

## Asia Pacific Regional Organisation

Regional secretary: Ms. V. Lakshmi

Wisma AUPE, 295 Upper Paya Lebar Road Singapore 534929

Tel: +65.6282.3219 and Fax +65.6280.4919 E-mail: [lakshmi.vaidhiyanathan@world-psi.org](mailto:lakshmi.vaidhiyanathan@world-psi.org)

## Jobs creation and decent work agenda at the centre of ADB operations and projects



Mr. Katsuhiko Sato, JICHIRO and PSI APREC Members, given miniature token of Labour Desk to ADB President, Mr. Haruhiko Kuroda

“ In light of growing challenges in the Asia-Pacific region, we would also like to urge ADB to undertake an open and multi-stakeholder review of the Bank’s 2001 Social Protection Strategy to ensure it supports decent work and inclusive growth,” said Annie Geron, Vice President of Public Services International (PSI), speaking on behalf of 100 delegates representing Public Services International (PSI), Union Network International (UNI), Building and Wood Workers’ International (BWI), International Transport Federation (ITF), Education International (EI), and International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine, and General Workers’ Union (ICEM) during the 44th ADB Annual Governors’ Meeting in Hanoi, Vietnam.

In this meeting PSI and the global unions continued to urge ADB to create a labour desk with labour competent personnel within ADB’s structure as a first concrete step towards the mainstreaming of labour issues within the ADB and promoting inclusive growth. As pointed out by Annie Geron, Vice President of PSI, “**decent work = inclusive growth**, and must be promoted by the ADB.” During this meeting the global unions presented a joint statement to the ADB calling for:

- Promoting and institutionalizing reforms that promote and protect human capital through decent work, living wages and social protection for workers, families and the communities.
- Ensuring integration and compliance of international labour standards, as expressed in the 2006 ADB published *Handbook on Core Labour Standards*, into ADB’s operational procedures, procurement and bidding documents; particularly in the light of the Multilateral Development Banks’ development of harmonised conditions of contract for the Construction sector. . *Continue page 2*



From page 1

- The ADB Strategy 2020 of preferring private sector investment in the provision of core public services such as water, electricity, education and healthcare at the expense of assisting countries to develop effective, sustainable and quality public services needs to be checked. Quality, affordable and accessible public services financed through a fair and redistributive tax system should be a top priority.
- Supporting the promotion and adoption of the Financial

Transaction Tax (FTT) as in the model voted by the EU Parliament for strengthening the international financial regulatory framework and to avoid capital flight would significantly curb speculation and limit banks' excessive reliance on unstable sources of funding.

- Facilitating trade and investment towards regional integration by supporting transport infrastructure development while maintaining an emphasis on the rights of the local workers and communities who will be working and living alongside these highways and railways.
- Enshrining workers' organisations and their duly elected representatives to participate in the designing, implementing, monitoring and reporting of ADB-funded country-level programme on climate change
- The setting up of a labour desk

The global unions strongly urged the ADB to introduction a Financial Transaction Taxation (FTT). *"FTT is part of the necessary responses to the crisis, alongside with other regulations of the financial sector and fair and progressive taxation. The FTT is the only option that will generate substantial revenues to pay for costs of the crisis, climate change and ODA, and contribute to reducing the pressures that could cause a renewed financial crisis"* added Katsuhiko Sato, JICHIRO Director of International Department. Report of this meeting, please click [here](#)

## **Permanent jobs for temporary employees in Life Insurance Corporation of India**

The temporary employees working in Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), India for more than 15 years were continuing on temporary basis only. They were doing the job of a permanent nature but without any social security, medical benefit and even normal grade increments.

They were organized by All India National Life Insurance Employees Federation (AINLIEF) and their case was taken before the Central Government Industrial Tribunal (CGIT) at New Delhi. The CGIT awarded favouring the temporary workmen. But the management of LIC preferred to appeal to Delhi High Court and have not implemented the award. From the High Court the matter had gone to Supreme Court of India. Side by side AINLIEF had been keeping the momentum going by highlighting this issue at various forums and launching a political campaign. Last year PSI supported a meeting organized to sort out the issue. During the hearing at Supreme Court the LIC management has filed papers stating that they are agreeable to regularize the services of temporary employees who are working for more than 5 years by holding a simple test. The notification for 5000 vacancies has been issued. The last date for applying is 03.06.2011 and the date of examination is 26.06.2011.

For more information contact Mr. V.Narasimhan, General Secretary, All India National Life Insurance Employees Federation [v.narasimhan@licindia.com](mailto:v.narasimhan@licindia.com)

## Labour Day celebration in Cambodia: decent salary for civil servants



CICA's leaders and members were participated to march International Labour Day 2011 in Cambodia.  
Photo by CICA

Freedom of expression and speak, decent work, decent salary and working condition for all workers have been the main banner of the Cambodian workers marched on International Labour Day. More than 3000 people including members of PSI affiliate, Cambodia's Independent Civil-Servant Association (CICA), paraded through the street of Phnom Penh. "CICA demanded a substantial pay increase for Cambodian civil-servants "said brother Kruy Sokha, Vice General Secretary. With regard to their current monthly salary from KHR 100,000 – 400,000 (USD \$ 25-97) for level E to A the rank of a civil servants, the association's demanded "dignified salary increment" an set of KHR 800,000 - KHR 1,200,000 (for E to A levels) as a decent

salary. "The prices of everyday commodities, particularly food prices, continue to rise at the market. Increasing salary is a must. We need to cope with our daily life, our quality life. Compared with other ASEAN countries, a Cambodian civil servant receives the lowest salary" added Kruy Sokha. For further information, please contact: [cica.cambodia@gmail.com](mailto:cica.cambodia@gmail.com)



## Indonesian water workers gain 50% wage rise

Serikat Pekerja PDAM Jakarta, representing workers in Palyja (the GDF-Suez concession of the city of Jakarta's water system), finally won their demands for salary adjustments. After many years of stalled negotiations, recent union mobilisation and political pressure convinced the private employer to finally agree a to 50% wage increase, retroactive to January 2011.

Although 50% may appear high, this level was needed to compensate for years of low and frozen wages, lagging far behind high inflation in Indonesia. The wage negotiations in 2011 are in the context of the increasing mobilisation opposing the 13-year old private concession contracts in Jakarta (which has 12 years remaining in the 25-year concession). A number of groups, including the PSI affiliated unions, are exerting pressure within the city of Jakarta to end these two privatisation contracts - due to a number of problems with private management. SP PDAM Jakarta President, Simon Hutasoit, said that the union will be holding further talks with the company over the issues in dispute and that the wage increase for the Palyja workers now needed to be extended to the workers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> private concession, Aerta.

## Public services workers: meeting the challenge of emergencies and disaster

Emergencies and disasters are a fact of life. Climate change may increase the frequency and magnitude of some forms of natural disasters. The International Strategy for Disaster Reduction has been in place since 2000 and encourages establishment of regional and national platforms for disaster risk reduction, comprising multi-stakeholder mechanisms. Less certain is the ability of nations and communities to plan for, prevent or lessen the damage from such events. Public Services International, the global union federation that represents 20 million members, insists that public service workers must be consulted and involved in planning, decision-making and delivery at all levels of disaster scenarios.

*Continues page 4*

*From page 3*

Public service workers are the skilled first responders in times of crisis. Emergency services, healthcare, water and energy workers risk their health and lives on the frontlines in the service of their communities. Governments are responsible for protecting people. Investment in strong public safety regulations, well-trained and properly equipped public service workers and quality public services are key to effective disaster readiness, risk reduction, response and recovery. When proper building standards are enforced, needless injuries and deaths are avoided in times of disaster. Well-informed urban planning can reduce risks from climate crises. And a well-trained public workforce and strong emergency and health services can quickly and effectively help people during and after a crisis. A comparison of the impact of the 2009 earthquakes in Haiti and in Chile, two developing countries in the Inter-Americas region, is instructive. In Chile, thanks in large part to public policy, strong construction regulations and public infrastructure and emergency response investments – loss of life and building damage were remarkably less than occurred in Haiti. In Haiti, where building codes and emergency services were poor – 320,000 people lost their lives and the country’s infrastructure was destroyed, even though the quake in Chile was far stronger than in Haiti.

Most recently, the 2011 earthquakes in New Zealand and Japan (and the subsequent tsunami in Japan) demonstrated that even high resource countries that are well prepared suffer damage and rely heavily on the quality of their public service infrastructure to limit the multiple harms that disasters entail.

Public Services International urges the United Nations, relevant UN entities, governments and non-governmental organizations to consult and work with trade unions globally to strengthen emergency prevention and response infrastructures at regional and national levels, and to ensure that emergency workers are well-trained and well-equipped to meet any challenge. For more information, please click [here](#)

## **Report: JICHIRO disaster support activities**



*JICHIRO members helping at one of the evacuation centres in Miyako, Iwate prefecture*



*President Tokunaga visiting Minami-Soma city hit by the Tsunami.*

JICHIRO is conducting support activities for those affected by the Japan earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disasters.

The massive earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan’s eastern coast on 11 March 2011, and the resulting accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant, have caused severe damage for members of PSI affiliates and their families.

Although members are facing large-scale damage on a personal level, they immediately went to work helping residents, confirming safety status, and organizing evacuations. Some union members continued support activities, confirming the safety of residents, distributing relief items and running evacuation centres, despite losing, or not being able to confirm the safety of their own family members. Working round the clock is causing mental and physical exhaustion and we hear from unions in the disaster-affected areas that some members have collapsed due to illness and others have taken early retirement. Based on experience of support activities gained after the Great Hanshin-Awaji earthquake in 1995, JICHIRO made every effort to immediately contact after the earthquake each of the prefectural offices in the disaster area and began preparing a support system. In order to lighten, as much as possible, the workload of the local government employees, JICHIRO started full-scale support activities on 11 April 2011.

Base camps were set up in four places, Iwate, south Miyagi, north Miyagi and Fukushima. About 300 union members from all over Japan were sent there every week.

*Continues page 5*

*From page 4*

As of 20 May, about 10 000 union members in total had helped with various activities including evacuation centre support, recovering items from family homes, dividing up relief supplies for distribution, processing applications from residents for temporary housing and so on. Until 10 July, JICHIRO plans to continue support activities, scaling up or down and changing the contents according to needs. JTUC-RENGO, the National Union Centre of Japan, is also organizing volunteers to help with recovery activities. JICHIRO has also been participating in these activities, mainly through the JICHIRO Youth Division. Japanese PSI affiliates are also sending volunteers with the RENGO programme. Municipal workers in the disaster areas must continue performing their regular local government duties on top of long-term recovery activities, which is mentally and physically demanding. Entire towns located within the danger zone around the Fukushima nuclear reactors have been forced to evacuate and both the municipal workers and the residents from these towns must live day by day with the anxiety of not having any idea what the future holds for them. Sometimes residents, frustrated by the situation and not knowing who to blame, take it out on municipal workers. Nevertheless, these workers continue to do their jobs without complaining. Read full report, please click [here](#)

## **The Febe Elizabeth Velasquez Trade Union Award: send your nomination**

Every year, the Dutch trade union centre FNV presents an award to a trade union leader who has dedicated herself/himself to the protection of the union rights in those countries where union rights are still being violated. The nominees will have dedicated themselves to the protection of human rights in situations where their personal freedom and individual rights have been threatened.

The Febe Elizabeth Velasquez Trade Union Award is named after a Salvadoran trade union activist who was killed because of her activities in her trade union. FNV will present the award during an FNV conference on 7 October, the World Day of Decent Work. Please send your nominations to PSI before 15 June, so that we can forward them to FNV before the 1st July deadline. Please send to: [psi@world-psi.org](mailto:psi@world-psi.org) and Cc to: [lakshmi.vaidhiyanathan@world-psi.org](mailto:lakshmi.vaidhiyanathan@world-psi.org)

## **Video: Public water and the way forward**

The Global Water Operator Partnership Alliance (GWOPA) of UN Habitat held its first Congress in conjunction with the broad UN celebration of World Water Day on 22 March 2011 in Cape Town, South Africa. More than 150 people participated, including the development banks, national governments, public and private water operators, UN agencies, NGOs and trade unions.

This video provides a brief overview of PSI work with the UN system, NGOs and public operators. It was compiled from interviews with participants at UN Habitat's first congress of the Global Water Operator Partnership Alliance, held in Cape Town, South Africa 20-21 March 2011. [Read more >](#)



## **Equal rights, respect and dignity for all workers**

The global unions, Education International (EI), Public Services International (PSI) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) join other human rights defenders in celebrating International Day against Homophobia. Working in cooperation, the three global unions restate their pledge to resist all forms of discrimination, intolerance and persecution based on sexual orientation or gender identity. Read more, please click [here](#)

## Join Quality Public Services—Action Now! Campaign



This is call to action! The Council of Global Unions, which includes Public Services International, has unanimously declared that now is the time for private and public sector unions to unite in solidarity to defend and advance the quality public services that build the strong, equitable, sustainable communities that benefit our members and our families.

In Egypt, the United States, Greece, the United Kingdom and elsewhere, working people are on the frontlines calling for progressive change – demanding a world where fair wages, decent jobs, vital public services and citizens’ voices are valued more than tax cuts, corporate bonuses, media monopolies and investment in war.

Public Services International calls on our affiliates to join the new *Quality Public Services—Action Now!* campaign, a shared initiative of the members of the Council of Global Unions. This campaign features a flexible approach that enables affiliates to work with their global union federations to enhance existing local public service-related campaigns, or to design new ones. Campaigns are directed locally by affiliates, while the *Quality Public Services—Action Now!* Campaign adds value by encouraging connections and action from the grassroots to global levels. For example, your union may already have a public service issue campaign that you want to quickly accelerate to new levels of action. By associating your effort with the *Quality Public Services—Action Now!* campaign, the Council of Global Unions will work to give greater profile to your issue, connect your union members with similar struggles happening elsewhere in the world, help share best practices, coordinate research, encourage development of sustainable economic and social policies, recruit important allies for your cause and strengthen coalitions, and engage in strategic national or international advocacy as you deem necessary. Your campaign may be a short-term or long-term initiative. Public Services International is looking to focus on one or more pilot campaigns with affiliates for the launch of this QPS campaign, with more partnerships possible as resources allows. **On World Public Services Day – 23 June 2011**, global unions and specific affiliates will be announcing the initial campaigns that are joined under the *Quality Public Services—Action Now!* banner.



Local unions are encouraged to hold related activities everywhere on 23 June to demonstrate the commitment of our global union movement to promoting quality public services and defending workers’ rights. This *Quality Public Services—Action Now!* campaign will be long-term, offering ongoing opportunity for unions to associate local campaigns or participate in further days of global coordinated action. **Join the *Quality Public Services—Action Now!* campaign** now: contact [Teresa.Marshall@world-psi.org](mailto:Teresa.Marshall@world-psi.org) or [Rolv.Hanssen@world-psi.org](mailto:Rolv.Hanssen@world-psi.org) (Tel: +33 4 50 64 64) to discuss your campaign.

For more, please see: <http://www.qpsactionnow.org/>



## Fair Work Australia

### **Australian women a step closer to equal pay**

Australian women who have been traditionally underpaid are a step closer to achieving wage justice thanks to the recognition of the need for equal pay for the nation's social and community sector workers by Fair Work Australia, the national workplace relations tribunal. The preliminary decision is a win for unions representing Australia's social and community sector workers, who do important but undervalued work for the benefit of the wider community. David Smith, National Secretary of the Australian Services Union, a PSI affiliate, declared, "The ASU acknowledges the ground breaking decision which for the first time in 30 years accepts the principle of gender based underpayment of wages.

This decision will not only lead to improved pay for our members in the Social and Community Services (SACS) industry, but opens the door for other women who have suffered gender based pay discrimination." The ASU is now required to lodge further evidence to support at what level SACS workers should be compensated for the gender pay gap they have endured. This will allow FWA to rule on a remedy for the SACS equal pay gap. In addition, the ASU will hold rallies all over Australia on 8 June 2011 in support of the equal pay campaign. [Read the ASU media release](#) and [Read the Tribunal decision](#)



**100th**  
Session of the  
International  
Labour Conference  
*Building  
a future with  
decent work*

### **100th Session of the International Labour Conference, 1-17 June 2011**

Director-General Juan Somavia opened the historic 100th International Labour Conference with a call for an urgent commitment to a new era of social justice and economic growth based on sustainable development to address mounting "turmoil" in the world of work. "Our world of work is in turmoil," Mr. Somavia said in his address to the Conference. "It is urgent to commit to a new era of social justice, of growth with social justice based on sustainable development." Mr. Somavia said the world of work was facing multiple crises, including an unacceptably high level of youth employment, stagnant levels of world investment in the real economy, marginalization of job-creating small enterprises, and "indecent levels" of income and wealth concentration. Read more, please see: <http://ning.it/iC9y34>



### **12<sup>th</sup> APRECON: People First, Quality Public Services is the Key**

Union leaders and its members of PSI affiliates from this region are expecting to gather in Sydney, Australia from 17 to 21 October 2011 for the 12<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Regional Conference (12<sup>th</sup> APRECON). The Regional Conference is the highest-ranking regional body, which meets once during the period between two PSI congresses. The APRECON determines the priorities of the regional policy.

People First, Quality Public Services is the Key, the theme that will bring together public services unions in this region. "PEOPLE FIRST" denotes that the region prioritizes the needs and welfare of citizens and in order to achieve the above, the Region believes that quality public services are key elements. The Region from the years 2011-2016 will promote the above theme with a concrete action plan integrating into the global priorities of PSI. Please contact your union if you wish to participate, further information visits APRECON Webblog: <http://psi12aprecon.wordpress.com/>

# ZENSUIDO: Public Services Workers Meeting Challenge of Disasters in Japan

By Mr Kazuhiro Oka, Deputy General Secretary, All Japan Water Supply Workers Union (Zensuido)



Climate change may increase the frequency and magnitude of some forms of natural disasters. PSI insists that public service workers must be consulted and involved in planning, decision making and delivery at all levels of disaster scenarios. Public service workers are the skilled first responders in times of crisis. Emergency services, healthcare, water and energy workers risk their health and lives on the frontlines in the service of their communities. On March 11, 2011, the 9.0 magnitude earthquake struck in the Pacific off the coast of Tohoku, causing extensive and serious damage in Tohoku and North Kanto Regions in Japan.

The earthquake also triggered an enormous tsunami, hitting the whole areas that face the Pacific Ocean. Sanriku, coastal areas of Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures were particularly affected not just ports and surrounding facilities but also towns and villages. Other coastal towns in Ibaragi and Chiba prefectures are also affected – roads damaged, a hospital ‘devoured’, liquefaction, etc. On the day of the earthquake, more than 1000 water workers from all over the country left in 204 water tankers to provide water to the people. Water workers from all over Japan came immediately after the disaster to help co-workers, who are themselves victims of earthquake/ tsunami, working day and night to restore water service. Water outage affected 1.4 million households in Eastern Japan. To boost the morale of affiliate members who have been working on restoration of water service for more than one month, Zensuido brought donation to Ishinomaki, Sendai, and Iwaki which was hit by rumours delaying restoration.

- The earthquake and tsunami in Japan demonstrated that even high resource countries that are well prepared suffer damage and rely heavily on the quality of their public service infrastructure to limit the multiple harms that disasters entail. Governments are responsible for protecting people. Investment in strong public safety regulations, well-trained and properly equipped public service workers and quality public services are key to effective disaster readiness, risk reduction, response and recovery.
- When proper building standards are enforced, needless injuries and deaths are avoided in times of disaster. Well-informed urban planning can reduce risks from climate crises. And a well-trained public workforce and strong emergency and health services can quickly and effectively help people during and after a crisis.
- These actions require committed investment in quality public services. Investments in public services save lives. They are investments in jobs that build economies, and investments in services that ensure sustainable communities. PSI urges the United Nations, relevant UN entities, governments and non-governmental organizations to consult and work with trade unions globally to strengthen emergency prevention and response infrastructures at regional and national levels, and to ensure that emergency workers are well-trained and well-equipped to meet any challenge.

