

IMF-JC 50th National Convention / September 6, 2011, in Yokohama, Japan

IMF-JC President Speech (summary)

By IMF-JC President, Koichiro Nishihara

### **Friends in the IMF: Thank you for your solidarity**

I offer my prayers for all who were lost in the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11 and my condolences to all victims of the tragedy. Among IMF-JC members, 42 were killed or went missing after the earthquake, and 616 family members were killed or went missing.



The industry-based unions that comprise the IMF-JC have given their utmost efforts toward rescue and support of union members and their families who were victims of the disaster, and toward job security in the affected areas. They also took part in RENGO's volunteer dispatch and fundraising campaigns, and put all of their might toward making demands to the government and getting policies enacted when requested or petitioned by the affected areas.

After the disaster we received solidarity, messages of support and a large amount of monetary contributions from the IMF head office and member organizations in many countries. We at the IMF-JC will never forget the spirit of international solidarity from metalworkers' unions all over the globe after this tragedy.

### **The Merger of the 3 GUFs**

The three GUFs (IMF, ICEM and ITGLWF) held a joint executive committee meeting in May at which they came to a basic agreement on the unification of their organizations.

Amidst the increasing globalization of the economy, companies are expanding their operations across borders and industries. National governments are also strengthening their international cooperative systems in trade, economic, and financial aspects. So that trade unions can also gain greater influence on a global level, we need to strengthen the international solidarity movement, in particular to protect fair labor standards and ensure decent work.

If we can achieve a more effective, more efficient GUF organizational structure and

management and secure greater financial stability through this unification, this will lead to the establishment of a more solid activity base for the future of the international labor movement. The IMF-JC will make the utmost effort to have its voice heard in the discussions on the unification, on matters such as financial and membership due issues and its role as a decision-making body, and we hope that the right path will be chosen.

From here on, the IMF plans to decide on unification at the Central Committee Meeting held in Jakarta in December, and the conference to form the new GUF is scheduled for June 2012 in Copenhagen.

### **Metalworkers' Labor Movement Enhancement and Organizational Management**

Regarding mid- to long-term organizational management, we have established an Organizational Management Discussion Committee comprised of the three top-ranking IMF-JC officials and presidents and general secretaries of industry-based unions to discuss matters. We will arrange with the RENGO movement and raise the issues at next year's conference, centered on strengthening international functions and improving domestic functions to cope with globalization.

As for finances, which are a prerequisite for our discussions, some member unions have asked us to reduce IMF-JC membership fees due to budget constraints as a result of shrinking memberships and the increase in fees for RENGO. After giving this matter some thought, though it has not been formally proposed, based on our understanding of unions' overall circumstances we will take the lead and reduce the monthly membership fee from 31 yen per person to 25 yen per person from January of next year. We acknowledge that this 20% cut will have a severe effect on the management of our organization, but giving careful consideration to the mid- to long-term organizational movement, we would like to ensure a stable and efficient financial base.