



International Domestic Workers Federation

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IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

15 Feb 2016

No abuse of domestic workers in Indonesia Adopt the C189 and Domestic Workers Bill NOW!

We, the International Domestic Workers Federation (IDWF), join with JALAPRT, the National Network for Domestic Workers Advocacy on the National Domestic Workers Day to call upon the Indonesian government to adopt the Domestic Workers Bill.

The International Domestic Workers Federation is a global federation of domestic workers, representing 400,000 domestic workers in 58 organizations in 47 countries.

We are shocked and agitated to learn the recent abuse cases of domestic workers in Indonesia. Siti Sri Marni and other 3 domestic workers E, M and W escaped on 8 Feb 2016 after 12 or more years of serious abuses by their employer Meta Hasan Musdalifah in Jakarta, Indonesia.

“No one should work like this. Domestic work is work and domestic workers are workers,” said Elizabeth Tang, General Secretary of IDWF. The International Labour Convention 189, Decent Work for Domestic Workers, states clearly that domestic workers should enjoy equal treatment as all other workers. They should be protected from abuses and discrimination by laws.

The government of Indonesia has failed to protect domestic workers. Jala PRT, the National Network for Advocacy for Domestic Workers, has been organizing domestic workers and mobilizing the society to demand the adoption of Domestic Workers Bill in Indonesia since 2004. Currently the Bill is listed as a priority in the House of Representatives in Indonesia. However no further move has been observed so far.

“Indonesia is a country where domestic workers are working in slavery condition. No precautions and legal proceedings against any acts of slavery,” stated in the statement of Jala PRT. “Governments in many places of the world have taken steps to rectify this in principle and practice. It is high time that the Indonesian government to do the right thing,” echoed Elizabeth Tang.

“We hereby demand that the time has come for the Government. Minister of Labour and Minister of Justice to take immediate steps to ensure that domestic workers are protected at their workplaces. Domestic work is like all other work and our work and our rights should be respected. We have won our freedom and our dignity with convention 189. We urge all workers and other governments to put pressure on the Indonesian government. The time is now and we demand our rights as workers,” told Myrtle Witbooi, President of the IDWF and General Secretary of the South African Domestic Services and Allied Workers Union (SADSAWU). In South Africa, the government adopted the Domestic Workers Act as far back as in 1997, to combat slavery and forced labour of domestic workers.

Elsewhere governments have moved on to give rights and protection to domestic workers. By the beginning of 2016, 22 countries have ratified the C189. Others have passed national policies and legislations. Examples include the Domestic Workers Policy adopted in Bangladesh in January this year, 7 states in India include domestic workers in their minimum wages legislations, Cambodian government’s 2 years roadmap to ratify the C189 and so on and so forth.

The IDWF will continue to monitor the situation of domestic workers in Indonesia and support its affiliate, the JALAPRT to hold activities to make their voices heard until their demands are yielded with the C189 ratified and the Domestic Workers Bill adopted.

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