

Minimal Reflection Diplomacy: KontraS' Response to the President's Speech at the 75th UNGA Session

The Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence [KontraS] wishes to respond to President Joko Widodo's speech at the 75th UN General Assembly. In general, President Joko Widodo conveyed the pandemic situation and the state's active involvement in diplomacy. Nevertheless, we believe that the president's speech does not show an attitude consistent with what is happening at home.

Several things highlighted by KontraS include the following:

First, President Joko Widodo's reflection on the impact of Covid-19 on the health and economic sectors has not been shown in improving the handling of Covid-19 in his own country. The various policies taken so far have failed to prevent the spread of the virus in society. Numerous government policies and statements, including President Joko Widodo's, have been contradictory and counterproductive to overcome the pandemic. The policies were underestimating the dangers of the virus to public health, creating confusion and anxiety, narrowing the definition of death from Covid-19, and at the same time, also creating a false sense of security. Shadows of a promised vaccine have always adorned the president's speeches. However, it is not balanced with a push to fight the virus's spread by promoting testing, tracing, isolating processes. It is shown with various sub-district public officials who objected when the PSBB was restarted in Jakarta. The emphasis on economic reactivation shows the state's insensitivity towards protecting the health and public life risk against the pandemic.

Second, the delivery of active state interactions in the UN Security Council, the UN Human Rights Council, or even the global realm becomes a smokescreen to Indonesia's enforcement of human rights. Domestically, the government has not shown the same commitment to dealing with crises, such as human rights violations in Papua and other areas during the pandemic. In the ASEAN region, Indonesia has not made a full contribution in initiating the conclusion of the genocide in the Rohingya. The involvement of the State in President Joko Widodo's speech turns a blind eye to human rights practices that occur in the country.

KontraS views the speech delivered by President Joko Widodo as a form of diplomacy that lacks reflection. President Joko Widodo has promoted cooperation to maintain world peace, even though at home, there is almost no cooperation between the government and the community to confront the Covid-19 pandemic. The government seems to ignore the opinions of experts, academics, and the patterns that occur. Prioritizing the people's safety has not been in the context of overcoming the pandemic, but rather to save the economy. We believe that the successful completion of Covid-19 transmission is the foundation for health and economic recovery.

In conclusion, KontraS believes that human rights are not a simple matter of word decorations on paper for the sake of a diplomatic speech. It is a vital foundation for taking concrete measures in every policy issued by the state.