



APL Message of Solidarity to ZENROREN on the Occasion of its 21st Regular Convention

The Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) extends its warm greetings of solidarity to its sisters and brothers in ZENROREN on the occasion of its 21st Regular Convention, 28-30 July 2004 in Tokyo, Japan.

Today we live in an insecure world shaped by neo-liberal globalization and by the US military aggression. Everywhere around the world, the neo-liberal assault has led to unemployment, the widespread use of contractual and casual labor, race-to-the-bottom wages, rollback of social welfare and the erosion of workers' and trade union rights for the vast majority while cornering great riches for a minority. At the same time the US military aggression in Afghanistan, Iraq, Venezuela, Haiti and many other countries where the empire has decided to interfere, has made the world unstable and thus more dangerous. The Empire's insidious "war on terrorism" is also being used as a pretext to curtail worker's democratic rights.

Indeed the challenges for the labor movement are daunting, but not insurmountable.

A few years ago, advocates of the free market proclaimed the advent of "the end of history." Today, neo-liberal globalization is in a deep crisis of legitimacy after it has spectacularly failed to deliver the prosperity that it promised. Its overarching concern for profits at the expense of people and the environment has resulted to the harsh realities now faced by the working people. Its main agencies – the IMF, WB, ADB, and the WTO – now find it impossible to hold a meeting without being greeted by a sea of protesters.

Even the US Empire, after pushing the world to the brink of a global war, now finds itself in a quagmire: the killings in Iraq continues after more than a year since George Bush Junior arrogantly declared the end of major hostilities; and, the truth that the war was based on a lie has now become obvious.

The twin crises of the neo-liberal world order and the US Empire should be seized by the working class as an opportunity to reassert the fact that a better world is indeed possible – a world that is free from war and from exploitation – a world shaped by socialist ideals.

Struggling for a better world requires a qualitative leap in worker's power. It is therefore incumbent upon the labor movement to rapidly increase our representativeness in our respective countries, to bring under its protective arm all types of workers – public and private, formal and informal, paid and unpaid and especially migrant workers – as we endeavor to build solidarity across borders not just in words but in action.

It is in this context that we view the importance of the action plan that the ZENROREN has set for itself. We are one with you in all your struggles that would ensure for the working class all the economic, political and cultural benefits that it rightfully deserve.

We look forward to strengthening the bilateral relations between our organizations in the next few years. It is, after all, only through cross border solidarity that we can effectively respond to a number of issues that are of mutual concern to both our organizations such as the on-going Japan-Philippine free trade agreement and the increasing problems related labor migration.

We wish you all the best on your Convention. Love Live Zenroren! Long Live the Japanese Working Class!