

AN ARGUMENT ON THE DESIRABILITY OF NATURAL DISASTER RELIEF MECHANISMS IN REGIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the possibility and desirability of including natural disaster relief mechanisms in regional trade agreements (“RTAs”). It analyzes how a multilateral protection of persons in the event of disasters has limitations. It also provides reasons for RTAs to serve as vehicles to enhance disaster resilience and elaborates trends and challenges for RTAs to include disaster relief mechanism. The paper suggests certain elements of natural disaster relief mechanism should be included under RTAs. It argues that RTAs should include natural disaster relief mechanism is adequate and necessary based on two perspectives. The first perspective is the growing disaster risks and the corresponding international trends. For example, the EU and the NAFTA have noticed that there should be cooperation in the field of natural disasters and the ASEAN countries and the Caribbean countries even developed more detailed legal framework for enhancing regional cooperation. The second perspective is the theoretical foundation of including natural disaster relief mechanisms in RTAs. It argues that strengthening regional cooperation through RTAs as vehicles to enhance regional disaster resilience have sound

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foundations based on human development and human rights. It is of the view that a proper risk management for natural disaster will enhance regional trade in the long run and attain the goal of sustainable development for a whole region.

KEYWORDS: *international disaster relief law, disaster management, regional trade agreement (RTA), disaster law, natural disaster*