

Inauguration of Prof. Augustinus Supriyanto: Important, Ratification of Migrants Convention 1990

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Indonesia is a country which has a quite large migrant workers. Data of the National Agency for Placement and Protection of Indonesian Workers (BNP2TKI) mention that the total number of migrant workers is 126,031 people of which 78.05% (98 372) are female workers.

The phenomenon contains the essence of the women's human rights protection due to the large number of migrant women, especially in the Middle East and Africa. "In these areas, human rights violation cases of Indonesian migrant women workers are frequently encountered, such as sexual harassment, abuse, unpaid salaries and unilateral job cuts. This should become the government's attention. Unfortunately, the diplomacy concerning the protection of women migrant workers in Saudi Arabia and other countries are still reactive. Ideally, diplomacy is done by design and creative," says Prof. Dr. Augustinus Supriyanto when he was inaugurated as Professor at the UGM Faculty of Law on Thursday (21/7) at the UGM Senate Hall.

According to Augustinus, Indonesia can learn from the Philippines that sends the Philippines migrant workers (*Filow*) only to countries that can protect their rights. Through its representatives abroad, the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs provides protection for them through cooperation with the related foreign institutions. Thus, from the start migrant workers are already in the Philippine diplomatic escort. "For the presence of diplomatic protection of Indonesian migrant women workers since the beginning, there needs to be a change in managing migrant workers. Learning from the Philippines, the management should not be monopolized by the Ministry of Manpower and BNP2TKI, but managed in inter-sectors manner," he explained.

Augustine mentions that to provide protection of Indonesian migrant workers can also be done by extending and strengthening the consular institutions with the offices placed in areas that have many Indonesian women migrant workers. By comparison, Mexico that has many migrant workers has opened 50 consular offices in the U.S. In addition, cross-sectoral officials are also prepared with the perspective of gender-based human rights and concerns for women migrant workers who are

vulnerable to become victims of human rights violations.

In his inauguration speech entitled *Rights Protection of Women Migrant Workers: Opportunities and Challenges of Indonesia*, Augustinus emphasized the importance of ratification of the migrants convention 1990 to protect Indonesian migrant workers. In more than 20 years, Indonesia did not utilize the opportunities on human rights protection for migrant workers provided by the Migrant Convention 1990.

The ratification conducted is a condition *sine qua non* (absolute requirement in a state based on law) for the creation of ideal condition to the rights protection of Indonesia migrant women workers. "Indonesia has not yet ratified the convention on the grounds that there are many migrant workers recipient countries that have not ratified it. Whereas, by doing the ratification of the migrants convention 1990, it can enhance their bargaining position in the diplomatic struggle for human rights of migrant workers," said the man born in Salatiga, 24 October 1966.

Furthermore, Augustinus also noted that it is important to use the perspective of gender-based human rights in making changes to Law No. 39 of 2004 concerning the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Workers Abroad. In addition, at the individual level, women migrant workers should be empowered and at the state level political and diplomatic leverage should be pursued. "Gender sensitivity should be set out in the variety of policy at the micro and macro level as such that the specific rights that are owned and needed by women can be implemented," he said.

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