

Lawmakers issue Medan Declaration to fight corruption

Apriadi Gunawan, The Jakarta Post, Medan | World | Fri, October 25 2013, 12:06 PM

Southeast Asian parliamentarians issued the Medan Declaration, on Thursday, to cement their commitment in the fight against corruption.

The declaration, issued at the end of the second general assembly of the Southeast Asian Parliamentarians Against Corruption (SEAPAC), consists of several points to enhance corruption eradication.

First, there should be no legal immunity given to any public official who is involved in a graft case.

Second, a closer cooperation is needed among various parties including non-government organizations, the media, the private sector and institutions that are tasked with graft eradication.

The declaration also calls for parliamentarians to promote the principles embodied in the United Nations Convention on Anti-Corruption (UNCAC) consisting of prevention, criminalization, asset recovery, international cooperation and effective supervision mechanisms.

The Global Organization of Parliamentarians Against Corruption (GOPAC) Indonesia chairman, Pramono Anung, said the Medan Declaration called for parliaments in Southeast Asia to ratify UNCAC.

Pramono, who is also the Indonesian House of Representatives deputy speaker, said Indonesia had ratified the convention in April 18, 2006.

He said the ratifying chapter on asset recovery was important for Indonesia to prevent cross-border corruptors fleeing with their ill-gotten wealth.

“Once the wealth is transferred abroad, Indonesia does not have the tools to recover the assets,” he said.

Pramono told The Jakarta Post after the declaration that corruption was no longer a domestic issue but had been categorized as a trans-national crime.

“That is why ratifying UNCAC is important,” he said.

The two-day meeting had 47 representatives from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Timor Leste, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia and Thailand as well representatives from various organizations such as GOPAC, GOPAC Arab region and Transparency International Indonesia.

Pramono said the Indonesian House tried to take the initiative and push for real action to realize multinational cooperation in graft eradication.

“We expect a wider graft eradication movement at parliament levels in Southeast Asia,” he said.

Meanwhile, chairman of the Inter-Parliamentary Cooperation Body at the Indonesian House, Surahman Hidayat, welcomed the Medan Declaration and proposed a corruption code of ethics to be drafted soon for lawmakers.

“We do have the UNCAC but it is still normative. We want something that is more applicable to fight corruption at the House,” he said.

Surahman also proposed to strengthen the House’ internal regulations to fight corrupt practices such as by suspending and firing lawmakers who are involved in graft cases.

Recommend 2

Tweet 8

Share 0

Paper Edition | Page: 11

Read also:

- [When the people have little trust in the House](#)

Post Your Say

Selected comments will be published in the Readers’ Forum page of our print newspaper.

0 comments

Sign in

+ Follow				Post comment as...

Newest | Oldest