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Volume III

SHARED DESTINY

Edited by

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IRC INTERNATIONAL
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STUDIES

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PREFACE

Besides the series of symposia that were held in 1991 and 1992 as part of the ASEAN-Vietnam "Interaction For Progress" project, we also set up a task force that could complement the dialog between policy-makers and experts from both sides. Initially set up under the patronage of H.E. Anwar Ibrahim, Minister of Finance of Malaysia, the study group on ASEAN-Vietnam Relations, as the task force was called, was designed and developed as an extension of the symposium. It was an informal body that was asked to identify basic and practical issues related to the new modes of socio-economic linkages between ASEAN and Vietnam, and to propose policy options to the concerned authorities in order to accelerate regional cooperation.

For the good part of ten months in 1992 the study group operated as an experts group, comprising experts and officials from ASEAN and Vietnam, and worked along the flexible guidelines given by the patron of the project that the study group should look into new patterns of multi-dimensional interaction between ASEAN and Vietnam, and to formulate a set of recommendations for cooperative linkages.

The study group comprised 23 persons (some of whom served on an advisory panel) and worked under the able leadership of M.R. Sukhumbhand Paribatra. The study group was a learning experience for its members who met several times in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Phuket, Tioman, and Bangkok. The ASEAN members also went on a mission to Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and Vung Tau and met with government officials, scholars, and business, women, and student groups.

The output and recommendations of the study group was officially launched in Bangkok on 22 February 1993 at an international forum on "Towards One Southeast Asia in the 21st Century". The study group's report was named *Shared Destiny: Southeast Asia in the 21st Century*. The entire report is reproduced in this volume together with all the seven speeches of some of the most prominent advocates of regional integration in Southeast Asia.