

Observer: UN Should Pressure Myanmar Government on Muslim Rohingya Migration

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YOGYAKARTA - Migration expert from Centre for Demography and Policy Studies of Universitas Gadjah Mada, Dr. Sukamdi, M.Sc., considered appropriate the measure taken by the Indonesian and Malaysian governments not to reject the influx of boat people of the Muslim Rohingya. "The treatment of the Muslim Rohingya people should be the same with that of the Vietnamese back in the 70s. Rejections will not resolve problems as migration will continue to happen. If they are rejected, where else are they going to?" he said to journalists on Thursday (21/5).

In his opinion, the Muslim Rohingya are considered refugees whose rights have to be protected. Unfortunately, the Indonesian government still categorises them as illegal immigrants. "The Muslim Rohingya migrate because they have no other choices. They are facing multiple conflicts, not only horizontal against other ethnic groups, but also structural against the Myanmar government," said Sukamdi.

Responsibility of Myanmar

Sukamdi added that in the ICPD (International Conference on Population and Development) it is stated that the country of origin and the displaced persons have to suppress the factors that cause those people to leave.

The Myanmar government, said Sukamdi, should take the right step particularly that relates to conflict resolution whilst respecting human rights. The government, instead, takes a stance that defends the majority. Such limp mechanism urges the bigger role from the UN and developed countries such as the U.S. Further, Sukamdi suggested incentives and disincentives can be applied by the UN to its member countries that can suppress the rate of refugees. The burden for the countries that accommodate them should be shared through collective principles and international solidarity.

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