

= Maria Ulfah Santoso =

Meester Hajjah Maria Ulfah Soebadio Sastrosatomo (18 August 1911 ? 15 April 1988) , better known by her first married name Maria Ulfah Santoso , was an Indonesian women 's rights activist and politician . She was the first Indonesian woman to receive a degree in law as well as the first female Indonesian cabinet member .

Santoso , the daughter of a politician , became interested in women 's rights after seeing numerous injustices in her youth . Despite pressure to become a doctor , she graduated with a degree in law from Leiden University in 1933 ; while in the Netherlands she also became involved in the Indonesian nationalist movement , Upon returning to the Dutch East Indies , Santoso began teaching and working towards marriage reform . She was a member of the Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence , and later became the social minister from 12 March 1946 to 26 June 1947 . After her term , she continued to work with the government in various capacities .

Chosen for the cabinet post in part for her emancipatory activities , Santoso paved the way for other female cabinet members , including S. K. Trimurti in 1947 . She received several awards from the Indonesian government for her activities .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life and activism = = =

Santoso was born in Serang , Banten , Dutch East Indies , on 18 August 1911 to R.A.A. Mohammad Achmad and his wife R.A. Hadidjah Djajadiningrat . The youngest of three children , Santoso spent her childhood in Kuningan , where her father served as regent . One day , an ill aunt came over looking for help . However , upon receiving a letter from her husband , the aunt returned home and died not long after . Santoso later described this incident as inspiring her to work for women 's rights .

While Santoso was still in elementary school , her father sent her to Batavia (modern day Jakarta) to live with a Dutch family at Willemslaan Elementary School ; while in Batavia she completed her middle schooling at Koning Willem III Middle School . While in Batavia , Santoso observed further women 's issues , such as how women were devastated when their husbands took second wives or divorced them without cause . Despite her father wanting her to be a doctor , Santoso insisted on going into law .

Santoso went to The Hague , in the Netherlands , in 1929 with her father , who was furthering his studies . Santoso then enrolled at Leiden University in Leiden , from which she graduated in 1933 with a Meester in de Rechten (Master of Laws) degree ; this made her the first Indonesian woman to earn a law degree . During her studies , she became involved with the Indonesian nationalist movement and its leaders , including Mohammad Hatta and Sutan Sjahrir .

In 1934 , Santoso returned to Batavia and took a teaching job at the Muhammadiyah @-@ run teacher 's college there , refusing a position in the colonial government to do so . While teaching , she continued to be active in the nationalist movement , helping Adam Malik to establish the news agency Antara . On February 1938 she married R. Santoso Wirodihardjo . That same year , she led a congress dealing with marriage reform , to better protect the rights of women ; the reforms passed in 1941 . Santoso also worked to promote women 's literacy through sewing groups ; women who came to study sewing would be invited to learn to read and about marriage rights and child @-@ rearing .

= = = Government work = = =

After the Japanese occupied Indonesia in 1942 , Santoso left her work as a teacher and found employment as legal assistant to Soepomo , who later became the country 's first minister of justice

. In 1945 , with the Japanese preparing to withdraw from the Indies and the proclamation of independence looming , Santoso became a member of the Committee for Preparatory Work for Indonesian Independence . On 12 March 1946 , Santoso became the first ever female cabinet member when she was selected as services minister in the Second Sjahrir Cabinet . Working quickly and efficiently , she found herself organising the return of internees from Japanese @-@ run camps . She was kept on through the Third Sjahrir Cabinet , but when it dissolved on 26 June 1947 , Santoso refused another term as social minister . She instead chose to work as head of prime minister Amir Sjarifuddin 's secretariat . She kept this position into the First Hatta Cabinet . During Operation Kraai , a Dutch @-@ led offensive on the city of Yogyakarta on 19 December 1948 , her husband was killed outside Maguwo .

In 1949 , Santoso was part of a committee tasked with preparing a marriage bill " in keeping with the spirit of modern times " . Throughout the 1950s , Santoso kept herself busy with numerous social works . From 1950 until 1961 she served as the head of Indonesia 's film censorship bureau , a position which she held reluctantly . She also served as the head of the National Women 's Congress , Kowani , from 1950 to 1961 .

Santoso married again , this time to Indonesian Socialist Party figure Soebadio Sastrosatomo , on 10 January 1964 . The couple were often separated when Sastrasatomo was imprisoned for his political activities , but they were able to go on the hajj together . During the 1960s Santoso continued to be politically active , serving in the State Secretariat from 1962 to 1967 and on the State Advisory Council from 1967 to 1972 . While with Sastrosatomo , she adopted a child .

In her final years , Santoso and Sastrosatomo lived off of their pensions in Jakarta ; in her obituary , Tempo magazine reported that the pension was barely enough for day @-@ to @-@ day expenses . She died at 2 : 15 am on 15 April 1988 , after being treated at Gatot Subroto Air Force Hospital in Jakarta for more than a month . She was buried at Kalibata Heroes Cemetery .

= = Legacy = =

Soebadio Sastrosatomo wrote that Santoso 's selection as social minister was important for several reasons . Firstly , her selection showed that the government truly respected women 's contributions to the nationalist movement . Secondly , it was a way for Sjahrir to show that the Indonesian people were committed to the needs of their people , by having a woman deal with women 's issues . After Santoso , other women have held government positions . The second female Indonesian minister , S. K. Trimurti , served as minister of labour from 1947 to 1948 . In 2001 , Megawati Sukarnoputri became the first female president of Indonesia .

Santoso received several awards from the Indonesian government , including the Satya Lencana Karya Satya (Level II) (Medal of Great Work) , Satya Lencana Peringatan Perjuangan Kemerdekaan (Medal in Memory of Freedom Fighting) , and Bintang Mahaputra Utama (Third Class) (Mahaputra Star) . The Bintang Mahaputra is Indonesia 's highest award for civilians .