

Europe Solidaire Sans Frontières > English > Asia > Indonesia & West Papua > Rural & fisherfolk (Indonesia) > **On National Farmers Day, Indonesian Protesters Accuse Government of Ignoring (...)**

# **On National Farmers Day, Indonesian Protesters Accuse Government of Ignoring Agrarian Reform**

Friday 4 October 2024, by [BALOWSKI James](#), [CNN Indonesia](#) (Date first published: 24 September 2024).

**Jakarta — Protesters from various different organizations commemorating National Farmers Day (HTN) in front of the House of Representatives (DPR) parliamentary complex on Tuesday September 24 brought a number of demands related to agrarian reform which they see as still not addressing with the ordinary people.**

HTN action coordinator and Agrarian Reform Consortium (KPA) Secretary General Dewi Kartika criticized the government for ignoring the agrarian reform agenda. According to Kartika, the government has even abolished the principles of democracy by threatening farmers' freedom to associate.

"This government has betrayed reforms [the political reform movement that began in 1998] that was built with great effort with the blood and sweat of the ordinary people in 1998," Kartika said in a statement on the action at the DPR on Tuesday.

Kartika believes that the government over the last 10 years had committed 18 systemic crimes against the agrarian reform agenda. These crimes have caused the country to further sink into an agrarian reform emergency.

Included in the list of crimes is the government is considered to have mislead and lied to the public by saying they have carried out 9 million hectares of agrarian reform. In fact, said Kartika, the government only carried out land certification without carrying out land redistribution for the ordinary people or resolving agrarian conflicts.

"Just conducting land certification is not agrarian reform. Certification is just a service for people who are already have land, not a service for the ordinary people who don't have land," she said.

President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo is also considered to have violated the 1960 Basic Agrarian Law (UUPA) and has gone against Constitutional Court's ruling Number 21-22/PUU-V/2007 which prohibits business permits (HGU) over 90 years and Building Use Permit (HGB) over 80 years.

In fact, the government now doubled the period for granting of land rights to entrepreneurs to 190 years for HGU and 160 years for HGB in the new capital city Nusantara (IKN) in East Kalimantan.

President Widodo also often designates development projects as a National Strategic Project (PSN), such as projects involving energy, infrastructure, food estates, factories, commercial and real estate projects. With the PSN label, the president has given birth to decisions that have led to the seizure of land, evictions and the criminalization of the ordinary people.

The fact is, said Kartika, as of July 2024 the seizure of ordinary people's land for PSN in 134 locations had reached 571 thousand hectares and 1.86 million hectares in 11 provinces for food estate projects.

Based on this list of government negligence, the organizations involved in the action commemorating National Farmers Day demanded a number of things of the government related to the agrarian reform agenda.

First, carrying out genuine agrarian reform in accordance with the 1945 Constitution and the Basic Agrarian Law by redistributing land to farmers.

Second, asking the government to carry out institutional reforms to support agrarian reform in the ministry that is responsible for agrarian and land issues.

Third, revoking anti-farmer and anti-people regulations under the Omnibus Law on Job Creation (Cipta Kerja) and its derivative legal products related to land banks, food estates, PSN, the IKN, special economic zones (KEK), National Tourism Strategic Areas (KSPN), Land Management Rights (HPL), amnesties for companies that are operating illegally in forests and Forest Zones for Special Management Purposes (KHDPK).

Fourth, asking the government and the DPR to immediately draft and ratify the Draft Law on Agrarian Reform (RUU RA) and the Draft Law on Indigenous Peoples as a reinforcement of the ideals of the Basic Agrarian Law.

Fifth, stop all food estate projects and prioritize rural development based on natural and ecological food agriculture according to the framework of genuine Agrarian reform.

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**CNN Indonesia**

**Translated by James Balowski**

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