Abstract: - This study attempts to systematically discuss the roles of women NGOs in empowering women in Southeast Asia from gyroscopic and surrogate representations analysis. This paper applies an evolving concept of political representation due to the globalization phenomena and democratization of global politics. Gyroscopic representation refers to the representatives that “look within” to derive from their own experience conceptions of interest and principles to serve as a basis for their actions. Meanwhile, the surrogate representation occurs when representatives represent a group of people beyond the constituents. It is also can be called political representation transcending the national border for women or any marginalised groups. By examining local-global representation activities of women NGOs in Southeast Asia through Convention on Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) reporting process, this research aims to point out the strengths and the impacts of these types of representation to women locally. Through content analysis of CEDAW and United Nations women development related agencies official documents and unofficial documents prepared by local and international NGOs, this research seeks to investigate the women NGOs’ roles played in the global realm. This study is analysed through the social constructivist approach of global politics and the feminist perspective. The findings of this paper indicate CEDAW governance has constructed a surrogacy representation platform for hundreds of NGOs in Southeast Asia to represent women in each country globally from gyroscopic representation perspective.

Key-Words: - Gyroscopic Representation, Surrogacy Representation, Southeast Asia, Women’s NGO, CEDAW Reporting Process.

1 Introduction
Although women population comprised 50 percent, statistical data by Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) [1] shows women representation in parliament are averagely less than 20%. Despite being underrepresented, women issues are repetitively highlighted in global sphere especially through initiatives by United Nations and NGOs.
Therefore, this paper is focusing on two types of political representation namely gyroscopic and surrogacy political representation. These types of political representations have transcended the national borders to represent Southeast Asia women in global platform called Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) reporting process.

2 Revisiting Representation in Global Politics

The concept of political representation usually discussed in a local context. This paper is focusing on different dimension of political representation that evolved due to democratization of global politics for marginalize group i.e women. According to Zappala [2], Mansbridge [3], Castiglione & Warren [4], Dovi [5] and Rehfeld [6, 7], there are development of political representation practices transcending national borders especially for marginalised groups due to globalization phenomena and global governance normative practices.

Mansbridge [3] introduces gyroscopic and surrogacy as a newly emerging concept of representation. Gyroscopic representation refers to the representatives that “look within” to derive from their own experience conceptions of interest and principles to serve as a basis for their actions. Meanwhile, the surrogate representation occurs when representatives represent a group of people beyond the constituents. In this article, it is focusing on political representation transcending the national border for women or any marginalised groups [2]. Here, the involvement of NGOs and individuals in CEDAW reporting process is analyse descriptive and substantively in representing local women issues at the global platform.

3 CEDAW as A Platform for Gyroscopic and Surrogacy Representation

CEDAW is a convention established in 1979 and ratified by 186 countries. Ten countries in the Southeast Asia have ratifies CEDAW. Table 1 indicates the ratification dates and number of government reports submitted by these states.

Table 1 shows Laos, Philippine, Indonesia and Vietnam are the earliest countries in Southeast Asia ratified CEDAW in 1981 to 1985. Meanwhile in 1990s, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore and Myanmar have ratified CEDAW. Brunei was the last country to ratify CEDAW on 24th May 2006.

According to Article 18 CEDAW, upon ratifying CEDAW, it is a state obligation to send a report on CEDAW’s implementation particularly on measures taken within legislative, judiciary and administrative to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women every four years to the Secretary-General of United Nations. Table 1 indicates most countries are not successfully observed Article 18 due to their late submission of the reports. Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore and Vietnam are the countries that managed to send frequent reports. Meanwhile Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia and Myanmar only sent a report. As the last country to ratify CEDAW, Brunei has yet to send any report on CEDAW’s implementation. All countries in Southeast Asia seems to be reluctant to
follow the exact schedule of report submission due to many factors such as lack of political will to change government’s legislation, judiciary, policy and administration to be gender sensitive, lack of cooperation given by ministries to compile a report on women affairs, lack of gender segregated data and lower representation of women in Parliament [9]. Other than these reasons, the governments are also reluctant to send the report due to the CEDAW governance that includes NGOs in reporting process. Therefore, governments’ reports are subjected to critiques and scrutiny from other state members, CEDAW Committee Members as well as local NGOs.

4 NGOs Involvement: Descriptive & Substantive Analysis

Descriptively, there are hundreds of NGOs and activists involved in drafting, compiling data and submitting the NGO Shadow Reports. NGOs in Thailand have managed to submit a shadow report on 2003 prepared by 22 local NGOs [12]. Then, in 2005, Cambodia and Malaysia have submitted the NGO Shadow reports [13, 14]. There were more than 35 NGOs involved in Cambodia’s shadow report and more than 30 NGOs were involved in Malaysia’s shadow report. Meanwhile, Vietnam and Philippine have sent the shadow reports in 2006 [15,16]. More than 100 NGOs were involved in Philippine’s shadow report and 8 NGOs were involved in Vietnam’s shadow report. In 2007, 46 Indonesian NGOs and 4 Singaporean NGOs managed to submit the report [17] [18]. Recently, in 2008, 12 NGOs in Myanmar managed to submit a shadow report on women conditions in Myanmar [19]. The number of NGOs involved in the shadow reports shows that CEDAW governance has constructed a surrogacy platform of representation for hundreds of NGO to present local women conditions and situations at the global platform.

Table 2. NGO Shadow Reports submitted to Secretary General of United Nations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Type of Document</th>
<th>NGO</th>
<th>Lead by:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Independent report of NGO concerning the implementation of CEDAW in Indonesia (2007)</td>
<td>46 NGOs</td>
<td>CEDAW Working Group Initiative (CWGI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>CEDAW Shadow Report (2007)</td>
<td>4 NGOs</td>
<td>Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Joint Coalition Shadow Report For The CEDAW</td>
<td>&gt;35 NGOs</td>
<td>Cambodian NGO Committee on CEDAW</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Substantively, the NGO Shadow reports portray the gyroscopic representation of women in each country. All reports are giving the micro situations and conditions of women based on 16 articles of CEDAW. The articles covering all aspects of women’s situations and conditions particularly sociological perspective of stereotype roles, definition of discrimination, education, marriage and family, economic and social status, employment, participation in local politics and international politics. Most NGOs Shadow reports are focusing on specific and crucial issues faced by women locally compared to the government reports that only gave general picture of government policy and implementation. The preparation of the shadow reports were divided following the expertise and the area of the NGOs activism. For example, Tenaganita Malaysia was the NGO that prepared a report on illegal women, refugees and domestic workers in the Malaysia’s NGO shadow report [14].

5 Conclusion
This paper indicates there are hundreds of NGOs involved in CEDAW reporting process from gyroscopic perspective. Most of these NGOs are able to ‘look within’ the women conditions and situations from sixteen (16) aspects as stated in CEDAW articles. Secondly, this paper managed to highlight the strength of surrogate representation at the global level. Through CEDAW reporting process involvement, women NGOs in Southeast Asia are able to indirectly pressure the government to revisit the policies and practices that are discriminating women in each country.

References:


