



NEWSLETTER

Japan International Labour Foundation <http://www.jilaf.or.jp/English-jilaf>
 Office: Kinmei Building, 3-23-2, Kanda-Jimbocho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0051, Japan
 Telephone: 81-3-3288-4188 Facsimile: 81-3-3288-4155 E-mail: info@jilaf.or.jp

Invitation Program for Developed Countries Starts — Team from Europe Welcomed

Since its establishment in 1989, JILAF has implemented Invitation Programs mainly for promising young trade union leaders of developing nations and transition economies. As of the end of 2003, a total of 1,647 members have been invited to Japan from 97 countries and two areas and four international organizations.

In addition, JILAF began the Invitation Programs for trade union leaders from developed nations starting in the latter half of 2003; such programs had previously been implemented by the Japan Institute of Labour (JIL). This change was due to the fact that JIL underwent reorganization to become an independent agency, the current Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT). As a result, JILAF's Invitation Programs have now literally expanded worldwide.

Prior to launching the Invitation Program for developed countries, JILAF formulated two basic principles: (1) to broadly categorize developed countries into three regions — Europe, North America and Oceania — and invite a team from each region in successive order, with a specific theme set for every invitation, and (2) to coordinate with JTUC-RENGO's head office in selecting organizations to be invited, setting themes, preparing for each invitation, and implementing the program.

In consultation with RENGO, JILAF decided to invite a team from Europe first, and welcomed four representatives during the two-week period from January 11-24,

2004. The invitation theme was set as Flexibilisation of Work: The Response of Trade Unions. The team consisted of Mr. Joel Decaillon, Confederation Secretary of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), Ms. Maria Jespin, Senior Researcher of the European Trade Union Institute (ETUI), Ms. Carola Parniske-Kunz, Secretary for Work and Innovation, Policy Department of the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB), and Mr. Tom Saxen, General Secretary of the Council of Nordic Trade Unions (NFS).

The program was entirely organized in accordance with the invitation theme. In Tokyo, the team visited RENGO's headquarters, RENGO-RIALS, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and Nippon Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) to thoroughly discuss the current status of flexibilisation of work and labor markets in Japan and Europe, as well as each organization's views on and response to flexibilisation. On January 15 (Thurs), an international symposium was held at RENGO's head office, which was attended by about 100 Japanese representatives, including those involved in trade unions, and scholars and journalists. In the symposium entitled Flexibilisation of Work: The Response of Trade Unions, Mr. Decaillon delivered a keynote speech concerning the current conditions in Europe and ETUC's efforts. The other three leaders from the European team also gave presentations highlighting the various measures that each of their organizations has taken. RENGO representatives also talked about the present situation in Japan as well as RENGO's initiatives, followed by a panel discussion.

Later the team paid a visit to Hiroshima to witness first hand the actual situation regarding the trade union movement and the peace movement. Subsequently, two of the representatives from the team from Europe departed Japan due to other scheduled en-



agements. The two remaining representatives meanwhile traveled on to Hyogo Prefecture to visit Rengo's Hyogo Local, as well as the Hyogo Prefectural Office and two factories. At each of the stops, the representatives exchanged views and opinions with their Japanese counterparts on the flexibilisation of work (the theme for this invitation tour).

Through the program, it was revealed that there is a sizable gap between Japan and Europe when it comes to the current status of flexibilisation of work and the responses being made to such. It was also shown that the concepts that Europe and Japan hold concerning the various forms of atypical work are quite different. However, both the Japanese side and the European members agreed that they should take advantage of various opportunities that exist and would continue to hold exchanges and explore the direction of future activity. This Invitation Program was a great success, in terms of being a project that received high marks from both the invitees and the relevant Japanese parties.

JILAF will continue to invite several teams from developed countries every year. Taking into account and utilizing the positive results produced by the current program, we aim to develop an overall program that is highly meaningful for both Japan and the countries/organizations which are invited.



First ITUC/JILAF Joint Workshop Held in Indonesia

The very first joint workshop between JILAF and the Indonesian Trade Union Congress (ITUC) was held in Surabaya, a major city in East Java, from December 9-12, 2003 (ITUC was established in February of 2003). The workshop was co-chaired by two vice presidents in charge of education and legal affairs at ITUC, as well as a chairman from the National Executive Board. Twenty-three persons participated in the workshop, including representatives from 10 industrial unions affiliated with ITUC, a legal official from the ITUC head office in Jakarta, and local representatives of East Java. Two JILAF officials, including Executive Director Sadataka Takai, also attended the workshop. Presentations were delivered followed by a Q&A session, with a focus on: 1) problems in the labor dispute settlement law, revision of which is under deliberation in Indonesia, and ITUC's response to the law's revision, and 2) the Japanese system regarding labor dispute settlement. The participants were subsequently divided into four groups to allow for discussion and the drafting of proposals which would help improve each of the law's provisions. The results produced during the group discussion were shared, debated and summarized by all of the participants. The workshop finished as a success.

This was the first regional workshop involving participation from ITUC and leaders from all the industrial unions active in East Java. As the labor dispute settlement law is being revised for the first time since 1957 and its revision has been facing difficulties, leaders with common concerns on various issues gathered together and continued to hold group discussion late into



the night. During the concluding session, one of the participants stated, *Indonesia is not yet fully governed by law and faces many problems concerning labor-related legal issues. In this context, it is crucial for us to strengthen cooperation within the region. I hope ITUC's role will develop and expand in the future.* These remarks received tremendous applause from the participants on hand. The workshop ended with all of the participants shaking hands with one another as they left. Only a mere ten months have passed since ITUC was first established, however the workshop was run very effectively and it is truly expected to bear more fruit in the future.

ICFTU-PC/ICFTU-APRO/JILAF National Seminar Held in Pakistan Towards the Integration of Three National Centers

Three national centers in Pakistan, which are affiliates of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), have formed a council called ICFTU Pakistan Council (ICFTU-PC) and have made preparations for their integration which is scheduled for December 2005. In early January 2004, ICFTU-PC organized a national seminar in cooperation with ICFTU, Asian and Pacific Regional Organization (ICFTU-APRO), to which JILAF sent its representatives as a cooperating organization. JILAF has already invited leaders from the three national centers — the All Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions (APFTU), the All Pakistan Federation of Labour (APFOL) and the Pakistan National Federation of Trade Unions (PNFTU) — to Japan, and has also implemented various assistance projects for the three organizations in Pakistan. However, this marked the first time a joint seminar was held with the participation of the three national centers as ICFTU-PC. The seminar was attended by 27 representatives, nine each from the respective organizations. The participants primarily discussed the role that trade unions should play in resolving pressing issues, such as the lack of adequate work opportunities and the reduction of poverty. Mr. Kumagaya, Director of the International Bureau of RENGU, also attended the seminar and talked about the history of the trade union movement



and its development in Japan, including Japanese experiences in realizing unification of trade unions which led to forming RENGU. Moreover, he discussed the contribution that trade unions have made towards creating adequate work opportunities, as well as aspects of social dialogue and

other issues. Pakistan, which has recently undergone changes in its government, has recorded higher growth (5.6%) than other countries in South Asia. Under such circumstances, the trade union movement, which had been suppressed in the past, is now



▲ Representatives eagerly discussing initiatives towards the integration of the three organizations

being activated. However, the organization rate has been slow to rise due to severe problems caused by economic globalization, such as an increase in the number of informal workers and the unemployed, as well as a wider gap between the rich and the poor. For several years now JILAF has held discussion with trade union leaders from Pakistan concerning; 1) improvement of working conditions and work environments, 2) improvement of the standard of living, and 3) overall economic development for the entire nation of Pakistan. JILAF has insisted over the last years that in order to achieve such improvements, workers need to be unified into a democratic trade union organization. And to this end, JILAF believes it is important to realize the unification so as to strengthen the power of the trade union movement. Based on this background, the national seminar should be able to provide various valuable opportunities, taking into account the current status of social and economic development in Pakistan. These include opportunities for 1) identifying problems the integration of the national centers face and how to resolve them, and 2) fostering a shared perception regarding the need to integrate the trade union movement. Such a move towards integration is expected to help develop and promote the trade union movement in Pakistan.

Conditions related to HIV/AIDS in Zambia and What RENGO/JILAF Can Do

In Zambia, a landlocked nation in southern Africa, more than 20% of the population of 10-million are HIV infected and more than 120,000 persons die each year from AIDS. Quite a few of my acquaintances have also died of AIDS. According to statistics, 60% of those who have died from AIDS in Zambia were in the prime of their life, namely those in their 30s or 40s. A recent report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) notes that HIV has rapidly spread not only in urban areas but also in rural areas as well, and that more than 20% of the agricultural labor force has been lost. Consequently, agricultural-related knowledge and technology has also been lost as well, meaning that food security has been severely impacted.

Unofficial statistics indicate that the infection rate among those who work as teachers exceeds 50%, and last year some 1,900 teachers died. Given the fact that only around 450 new teachers at most can be trained per year, there is an insufficient number of teaching professionals in Zambia, even though many schools have been built. The education system is therefore experiencing a collapse.

Almost all of the hospital beds in Zambia are occupied, and there is no health insurance program, with many patients being unable to pay for medical expenses. Meanwhile the average monthly salary for doctors is only \$540, which has caused many medical practitioners to leave the country in search of better financial opportunities. Of the 1,600 doctors who have been trained at the public's expense, less than 400 currently work within the country.

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) has decided to provide financial aid valued at \$5 billion to suffering countries such as Zambia, and has begun to give free treatment using Antiretroviral Agents. Although this medicine can control HIV/AIDS, it is necessary for patients with the disease to take this expensive medicine throughout their entire life. I am worried about how long developed nations will actually be able to provide financial assistance for such treatment.

PROFILE



Kenichi Yumoto

Second Secretary, Japanese Embassy in Zambia
Born in 1968. After graduating from Chuo University, joined Price Waterhouse, an international auditing firm. In 1994, joined JTUC-RENGO. Since 2001, has been stationed at the Japanese Embassy in Zambia to work in areas related to economic cooperation.

In this context, what form of cooperation can JTUC-RENGO and JILAF provide to Zambia and other African countries to help address the HIV/AIDS issue?

First, it is necessary to create an environment where people with professional skills can serve as experts and volunteers in the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) or in various NGOs, without having to worry about losing their present job when they come back. Through labor-management agreements and other similar arrangements, they should be given the guarantee that they won't be placed at a disadvantage when they return from JICA or NGO volunteer activities and go back to work. JICA supplements personnel costs to companies which dispatch employees to JICA-related programs, however this system does not seem to be well known.

Second, the possibility of promoting initiatives which support orphans whose parents have died of AIDS should be examined, from the point of elimination of child labor etc. The problem related to AIDS orphans is also closely linked with the child labor issue, which the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) have made efforts to resolve. It is estimated that the number of AIDS orphans in sub-Saharan Africa will reach 20 million in the next decade. It is time to take action before it's too late.

International Cooperation Efforts by Trade Unions — No.3 Jichiro's International Solidarity Activities Asian Children's Home

Noboru Inokuchi

Director of the International Bureau

All-Japan Prefectural and Municipal Workers Union (Jichiro)

The Project's Background and Major Features

In 1995, Jichiro initiated the Asian Children's Home Project as part of its international cooperation activities to commemorate the 40th anniversary of its establishment. The project mainly targeted three countries — Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia — which suffered serious damage during and after the Indochina war. The objectives of the project were to support education for disadvantaged children in these countries and help them achieve self-reliance, and to also encourage them to actively utilize the features and resources of their traditional cultures.

The major characteristics of this project included (1) direct participation by union members, (2) continuous cooperation activities in the three countries, and (3) cooperation between Japanese NGOs and governmental/regional agencies in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.

Main Activities

Specifically, Jichiro promoted primary education (including literacy education, and the

study of national language and arithmetic) as well as cultural activities (dance, painting and sports). Jichiro also provided vocational training, where dressmaking, embroidery and sewing skills etc. were taught, and Jichiro helped to train people so that they could acquire jobs. Jichiro members were also directly involved in other activities such as providing various guidance and instruction, for example instructing people on skills related to library activities.

Financial resources for these activities were raised through the International Solidarity and Relief Campaign conducted by JICHIRO with catchphrase *Your donation equal to the price of one cup of coffee can go a long way to help others.*

Towards Future Initiatives

This project was implemented from 1995 until to 2003 (March), when the last of the available financial resources was used up. In our efforts, Jichiro produced many positive results over the project's eight-year duration. Specifically, union members were able to see first hand the actual conditions that exist in

developing countries, which helped them to reevaluate how they participate in daily trade union activities. In addition, participation in the assistance activities spread to the levels of local organizations and Prefectural head offices, and the activities themselves contributed to strengthening solidarity among Jichiro members.

Now that Jichiro's activities in this project have come to an end, they would like to encourage the three Asian nations to act independently, as they search to find new and flexible initiatives they can provide. Their past experiences will hopefully aid them in designing such initiatives. Jichiro will continue to play an increased, active role towards international solidarity.



ILO/RENGO/JILAF Workers Education Seminar on Productivity Improvement Held in Africa

An Regional Workers Education Seminar on the advantages of productivity improvement was held in Douala, Cameroon, from November 24-27, 2003. The seminar was hosted by ILO/ACTRAV, JTUC-RENGO and JILAF, and was attended by 31 trade union leaders from 13 countries and two international organizations. Masao Aihara, Project Adviser of JILAF, also attended the seminar and gave a presentation on the concept and definition of productivity.

During the opening ceremony various speeches were delivered by the participants, which helped to highlight the meaning and importance of the seminar. These included speeches from: a representative of the Cameroon trade unions, a representative from African Regional Organisation of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU-AFRO), as well as ILO SRO Director Yaounde, ILO Director Ito, Workers Member of ILO Governing Body, Mr. Kato, Counselor of the Japanese Embassy, and the Vice Minister of Employment, Social Security and Labor.

The seminar consisted of four sessions. The first, second and third

sessions featured presentations and discussion on the themes *the concept of productivity, and its improvement, experiences in and efforts toward improving productivity, and improving social dialogue and productivity*, respectively. During the fourth and final session, a resolution to promote productivity improvement through the joint efforts of government, labor and management was adopted.

Now that economic globalization has intensified, international competition and the struggle to survive among corporations has led to worsened working conditions, and the participants at the seminar confirmed the importance of trade unions in taking an initiative in the movement for increased productivity. Through the seminar, a shared sense of recognition was fostered among the attendees that improvements in productivity will enhance economic development and the growth of corporations, and that profits need to be allocated to workers, in order to maintain employment and to promote progress in society as a whole.

Visit to the Korea International Labour Foundation

In South Korea there is an organization that has a similar name as JILAF. We are referring to the Korea International Labour Foundation (KOILAF), which was established in 1998 by the Korean three parties of labor, management and Government. Like JILAF, KOILAF has promoted invitation programs to invite trade union leaders of other countries to South Korea, conducted surveys of labor-management relations, and provided information for Korean companies operating abroad and for the companies that are invested in South Korea. In November 2003, President Teruhito Tokumoto and two JILAF staff visited Korea. They were able to obtain up-to-date information from KOILAF regarding: the labor situation in Korea, trade unions, employers associations and the government. They also discussed with KOILAF the type of cooperation that might be promoted between the two foundations.

KOILAF's annual budget is about ¥90 million, of which about ¥65 million is allocated for various projects. KOILAF is run by ten staff

members. At present KOILAF is smaller than JILAF in size, however, in 2004 KOILAF plans to expand its activities by increasing the number of countries whose trade union leaders are invited to South Korea and it intends to newly hold seminars for foreign workers working in Korea. KOILAF is expected to play a more important role in the future, both in terms of developing labor-management relations in South Korea and in the area of international cooperation. As a senior organization for international cooperation in the field of trade union-related issues, JILAF aims to foster strong and positive ties with KOILAF by providing know-how necessary for expanding invitation programs, conducting surveys on common issues (including the problem of non-regular workers), holding forums, and will offer advice that can hopefully help KOILAF initiate field projects in developing countries.

(Check out KOILAF's website: URL: www.koilaf.org/index.php)

JILAF Calendar (December 2003 – February 2004)

1. Invitation Programs

- Korea / Hong Kong / Mongol Team: November 27-December 10
- Europe Team: January 11-24
- Russia / NIS Team: January 29-February 11
- South America / Africa Team: February 12-25

2. Field Projects

- Philippine TUCP/JILAF POSITIVE Seminar and Indonesia ITUC/JILAF - Workshop: November 30-December 15; Quezon, Jakarta, and others
- Pakistan ICFTU-PC National Seminar: January 6-14; Islamabad, and others

Indonesia ITUC/JILAF Workshop on Decentralization: February 1-6; Jakarta, and others

- Participation in the Health Care-Related NGO Study Meeting: Field Training for the Thai HIV/AIDS Control Project organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: February 1-6; Ubon Rachathani Province, and others
- Nepal POSITIVE Trainers Meeting: February 2-13; Pokhara, and others
- Pakistan POSITIVE Monitoring: February 20-March 1; Lahore, and others

3. Surveys, Education, etc.

- Visit to KOILAF: December 8-11; Seoul

- Study Meeting on International Labor Issues: January 29; Tokyo
- Dispatch of Women's Team for International Exchange: February 1-10; Vietnam

4. Meetings, etc.

- 18th Industrial federation/GUF Discussion Meeting: February 5; Tokyo
- 18th Planning Committee Meeting: February 5; Tokyo
- 40th General Affairs Committee Meeting: February 12; Tokyo
- 41st Board Meeting and Councilors Meeting: February 26; Tokyo