

Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi: 4.3 Millions of Indonesian Nationals Abroad

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YOGYAKARTA - Indonesian Foreign Minister, Retno L.P. Marsudi, said the number of Indonesian nationals living abroad totals to 2.7 millions. The real number, however, may reach as high as 4.3 millions.

Problems affecting the Indonesian nationals abroad vary, mostly related to migrant workers. Retno said this was related to the illegal deployment of such workers. "The problems affecting migrant workers will not recede, if upstream arrangement of workers is not made well," she said in her scientific remarks on the developments and dynamics of Indonesian foreign policy to commemorate the 69th anniversary of Faculty of Law UGM on Tuesday (17/2).

Retno said the MFA has introduced the sms blast service for the protection of Indonesian nationals abroad that gives information and contact details of Indonesian embassies/consulates in collaboration with cellular phone service providers. In some conflict areas, Retno said, the MFA has evacuated the nationals there. Retno said her office would continue to monitor the countries in conflict. In Syria, Indonesian diplomats have evacuated up to 90 percent of Indonesian nationals. Indonesia also monitors Yemen and even prepares evacuation plans.

The government, said Retno, has the duty to protect nationals and give legal counsels for those facing legal problems abroad. The government, however, always reminds them to respect the law prevailing in a country.



In the scientific remarks, Retno explained that Indonesia has established diplomatic relations with 186 of 193 countries that are UN member countries. This year Indonesia will host the 60th Asia-Africa Conference and the 10th of New Asia Africa Strategic Partnership. “We would like to make this opportunity to enhance South-South cooperation whilst increasing the contribution of the South to world peace and prosperity,” she confirmed.

On another front, Indonesia’s active participation in peacekeeping is increased. Currently, no less than 1,881 personnel are joining the UN peacekeeping troops, making Indonesia at 16th rank of 122 countries. “In the future, the number of these troops will be increased up to 4,000 personnel by 2019,” she concluded.

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