



Judul : House Criticizes Marty On Rights Diplomacy
Tanggal : Kamis, 11 Oktober 2012
Surat Kabar : Jakarta Post
Halaman : 4

House criticizes Marty on rights diplomacy

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THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA

The House of Representatives lambasted the government for padding up its human rights records only to improve the country's standing in the international community while actually doing little to protect the rights of minority groups domestically.

Several lawmakers accused the government for being hypocrites for actively promoting interfaith harmony at the global level by campaigning on an international protocol banning blasphemy, but failed to equally protect the rights of religious minority groups in the country.

"I appreciate the government's efforts in proposing such an initiative to the international community. That sounds good. But, how will the government deal with the ongoing religious intolerance at home, because, for example, it hasn't resolved discrimination against the Shia community in Sampang [East Java]," Tjahjo Kumolo of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P) faction said during a hearing with Foreign Minister Marty Natalegawa on Wednesday.

Later in the session, lawmaker Helmi Fauzy also questioned the government's refusal to accept a recommendation from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) to amend the 1965 law on blasphemy, which has been long

- » Marty says universal values of human rights should not contradict local values
- » Govt criticized for refusal to amend 1965 law on blasphemy
- » Joint ministerial decree to set standards on defining human rights

used to justify attacks against minority groups.

"We are selling our democracy to the international community, but we forget that democracy requires the protection of minority groups," Helmi said.

He then urged the government to submit to the UNHRC's recommendation and amend the outdated blasphemy law, which he deemed as being responsible for the outbreak of religious conflict in the country.

Responding to the criticism, Marty said that the government would synchronize the ministry's diplomatic efforts with the promotion of religious freedom at the domestic level.

Later on the sidelines of the meeting, Marty told reporters that universal values of human rights should not contradict local values adopted by local communities in the country.

"Our international commitment to protect and uphold human rights must meet the demands of local rules and values. Other countries

have done the same," Marty said.

When asked about the government's attempt to draw up a regulation that would interpret universal human rights values in accordance with local conditions, Marty said that although Indonesia is a member of the UN, it must defend local values against the values promoted by the UN.

Earlier, Home Minister Gamawan Fauzi has said that the government is drawing up a regulation that would make it possible for local governments to interpret the universal values of human rights in accordance to local conditions.

The ministry was working with the Law and Human Rights Ministry to draft a joint ministerial decree that would set the standards on how to define human rights, according to local customs, which would be used as the benchmark in drafting bylaws nationwide.

Separately, National Commission on Human Rights (Komnas HAM) chairman Ihdhal Kasim said Indonesia was obliged to submit to the UN's human rights values as one of its members.

"That's the whole point of agreeing to ratify all international protocols, meaning that we have to adapt our laws to international values. The government must remember that there are inalienable rights that our government must fulfill despite local values," Ihdhal told *The Jakarta Post*.