Thesis Title	:	Political Security Obstacles and Challenges of Timor-Leste's ASEAN Membership	
Author	:	Ms. Deuladeu Elizabeth Florindo Soares	
Major	:	Master of Arts (International Law and Diplomacy)	
Advisor	:	1. Dr. Thanes Sucharikul	Advisor
		2. Dr. Disaphol Chansiri	Co-Advisor

ABSTRACT

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is a country newly-born in the 21st century, which is situated in a strategic location in Southeast Asia between two much larger neighbouring countries: Indonesia and Australia. The country's foreign policy is clearly mentioned in its Constitution, and it has implemented this policy by participating in various international organizations, such as the United Nations. To enhance its relations with other countries, particularly at the regional level, Timor-Leste has worked hard to achieve full membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations since the beginning of its independence, and showed the seriousness of its intentions by submitting a formal application on 4 March 2011.

The three pillars of ASEAN, namely political security, economic and socio-cultural, are part of Timor-Leste's preparations to gain trust from ASEAN Member States to integrate the country into the community. Since this research focuses on the political security sector, the purposes of this study were to find and describe the political security obstacles that Timor-Leste has resolved and those yet to be resolved; and to understand and explain the political security challenges facing Timor-Leste as it seeks to join ASEAN.

The political security obstacles that have been resolved by Timor-Leste are the political and security crisis in 2006, the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) problem, reconciliation and veteran issues. On the other hand, the obstacles that require serious attention from the government to be overcome are the Martial Arts Groups (MAGs) issues, boundaries issues and comprehensive security issues like drugs and human trafficking. The political security challenges faced by the country are good governance,

democracy, human rights, the electoral system and national security. Timor-Leste has succeeded in the process of democratization by showing its capability in the implementation of good governance through transparency, combating corruption, and conducting free and fair elections. However, the challenges for the country that require additional effort are human rights and national security.

To join ASEAN, a prospective member must fulfil certain requirements. Timor-Leste has undertaken various preparations, particularly in the political security sector, that have shown the ASEAN Member States that the country is capable of managing and solving its internal security issues and therefore is deserving of status as an ASEAN Member State.

The positive signals from the ten ASEAN Member States and support from countries outside ASEAN show that Timor-Leste has worked hard to obtain permanent membership in ASEAN in the near future.

ASSUMPTION UNIVERSITY OF THAILAND
BROTHERS of ST GABRIEL
LABOR VINCIT
OMNIA
SINCE1969
มหาวิทยาลัยอัสสัมชัญ