to develop mental capital is through education. ASEAN member countries can hand in hand in conducting qualified education for its society.

## CHAPTER IV

### CONCLUSION

*"Wealth is created not merely by material capital but by the interaction between material capital and man's skills, industry and initiatives."*

-Friedrich List-

The serious development gap among ASEAN countries which is eventually a main challenge towards AFTA must be immediately tackled. The improvement of national economic development of each ASEAN member country is going to be one of the ways to solve the problem. In improving their development, ASEAN countries should prioritize not only on material capital, but most importantly on mental capital. A high qualified mental capital will be able to carry out material and natural capital well. One of the ways to improve mental capital is through education. ASEAN countries could improve education for their society domestically or regionally based on ASEAN Charter. If every state has high qualified human resources, then they will be able to innovate, initiate and compete in realizing AFTA towards ASEAN Economic Community (AEC). Finally, the success story depends on ASEAN countries themselves, whether they want to be defector or cooperator.

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< <http://www.aseansec.org/7665.htm>>

## **NEWSPAPER**

*Semakin Banyak Mahasiswa Asing di Fakultas Kedokteran Negeri*. Humaniora column. Kompas Thursday, June 19, 2008.

## **PRESENTATION SLIDE SHOW**

Chilman Arisman, Director of Dialogue Partner and Inter-Region ASEAN, Department of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Indonesia at 19<sup>th</sup> National Summit of International Relations Students in Universitas Al-Azhar Indonesia, Jakarta – December 11, 2007.