



# NEWSLETTER

Japan International Labour Foundation <http://www.jilaf.or.jp/English-jilaf>  
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## ZCTU of Zambia Holds National Seminar on HIV/AIDS — RENG0/JILAF African AIDS Project Is Launched —

### ◆Start of the Project after More Than Four Years of Preparation

The first national seminar on HIV/AIDS in Zambia was held from February 6-12 in Lusaka, jointly by the Zambian Confederation of Trade Unions (ZCTU), the ICFTU Africa Regional Organization (ICFTU-AFRO), and RENG0 and JILAF. It took four long years to bring it to realize this project, but the project has now taken its first step forward.

### ◆Two-thirds of the World's HIV-positive People Live in Africa

According to UNAIDS statistics (as of the end of 2004), 25.4 million (roughly 64%) of the world's 39.4 million people infected with HIV are concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa. Out of this figure, there are said to be 920,000 infected people in Zambia, meaning that approximately 20% of adults are HIV-positive. The average lifespan in the country was once above 60 years, but it has fallen today to 37 years as a result of a rise in the death rate caused by AIDS.

### ◆Training 26 Core Trainers

The most important issue is how to prevent new people from becoming infected in the future. The funding for the seminar was provided by RENG0's international



solidarity fund, 26 trade union members participated in a training seminar for core trainers to be responsible for HIV/AIDS problems in the industrial federation. And they learned necessary knowledge of preventing HIV/AIDS and caring and supporting measures for infected people.

### ◆Practical Training in Counseling Techniques

For practical training in counseling, role-playing was performed, with participants divided into counselors and people seeking consultations, with the instructors providing advice on points to be careful about.

The participants learned from the perspective of people seeking consultations, and received detailed guidance covering tone of voice, wording, posture and eye contact.

### ◆VCT Is the Key

At the completion ceremony on the final day of the seminar, the participants had a sense of accomplishment at having finished the one-week seminar as they were handed certificates of completion from the leaders of the ZCTU.

Later, there was some encouraging news. Among the participants who attended the completion ceremony as couples, there were some who decided to undergo voluntary counseling and testing (VCT). There are in fact many union members who have yet to be tested, out of fear that the results could lead to being labeled as an infectee, and being discriminated against.

### ◆Efforts to Spread Knowledge at the Workplace Level

VCT is the portal to HIV/AIDS treatment, so people undergo it before receiving treatment. It is only when knowledge on HIV/AIDS becomes widespread in the workplace that the number of people undergoing VCT increases, leading to early treatment. Thus, the project will be able to be seen as a success if many union members and their families go for VCT. Hearing that even a few families made the decision to undergo VCT is a good sign for the sub-core trainer training that is scheduled to take place in the future.



## International Forum

# “Challenges of the North American Trade Union Movement” Held

A North American team made up of two members each from AFL-CIO in the United States and CLC in Canada was invited to Japan from January 18-27, and took advantage of this opportunity to hold an international forum on the challenges faced by the North American trade union movement. The visitors from the AFL-CIO and CLC gave reports on the current political and economic situation surrounding their movements, and on future tasks for the movement, and this was followed by questions from the floor. Despite the fact that the forum was organized at short notice, many union members attended, and there was a vigorous exchange of opinions.

The report from Canada was that though the organizing rate is relatively high there, there is a need to develop a movement which embraces the needs of immigrant and part-time workers, and that it will become increasingly important to establish systems of education and occupational training with the shift toward a knowledge economy. From the United States, the audience was introduced to the fact that under the Bush Administration the trade union movement is under an extremely harsh situation, and they also heard about the poor working conditions of immigrant and atypical workers and the polarization currently taking place domestically.

The powerful message spelled out at the forum was that with the progress of globalization, international competition is becoming



fiercer, and in a growing number of cases we are seeing a “race to the bottom,” where there is no choice but to cut working conditions. Thus, now is the time to strengthen solidarity between trade unions at the global level, and we must carry out discussions with one another and adopt common strategies.

## Two Workshop Held with the GUFs in Thailand

In January and February 2004, JILAF held two seminars, with TWARO and UNI.

The seminar entitled “The impact of textile industry after the end of quota system” was held in Bangkok on January 22-23, jointly by TWARO, TWFT and JILAF. It was attended by 37 people (among them, 23 women) including Chairperson Kanjai Kaewchoo, and by Sister Nakano from TWARO. Following lectures by a professor from Chulalongkorn University and others, a group discussion was held on the theme of “Effects of and measures to cope with the termination of the MFA,” and a countermeasure was formulated from the presentations.



As a result of the discussions, the following were adopted: (1) efforts will be made

to grasp the effects of the termination of the quota system in more detail, to provide information to union members, and to improve regional legal systems; and (2) a campaign will be conducted to demand the ratification of ILO Conventions, revise labor laws, and encourage employers to adopt Codes of Conduct.

The commerce sector seminar, co-sponsored by UNI-TLC, UNI-LCJ and JILAF, was held from February 6-7, immediately after the general elections, in Ayutthaya City. It was attended by 33 officers and members of the Tesco Lotus Workers Union, including the president, four officers from other unions in the Ayutthaya area, and six officers from UNI-TLC, as well as Brother Igarashi, Vice President of JSD, Brother Kanno, Vice Director of UI ZENSEN, and Brother Ito, General Secretary of UNI-LCJ, for a total attendance of 49 people. Among the speeches from the various groups, JSD President Igarashi, in the form of answers to questions, gave the following advice: it is precisely when labor-management relations deteriorate that it is important to work harder than ever; it is important to ensure that trade unions are attractive and rooted in local communities; and it is crucial to train organizers. The Tesco Lotus Workers Union was established last year as the first union in Thailand in the commerce sector. It is facing a difficult labor-management situation, but the participants were all very serious and bursting with enthusiasm.

## Japanese Trade Unions Must Make Contributions to Eliminating Poverty

Today, as my three-year assignment at the Japanese Embassy in Washington draws to a close, I would like to introduce the current situation of economic cooperation, which is undergoing a transformation on a global level, and analyze the demands that are being made of Japanese trade unions.

### 1. A World Trend toward the Elimination of Poverty

Even now, in the 21st century, there are many regions throughout the world that are seriously affected by droughts and epidemics. The progress of globalization has brought affluence to some regions, but at the same time there are many regions that are still suffering from poverty, and the fact is that these regions even lack the basis for promoting self-reliance.

### 2. This Year Is the “Year for Poverty Elimination”

The Summit of leaders of the major industrial countries to be held in the United Kingdom (Glenegles, Scotland) in July this year, is scheduled to discuss how the industrialized countries should contribute to the elimination of poverty, mainly in Africa.

Also, a special summit will be held in September to examine the state of implementation of the “Millennium Development Goals” adopted for the elimination of poverty.

### 3. Focus on Ending Child Labor and Eliminating Poverty

#### PROFILE



#### Takayuki Yagi

First Secretary at the Japanese Embassy in the United States. Originally from the Toshiba Labor Union. After working at the Japanese Electrical Electronic & Information Union Research Center (DENKI SOKEN), was assigned to the economic team at the Japanese Embassy in the United States as an officer in charge of economic cooperation, a position that he currently holds.

The Preamble to the Japanese Constitution states as follows: “We believe that no nation is responsible to itself alone.”

From Japan, which has become one of the world’s richest nations, there are many problems to which contributions can be made from a trade union perspective, such as child labor and the AIDS epidemic.

Since Japan, as a trading nation, cannot afford to ignore the problem of poverty in other countries, trade unions must examine the contributions we are required to make in international society, and make appropriate efforts.

## International Cooperation Efforts by Trade Unions – No.7 Supporting a School Project in India

Koichi Sato

Assistant General Secretary

Confederation of Japan Automobile Workers’ Unions,

“It really came home straight to my heart when I shook the hands of the children and saw them looking at me. When you go to the field, you really grow attached to people. The real issue is how we can continue to support people, from within the trade union movement, until they truly become independent. We can’t let things end with a passing feeling of sympathy. . .” This is what Brother Koichi Sato realized anew when he went to visit the JILAF School in Markapur, India.

In FY2004, the Confederation of Japan Automobile Workers’ Unions (JIDOSHA SOREN), of which Brother Sato serves as Assistant General Secretary, provided funding for JILAF’s school project. He felt that it was important to go to see how the funds were actually being used at the project site. So in January this year, he traveled to Markapur, where the school is located, and made an inspection for the first time as an officer of JIDOSHA SOREN.

“The basic line is correct. But at the root of things, there are financial problems. When thinking of how to use union members’ dues most effectively, we need to look carefully at how much assistance is necessary where.”

So what needs to be done, then? As an approach to finding an answer, Brother Sato believes it is important for people with real authority – meaning, in concrete terms, the top leaders of trade unions – to go to the field directly. Listening to the voices of the field is also the basis of trade unions. We are also required to

build a relationship of trust with the local trade union, which acts as the counterpart. Precisely because the target of the assistance is broad, one must take care in selecting whom to provide it to. Brother Sato showed us an awareness which JILAF must not forget.



# Activities Plan for Fiscal 2005 Formulated

JILAF's Activities Plan for fiscal 2005 was approved at the 44th Board Meeting and Councilors Meeting held on February 25. The plan was formulated with the following two points being taken into consideration.

The first is that JILAF will actively participate in the Forum for NGO-Trade Unions in International Cooperation, which was inaugurated last year with the aim of enabling Japan's NGOs and trade unions to work together to find solutions to various problems such as poverty, human rights, peace and the environment, which are included in the U.N. Millennium Development Goals. JILAF is a NGO established by RENGO with the aim of building international solidarity between trade unions and assisting developing countries in their social development activities through union activities. There are many trade unions and NGOs in Japan, which have been carrying out international cooperation activities. JILAF, as a NGO established by a trade union, hopes to increase information exchanges with other trade unions and NGOs in Japan and cooperate with

them.

The second point is that from 2005, in order to further improve the quality of activities, we will develop a new evaluation system, solidly reflect the evaluation results in our activities, and at the same time carry out information disclosure through a variety of means. In terms of income, our financial environment remains severe, mainly relying on commissioned business fees, but in fiscal 2005 we will fully transform our way of carrying out activities "from quantity to quality." While attempting to make our operations more efficient and higher in quality, we will make efforts to gain further understanding and cooperation from domestic union members and the public through means such as enhancing the JILAF website. In terms of medium- and long-term perspective, JILAF will endeavor to expand and strengthen its activities comparable to international solidarity activities conducted by trade unions of developed countries.

## JILAF Calendar (March - May 2005)

### 1. Invitation Programs

- European Team May 12-25

### 2. Field Projects

- Indonesia ITUC Seminar on Basic Education on Trade Unions March 7-8 Jakarta
- Philippine TUCP Seminars on Productivity and Labor-Management Consultations

March 9-12 Quezon/Cebu

- China ACFTU Seminar for Training POSITIVE Supervising Trainers

March 12-18 Chengdu City, Sichuan Province

- Pakistan APFTU/APFOL POSITIVE Seminar
- Thailand UNI-TLC/UNI-LCJ Workshops

January 21-February 8

Bangkok/Lahore/Islamabad/Ayutthaya

### 3. Others

- Dispatching an International Exchange Team March 21-27 Seoul

## Inside Out

I was long involved in the administration of labor-management relations in Japan. Now my key role is in international exchange and cooperation in the field of labor. On a new note, I intend to make efforts for the smooth promotion of activities and meeting our aims.

**Motoo Hayash**  
former manager, 3rd coordination section, Secretariat,  
Central Labor Relations Commission



JILAF's Invitation Program and Field Projects have been highly acclaimed in the international trade union movement. For me it is a great pleasure to be able to participate in JILAF's activities. I hope to be able to contribute to JILAF's activities as much as possible, making use of my 28 years of experience in the international trade union movement.

**Yozo Abe**  
former director, International Division



Each day surprises me with so many new things that I have to learn. I often feel lost, but I hope that I will experience many things and broaden my perspective. I will work as hard as I can.

**Akiko Nitta**  
on loan from the Japan Labour Health and Welfare  
Organization

