

# Indonesia: Its time to pass the domestic worker protection bill!

Sunday 4 August 2024, by [BALOWSKI James](#), [Ihsanuddin](#), [SUTRISNA Tria](#) (Date first published: 22 July 2024).

**The Civil Society Network for Gender Justice Policies is urging House of Representatives (DPR) Speaker Puan Maharani to push through the enactment of the Draft Law on the Protection of Domestic Workers (RUU PPRT).**

Network representative and National Network for Domestic Worker Advocacy (Jala PRT) member Jumisih explained that the RUU PPRT was first submitted to the DPR in 2004. It was not until 19 years later however that it was designated as a DPR initiative draft law.

Following this designation, continued Jumisih, the DPR has yet to discuss the bill with the government and there has been no information on when it will be enacted into law.

“To this day the fact is that the RUU PPRT has yet to be included in the scheduled discussions between the government and the DPR, because the ratification process is still sitting on DPR Speaker Puan Maharani’s desk”, said Jumisih during an online press conference on Monday July 22.

According to Jumisih, Maharani, who is a senior member of the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), should follow in the footsteps of Indonesia’s founding President Soekarno, who is her grandfather, and always respect the ordinary people.

Maharani’s actions however in never encouraging the ratification of the RUU PPRT actually show that she does not side with the ordinary people.

“Does Mbak [Sister] Puan side with and care for domestic workers? We want to question this. Actually, they were elected to represent the interests of the ordinary people, and domestic workers are themselves the ordinary people”, said Jumisih.

“If Mbak Puan and the members of the DPR still have a concern for the ordinary people, yes, don’t hold the RUU PPRT hostage. Deliberate and enact it now. Because there is no reason for putting it off”, she continued.

At present, continued Jumisih, the issue of protection for domestic workers should receive significant attention from the government and the people’s representatives.

Because, domestic workers are a group that is vulnerable to discrimination, violence and physical and sexual exploitation.

Based on Jala PRT’s data, between 2017 and 2022 there were 3,635 incidents of multi-faceted violence that led to the death of domestic workers. In addition to this, there were 2,031 incidents of physical and psychological violence, and 1,609 cases of economic violence.

“For this reason, we, the Civil Society Network for Gender Justice Policies is urging DPR speaker

Puan Maharani not to hold back the RUU PPRT and immediately approve the RUU PPRT during the DPR's 2019-2024 working period", concluded Jumisih.

National Commission on Violence Against Women (Komnas Perempuan) Deputy Chairperson Olivia Chadidjah Salampessy has said that the RUU PPRT is currently under threat of being designated as a "non-carry over draft law" if it is not immediately enacted during the DPR's 2019-2024 period.

This will result in all the stages that have been gone through so far having to be repeated from the start during the next legislative period.

"If there is no inventory list number in the remaining time of the current legislative period, the RUU PPRT will be categorised as a non-carry over draft law", said Salampessy at the Komnas HAM office in Jakarta on Friday July 19.

"This means that the RUU PPRT must go back to the planning stage in the DPR for the period 2024-2029", she added.

Based on this, Komnas Perempuan, the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM), the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI) and the National Disabilities Commission (KND) are urging DPR to ratify the RUU PPRT before the end of the 2024 legislative period.

"Do we want to wait for how many more years in this struggle, if it's not (passed) this year? It's been neglected for 20 years. If it reverts back to something new, is restarted from zero, it could be 21 years, 22, 23, 24, 25 years, perhaps even more than that", she concluded.

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### **Notes:**

*According to an article in the Jakarta Post on February 1, 2023 (<https://www.thejakartapost.com/opinion/2023/02/01/analysis-indonesians-drag-feet-on-improving-lot-of-domestic-workers.html>), a politician from the House said that the legislation body had agreed on the content of the RUU PPRT in 2020 but it was rejected by the Golkar Party and the PDI-P. According to the source, the parties are reluctant to pass the bill as it would lead to the formalisation of domestic workers. This would then become a burden for those employing domestic workers (such as lawmakers) since it would oblige employers to pay domestic workers the minimum wage, provide health benefits, overtime and severance pay. There are an estimated 4.5 million domestic workers in Indonesia and at least 90 percent of them are women and a large proportion are underage.*

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**P.S.**

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