

Decentralization and Democratization in Southeast Asia

- with a special section on 10 years of decentralization in Indonesia -

June 15-17, 2011 in Freiburg / Germany

organized by the Freiburg Southeast Asia Study Group

The post-Cold War period has witnessed major shifts in the quest for more democratic and more decentralized governance structures in Southeast Asia. With its “big bang” decentralization program launched in 1991, the Philippines spearheaded these changes. A decade later, in 2001, Indonesia embarked upon an even more ambitious decentralization and democratization process and has now become one of the biggest democracies in the world. Also Vietnam is undergoing a decentralization process since the late 1990s, albeit more incrementally than Indonesia and the Philippines.

Yet, democratization and concomitant governance reforms in the region are fragile as the 2006 coup and recent political unrest in Thailand suggest. Decentralization reforms have to contend with the resistance of major veto players ranging from the central bureaucracy to the military and entrenched local elites. This resistance is intertwined with cultural (re)constructions, identity politics and popular representations. The outcome of this renegotiation of governance structures, economic patterns and cultural identifications is by no means clear. It often leads to unexpected results which are not always in conformity with the objectives of the reformers. This conference is devoted to the scholarly analysis of these changes and a debate about the developments ahead.

A special section of the conference is devoted to commemorate – and analyze – **10 years of decentralization in Indonesia**. After a decade of decentralization, it is time to evaluate and to assess decentralization’s achievements and shortcomings within economy and political processes as well as for social and cultural discourses.

The conference pursues an interdisciplinary approach and intends to bring together scholars from economics, political science, public administration, anthropology, history, and related disciplines. It is organized by the Freiburg Southeast Asian Study Group at the University of Freiburg (<http://www.southeastasianstudies.uni-freiburg.de/>).

You are cordially invited to submit an extended abstract (300 words) online by **15. February 2011** through the **conference website** at www.decentralizationconference.de

Details including schedule, venues, hotel and online registration and Black Forest excursion can be found at www.decentralizationconference.de...

We look forward to meeting you in Freiburg!

Günther Schulze
Jürgen Rüländ
Judith Schlehe
(program committee)

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