

## ASEAN's Commitment to Decent Work ATUC/ITUC-AP Statement

7th October 2009



29 September 2009 --Bro. Suzuki handed-over ITUC-AP/ ATUC Statement on World Day for Decent Work to ASEAN Deputy Secretary General S. Pushpanathan in charge of ASEAN Economic Community. Colleagues from KSBSI and KSPI participated.

The ASEAN, as the forerunner of the regional economic integration in East Asia, is the core for broader integration, such as ASEAN+3, ASEAN Regional Forum. The ASEAN is also one of the important economic and political blocks within ASEM and is developing ties with OECD.

Currently, ASEAN nations are suffering from global economic slowdown and employment crisis; however, we are confident that the ASEAN region will soon restart its robust growth and will remain as one of the centres for global economic growth because of its population, diligent work ethics, natural resources, rich accumulation of capital for investment and the effect of FTAs (Free Trade Agreements), among others.

The integration of the ASEAN is in progress, as envisioned in the ASEAN Vision 2020, towards "outward-looking, living in peace, stability and prosperity, bonded together in partnership in a just, democratic, and harmonious environment,

dynamic development and ever-closer economic integration and in a community of caring and sharing societies, conscious of its ties of history, aware of its shared cultural heritage and bound by a common regional identity." The ATUC and the ITUC-AP largely share these policy areas with the ASEAN.

The ITUC-Asia Pacific and the ATUC welcome the integration of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint, the ASEAN Political-Security Community Blueprint and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint into the Roadmap for the ASEAN Community (2009-2015), an important comprehensive guiding policy document for a real integration of the ASEAN.

Of special importance of the ASEAN Road Map to trade unions is that promotion of decent work is set as a strategic objective to be included in ASEAN work culture and actions are specified; such as monitoring labour market and human resource indicators, establishing national skill skills frameworks, building an ASEAN network of experts in industrial relations, and implementation of plan of action on National occupational Safety and Health Frameworks for ASEAN. It also highlights important

labour issues to be tackled, such as gender equality, poverty eradication and migrant workers, which have presented a wide platform for joint action with trade unions.

Decent Work is a key factor for the success of the real ASEAN integration because the Decent Work will bring about a balanced economic growth with strong participation of social partners for economic development so that current globalisation can be truly beneficial to all stakeholders including working men and women. In reality, economic development has brought about inequality, driven by flexible labour market policies of governments and International Financial Institutions, within nations and across nations which may eventually lead to national and regional instability.

Decent Work consists of four essential fields of work; Standards, Employment, Social Protection and Social Dialogue. However, the Road Map does not spell out such components of Decent Work as defined by the ILO. In order for the ASEAN to pursue Decent Work in the Road Map as part of its inclusive policy, Social Dialogue should be pursued as part of inclusive approach of the ASEAN. Especially, recognition of trade unions is of essential importance to establish meaningful social dialogue nationally and in the ASEAN process.

We, the ATUC and the ITUC-AP, hereby resubmit the ASEAN Social Charter on the World Day for Decent Work and request the ASEAN to:

1. give a formal status to the ITUC-AP and the ATUC by means of registration/accreditation of the ATUC/AP within the ASEAN;
2. recognise the ATUC/AP as a counterpart of the ASEAN Business Advisory Council;  
and
3. conduct regular interactions with Labour Ministers' Meeting and SLOM (Senior Labour Officials Meeting).

**7th October 2009**  
**The ASEAN Trade Union Council**

**The ITUC-Asia Pacific**