

Action Policies 2012-2013

Slogan

「Let us do all we can for reconstruction and recovery and build “a secure society built around work as its core”」

I. Overview

1. The Current Situation and Challenges

(1) Facing the National Crisis of the Great East Japan Earthquake

The greatest earthquake ever recorded in Japan and the challenges we face

On March 11, 2011, a magnitude-9.0 earthquake, the biggest earthquake ever recorded in Japan, struck the Tohoku and Kanto region. The earthquake and the unexpectedly massive tsunami that followed became an unprecedented disaster, with some 20,000 individuals confirmed dead or missing.

This disaster was named the Great East Japan Earthquake. The affected area was extensive. The earthquake and tsunami, along with the still ongoing nuclear plant accident, constitute an unprecedented multi-faceted disaster.

The damage caused by the tsunami was enormous. In many areas, not only were private homes and companies damaged, the damage extended to social infrastructure and public facilities causing the loss of administrative function. It is expected that considerable time and money will be needed to reconstruct these.

In addition, the damage done to the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant, which has yet to be restored to its normal state, constitutes a serious accident. The radioactive material released contaminated a wide area beyond Fukushima Prefecture, and residents living in the vicinity have been forced to evacuate for months. The number of residents who evacuated within and outside Fukushima exceeded 100,000, including those also affected by the earthquake and tsunami. Making full use of knowhow and wisdom from home and abroad, the national government and Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO) must make an all-out effort to resolve the nuclear plant issue as quickly as possible. In Japan, nuclear power generation, which many believed to be safe, has lost the trust of the public. A thorough review of Japan's energy policy from the bottom up, including the utilization of nuclear energy, is necessary.

Against the backdrop of protracted deflation and expectation of further stagnation of the Japanese economy exacerbated by the yen's unexpected appreciation against the US dollar, the damage by the massive earthquake has dealt a serious blow to Japan's overall economy.

Damage to the supply chain and harmful rumors have worsened an already dire employment environment. Therefore, in addition to developing a safety net, it is imperative that we adopt an "employment policy" linked to the industrial policy, which includes in its purview the development of human resources. Moreover, the accident at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant not only caused a power shortage in the area covered by TEPCO, but also brought up the broader question of whether or not to resume nuclear plant operations across Japan following periodic inspections. There is a growing concern that power shortages may continue across the country for some years. This, along with the sluggish economy and the rising yen, is increasing downward pressure on the Japanese economy.

Meanwhile, the Reconstruction Design Council and its Study Group, established by the government in April in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake, submitted its recommendations for reconstruction planning to the Prime Minister in late June. The reconstruction bill was also passed through the Diet in June. Attention has now turned to whether these initiatives can lead to creative reconstruction that will become a springboard for the recovery of the Japanese economic society.

(2) Structural Problems of the Japanese Economy and Society

Sustainability threatened by a decrease in the working-age population

Japan faces structural problems that pose a threat to sustainability. There are too many issues that cannot be overlooked, including the significant increase in low-wage labor that is insufficient for workers to support themselves, unemployment and poverty among young adults, and the more than 30,000 suicides per year over the last thirteen years. The biggest problem is the rapid aging of the population that has resulted from the decline in birthrate. In Japan, the population has aged far more rapidly than in the other developed countries; and the decrease in working-age population cannot be slowed due to the falling birthrate. Therefore, comprehensive measures to counteract the falling birthrate, including programs to support childbirth and child rear, are urgently needed.

A major change is also occurring in the labor supply structure that has backed the

development of the Japanese economy and society up to this point. Given this trend, it is expected that the working-age population will decrease by more than 8 million over the next decade and the labor force necessary to support senior citizens along with it. Without appropriate action, as the economy shrinks, the ability to maintain the social security system will be threatened.

In order to secure an adequate work force in the face of the decreasing working-age population, it is urgently necessary to strengthen support for the employment of young people, and while paying attention to work-life balance, gender equality and equal treatment, and immediately creating an environment where people over sixty can work if they desire to do so, increase the employment rate among women and the elderly.

Employment and labor policy needs in response to the changing employment structure

As a result of the rapid deregulation in the area of employment and labor that began in the latter half of the 1990s, the number of non-regular workers has increased to over 1.7 million, accounting for more than one third of all employed workers in Japan. Although there is no accurate data on this, about a half of these non-regular workers are believed to be the primary breadwinner in their households. As such, their employment conditions and treatment must be improved immediately.

While companies have succeeded in reducing costs by gradually replacing regular workers with non-regular workers, this has resulted in inadequate accumulation of skills and abilities and is beginning to have a negative effect on these companies' fundamental competitiveness. To alleviate this problem, there is a need to promote the formalization of irregular work and to achieve equal treatment of non-regular workers. At the same time, the "bridging function"¹ must be improved to facilitate movement of labor.

Meanwhile, the fact that the social security system has not adapted to the changing employment structure has led to widening income disparity, as evidenced by the increase in working poor. The current situation has worsened compared to a decade ago. While employment insurance coverage has been expanded and the act for supporting job seekers was enacted, the revision of the Worker Dispatch Law (or Temporary Staffing Services Law) remains under deliberation. There is urgent need to develop capacity-building programs as well further improve the safety net.

¹ The "bridging function" refers to various policies/measure including the Job-Card system and public vocational training that facilitate the movement of labor.

Escape from a deflationary economy and a shift to new growth fields

The Japanese economy has remained stagnant for approximately the past two decades, since the burst of Japan's economic bubble in the early 1990s. Japan has not been able to escape the deflationary economy. The biggest challenge is finding a way to escape the deflationary cycle and returning to a track of sustainable growth. It must be kept in mind that underlying the current deflationary trend is the decline in working-age population.

Some argue that while China, as well as the rest of Asia, has experienced dramatic growth as the "world's factory," Japan alone remains stagnant, not only because of the appreciation of the yen and resource constraints, but because new sectors have not matured. It is necessary to increase Japan's industrial strength by capitalizing on and further developing Japan's high skill level, technological capabilities, and the ability of Japanese workers while creating job opportunities for decent work (humane work that is worth doing) in areas with growth potential or where Japan can exploit its competitive advantages.

The government, workers, and employers need to work together to immediately find a way out of Japan's stagnant economy, through discussion of the direction in which the Japanese economy should head, and including strategies for growth and the maintenance and growth of employment.

What is essential in this process is vitalization of local industries specific to each community, development of dynamic SMEs, expanded export of high-value-added products and services, promotion of investment in Japanese enterprises, transforming agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries into a "sixth industry," and development of growth areas, including medical and nursing care, tourism, environment and energy.

What is needed especially in the next two years, in addition to the reconstruction and recovery of the Tohoku region, is steadfast implementation of a growth strategy that will help boost the Japanese economy as a whole.

(3) Building a Sustainable Society

Failure of neo-liberal policy and the changing tide

The collapse of global financial capitalism, symbolized by the Lehman Brothers shock in the autumn of 2008, demonstrated to people all over the world that the market fundamentalism and neo-liberalism underlying the behavior of businesses and

individual that placed top priority on economic efficiency and profitability brings about social injustices such as widening income disparity and expanding poverty. Although financial capitalism remains a driving force as before, the world, learning from the crisis, continues to strive for a shift to a new paradigm, i.e. a shift to policy that focuses on creating a society based on justice, safety and security where people can deepen their bonds and support each other.

Even at the G20 summit, which gained in stature following the 2008 financial crisis and has become a forum for addressing world issues, “strengthening the social dimension of globalization” was positioned as an important agenda item, starting off earnest discussion. The concept at the core of this argument is the idea of realizing decent work. The decent work agenda advocated by the International Labor Organization calls for a review of current economic and social policies that ignore the dignity and value of labor. The “tide” is clearly shifting towards a new paradigm.

A shift towards a new paradigm is also evident in local communities. One example of this is the “solidarity economy”² movement in Europe. The core concept of the solidarity economy is that the values of solidarity and ethics should be incorporated into economic activity, and that citizens, as well as governments, and business enterprises should participate directly in economic activity to realize “ethical finance,” “fair trade” and “responsible consumption.” Such efforts have produced positive results in some areas, including local job creation and job assistance for the long-term unemployed. In Japan, the cooperative sector, including voluntary labor welfare programs (labor welfare councils, labor banks, workers’ insurance cooperatives, etc.), consumer cooperatives and agricultural cooperatives, is expected to take on this role.

2012 is the International Year of Co-operatives. Now is the time to realize decent work, address global warming, resource and energy problems, the widening gap between countries, peace & conflict, and explore, at home and abroad, a new framework for ensuring the sustainability of the entire Earth.

The need for a paradigm shift remains unchanged in a post-earthquake society

In an effort to address the structural problems faced by Japan, RENGO included a “Paradigm Shift also in Japan Now!” section in its 2010-2011 Action Policies. These problems remain unresolved even following the Great East Japan Earthquake. The need for a paradigm shift has not lessened one bit. Rather, the earthquake has exposed certain problems and highlighted the need to address these quickly. Policies aimed at creating “a secure society built around work as its core” should be implemented as soon as

possible.

The recent massive earthquake forces us to recognize the value of bonds and mutual assistance not only between family members and within local communities, but also in Japan and abroad. The view that “solidarity” and “bonds” helps strengthen economy and society also serves as the basis for the concept of “a secure society built around work as its core.” The calm and orderly efforts of the Japanese people to work together to deal with the devastating disaster have also been praised overseas. As long as these “bonds” are maintained, Japan will not fail to overcome this national crisis.

2 “Solidarity economy” refers to the set of economic activities based on social solidarity that can be carried out by co-operatives, NPOs, social enterprises, fair trade organizations, etc. The solidarity economy monitors government and market transparency and accountability and, at times, may call on the government to implement certain public policies and on companies to act socially responsibly.

(4) RENGO’s Efforts to Halt the Decline of Japanese Society

Full-scale disaster relief efforts

Immediately following the earthquake, RENGO set up a Disaster Relief Task Force within its headquarters to confirm the safety of affected persons, provide relief funds and necessary goods, and send relief volunteers. Moreover, RENGO called on the government, political parties, ministries, and relevant agencies to implement emergency measures to protect victims and release funds in a timely manner; with respect to employment, RENGO called for timely pay out of employment insurance, leave benefits, and employment adjustment subsidies.

The RENGO Headquarters received approximately 700 million yen in donations. Total donations, including funds collected by affiliates and Local RENGOs, reached 30 billion yen. Each week, about 300 volunteers from affiliates and local RENGOs were sent to Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima prefectures, comprising the areas hardest hit by the earthquake. RENGO was the only private organization to continuously dispatch such a large number of volunteers. Their sincere and disciplined activities help RENGO gain recognition and trust from victims, afflicted communities, and the government. These activities are a prime example of “RENGO’s face-to-face movement” and have led to increased awareness and presence of RENGO even in local communities.

Political efforts towards reconstruction and recovery

RENGO laid out its position and views regarding policies directed at reconstruction and recovery in a document titled “2012-2013 Demands and Recommendations on Policies and Systems: Toward Reconstruction and Recovery” and has made efforts to put these into action through consultation with the government, ministries, and relevant agencies and requests to political parties.

Moreover, RENGO, as a member of the Study Group of the Reconstruction Design Council within the Reconstruction Design Council set up by the government, has presented some recommendations in line with our vision of “a secure society built around work as its core.” These recommendations included putting job creation at the heart of reconstruction planning, promoting employment and economic recovery with careful consideration of the characteristics of the disaster region, and pursuing innovative community building, including initiatives to address the declining birthrate and aging society and develop an environment-conscious system. On June 25, the Council submitted its recommendations in a report titled “Towards Reconstruction – Hope beyond the Disaster,” which incorporated some of RENGO’s proposals.

As the areas affected by the disaster are also experiencing rapid aging of its population, there is a need to undertake reconstruction efforts with the goal of creating a prototype for realizing “a secure society built around work as its core.” In order that reconstruction of the disaster-affected areas will lead to the restoration of Japanese society as a whole and further the goal of realizing “a secure society built around work as its core,” RENGO will continue its policy-related activities, paying close attention to the concrete plans forwarded by the government and their steady implementation.

Urgent need to address employment and labor

RENGO’s activities over the past two years have been guided by the Action Policies adopted at the 11th Regular Convention held in October, 2009, which focuses on three objectives: (1) to halt the deterioration of Japanese society, (2) to advance the face-to-face movement rooted in the community and expand social solidarity, and (3) to rebuild collective industrial relations mainly through the expansion of trade union organizations.

Against the backdrop of a Japanese economy caught in a deflationary cycle, the global depression triggered by the Lehman Brothers shock in September of 2008, coupled with the appreciation of the yen and the stock market plunge, served only to exacerbate the employment situation. The Japanese government took emergency

countermeasures: For example, relaxing qualifications for the employment adjustment subsidies, providing a second safety net on a permanent basis, and expanding assistance to the poor and needy. Other countermeasures included a “child allowance,” eliminating tuition for high-school, and expanding employment insurance coverage to strengthen the safety net for non-regular workers.

In October of 2009, the government announced a second series of emergency employment measures and established a trilateral “Employment Strategy Dialogue” and “Regional Employment Strategy Dialogue” to promote discussion between representatives of government, labor, and employers. The three parties reached agreements on employment measures for young people and new graduates, creation of a support system for job seekers, and creation of new job, which were also incorporated into the new growth strategy.

Although the Japanese economy has subsequently showed signs, such as the nominal growth rate being higher than the real growth rate, of possible escape from the deflationary cycle, it is feared that the March 11 earthquake will worsen the employment situation. In May of 2011, two bills intended to support job seekers, one that establishes the second safety net on a permanent basis and a second that revises the Employment Insurance Law to expand eligibility, were passed by unanimously by the Diet.

A bill to revise the Temporary Staffing Services Law was submitted to the ordinary session of the Diet in 2010, but has not yet been passed. Further efforts are necessary to ensure that the appropriate revisions to this law are realized.

Efforts to raise minimum standards for all working people

RENGO has strived to establish a livable minimum wage.

The agreements reached through the trilateral Employment Strategy Dialogue were included in the government’s New Growth Strategy (June 2010), and legal minimum wages in respective regions experienced the sharpest rises since the current minimum wage system was established. However, minimum wages remain lower than ¥1,000, the level proposed by RENGO for every worker.

RENGO conducted a survey of public contracts concluded in and after 2008 and is campaigning, through events such as a symposium based on its survey results, for the enactment of local ordinances for public contracts and a basic law on public contracts.

In order to address the unstable unemployment and unequal treatment of fixed-term workers, such as establishing restrictions on fixed-term contracts and realizing equal

and balanced treatment, RENGO summarized its views on fixed-term contracts and called on the Legislative Council of the Ministry of Justice to put forth legislation to address the unstable employment and unequal treatment of fixed-term worker by establishing restrictions on fixed-term contract and realizing equal and balanced treatment..

Furthermore, to improve the working conditions of non-regular workers and employees of smaller companies, in addition to calling for adoption of fair trade practices and support for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as well as hosting symposia on a variety of related topics, RENGO has held regular discussions with temporary-employment agencies, such as the Japan Staffing Services Association and the Japan Production Skill Labor Association, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the National Federation of Small Business Association.

Local RENGOs, for their part, have provided labor consultation services. The national RENGO has set up a nationwide telephone consultation service as well as websites such as “Ippo-mae Navi,” “Work Rule Checker,” and “My Time Card: Work Tracker” to support unemployed workers and raise awareness of trade unions among unorganized workers.

Efforts in the *Shunki Seikatsu Tōsō* (Spring Labor Offensive) to improve working conditions

The main reason why the Japanese economy has remained stagnant over the past months is because employers, in an attempt to reduce expenses, have cut labor costs, resulting in uneven distribution of wealth and widened income disparities, which, in turn, have contributed to weakened domestic demand. In the Spring Labor Offensive, RENGO has argued emphatically that the recovery of domestic demand requires an increase in the share of wealth distributed to labor and improvement in working conditions. At the same time, in addition to working to improve the treatment of all workers, including non-regular workers, RENGO has attempted to identify and create conditions for building bridges between regular and non-regular workers. To this end, RENGO has established five joint-struggle liaison committees, worked to strengthen core trade unions, established joint-struggle goals, and identified characteristics of workers in each industry. RENGO will continue its efforts to be able to respond to the changing labor market.

Efforts to establish appropriate social security and tax systems

As mid-term goals, RENGO drew up its New Vision for Social Security in the 21st-Century and the Third RENGO Basic Outline of Tax Reform. RENGO participated in the Intensive Review Meeting for Social Security Reform set up by the government and called for the establishment of a sustainable social security system and a system for “supporting all age brackets.”³ RENGO consulted with the government and both ruling and opposition parties on several occasions regarding this issues. In June of 2011, the government committee to study social security reform submitted its plan for social security and tax reform to the Cabinet. Although the plan is commendable for its intention to support all age brackets, it falls short in terms of its provisions for tax reform. In the future, in addition to calling for substantial reform, we need to work diligently to achieve that goal.

Expansion of the organization and cultivation of human resources

Although the goal of organizing more than 520,000 workers (including 140,000 part-time and other non-regular workers) was set out in the Action Plan 21 for Organizing (2010-2011), results have been dismal, with only 30.6% of the goal being achieved during the first three quarters. Numerous problems remain, including the manner in which unions are organized and procedures for joining unions. While the number of workers at companies with 100 or fewer employees is 24.25 million, or nearly 50% of all the employed workers, their unionization rate is only 1.1%. Part-time, temporary and contract workers accounted for 47.4% of RENGO’s new membership, but only 5.6% of the estimated 12.92 million part-time workers are union members. RENGO must make an all-out effort to organize workers in small businesses, along with part-time, temporary and contract workers. (With the exception of the RENGO data, all figures are based on the 2010 Basic Survey on Trade Unions.)

The 3rd study group on organizational and fiscal soundness submitted its report to the Central Committee in June on 2011. Based on recommendations in this report, development of human resources, labor education, and promoting gender equality were added to RENGO’s list of main action areas, which previously included expansion of the organization, recommendations on policy and systems, the peace movement, political activities, and the international labor movement. The report particularly emphasized the need for labor education at all levels, spanning compulsory education (elementary and junior high) through secondary, post-secondary and adult education as well as the need to develop of human resources who play a vital role in the labor movement. Moreover, RENGO needs to put into action the recommendations of the

report, which include the setting of a membership goal of 10 million along with a call to step up efforts to achieve that goal and to strengthen the function of local councils.

Promotion of labor culture

In March of 2011, RENGO, together with the Central Association for Labor Welfare Councils, the National Association of Labour Banks, the National Federation of Workers and Consumers Cooperatives (ZENROSAI) and other related organizations, established the Japan Foundation for Labor Culture, which was recognized as a public interest incorporated foundation in July of 2011. The Foundation serves as a vehicle for carrying out a wide range of labor culture activities, including education, human resources development, international service, cultural events, and work support. In order to contribute substantially to the development of labor culture, RENGO must cooperate with other labor welfare organizations to harness the power of the labor movement.

RENGO, through the Foundation, also needs to cooperate with RENGO-RIALS, the Institute of Labor Education and Culture, the Japan International Labour Foundation, as well as independent labor welfare organizations, including labor welfare councils, labor banks (workers' credit unions) and ZENROSAI, to establish a specialized graduate school to cultivate human resources to promote labor and social movement.

3 Social security supporting all age brackets not only places emphasis on a later stage in life, but supports economic and social independence in all stages in life.

(5) Impacts and Challenges Resulting from the Change of Government

Looking back on two years of the DPJ administration

In September 2009, the Hatoyama administration was brought to power with overwhelming support from the public. It advocated "people's life first," "independence from bureaucrats," "leadership by politicians," and "cuts in wasteful spending." The Government Revitalization Unit undertook "budget screening" to secure financial resources for promoting policies intended to shift the focus from public works projects to people and to implement the ruling party's platform. This initiative made a strong impression on the people and revealed wasteful programs begun under former administrations. But the administration lost support due to the Futenma issue and questions involving the prime minister and party secretary regarding money and politics and was forced to resign en masse before the Upper House Election, leading to the

formation of the Kan administration.

Cabinet approval rebounded quickly with the election of Naoto Kan as Prime Minister. However, his remarks on a consumption tax hike, which had not been discussed within the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) nor included in public commitments, caused confusion and contributed to the party's massive defeat in the Upper House Election. In losing its majority in the Diet, all of the DPJ's major policies have all but stagnated. Subsequent remarks by ministers and the government's response to diplomatic issues have received much criticism, and the DPJ has continued to be defeated in local elections around the nation.

After the March 11 earthquake, the people expected the ruling and opposition parties to cooperate in reconstruction activity. However, the parties have continued to confront each other based on partisan interests and little attention has been paid to the disaster areas. The government has been unable to rally support for countermeasures related to the earthquake into support. Such bickering also revealed severe intraparty conflicts, which finally forced Prime Minister Kan to tender his resignation in exchange for rejecting the no-confidence motion against the Cabinet and avoiding a party split.

Both of these administrations failed to address important internal and external issues due to a lack of leadership and thoughtfulness on the part of the Prime Minister. Policy debate was neglected in the political confusion.

Although RENGO called on the ruling and opposition parties to work together for reconstruction and for unity within the DPJ's unity, the situation did not improve.

The political confusion and leadership vacuum, which have increased distrust of government among Japanese citizens, are cause for serious concern. It is not an exaggeration to say we face a crisis of not only party politics but parliamentary democracy. Both the ruling and opposition parties are responsible for this situation, and they deserve tough criticism.

Under these circumstances, Yoshihiko Noda won the DPJ leadership race and was elected 95th Prime Minister in late August of 2011. The new administration must give top priority to eliminating the citizens' distrust of politics. The Noda administration must strive to recoup party unity and regain the people's trust in politics by returning to the the principle of "the people's life first." Ruling and opposition parties must cooperate to overcome the national crisis facing Japan.

Impact and challenges resulting from the change of government

Meanwhile, RENGO has created frameworks for frank exchange of view at all

levels, ranging from ministry- or agency-specific consultations, to regular consultations, to talks at the highest levels. RENGO also offers its affiliates with a pipeline for submitting requests to the government and top ministry deputies. RENGO has strengthened its partnership with the DPJ through regular consultations with party officials. In addition to day-to-day exchange of information, these consultations are an opportunity to further strengthen this partnership through discussion on individual bills and government commitments and, as such, represent significant enhancement of RENGO ability to have its policy demands realized.

RENGO shifted its action plan for policy and systems from a “demand-based” approach to a “consultation-based” approach involving the participation of government and ministries from early stages of the decision-making process with a view to increasing the potential for realizing RENGO’s policies. This has necessitated changes in RENGO’s policy development process such that is more detail-oriented and expeditious.

Some of the policies and programs called for by RENGO have been adopted: supplemental social security income for single-parent households was reinstated; a child allowance system was introduced; a system for supporting job seekers was established; the employment strategy dialogue was set up; and minimum wages were raised. In addition, a draft plan for a “program to combine taxpayer and social security numbers,” which RENGO has advocated since its foundation, is to be submitted to the next session of the Diet.

Although civil service reform has not been achieved under former administrations, some progress has been made. Bills related to reform of the national public employee system that establish a system for autonomous labor-management relations were endorsed by the Cabinet in June of 2011. The government also announced its intention to give firefighters the right to organize. Although these bills have not yet been passed, their forward progress is one result of the change in government.

While it is true that some of the policies proposed by RENGO have been implemented or have be moved forward and although a satisfactory mechanism for policy consultation has been established, it cannot necessarily be said that sufficient reform has been achieved in terms of policy realization, government management, and party management. Despite RENGO’ concerted efforts, the bill to revise the Temporary Staffing Services Law has yet to be passed. Likewise, securing funding for employment insurance from tax revenues has not yet been realized, despite repeated consultations and requests. The “new pension program” is not something that RENGO can accept

given the age at which payments are scheduled to begin. And, no progress has been made on reform of the medical-care system for the elderly. The obvious lack of attention to employment and labor issues, as evidenced by the elimination of five programs under the special account for labor insurance resulting from “budget screening and despite the current severe employment situation, cannot be overlooked.

The DPJ administration, whose platform includes breaking away from bureaucratic domination and embracing leadership by politicians, tried to abolish the meeting of permanent vice ministers and set up a meeting of the top three deputies, but failed because of a lack of coordination among ministries and agencies, top deputies’ inconsistent remarks, a lack of communication with bureaucrats, confusion caused by the loss of central party control, and so on. This, combined with the twisted Diet and intraparty conflicts, constituted serious obstacles to management of the administration itself and dramatically reduced the potential to realize policies hoped for by RENGO.

What RENGO expects from the political system

Given Japan’s sluggish economy, deflation, rapid aging due to the falling birthrate, and reconstruction and recovery from the earthquake, there has been no other time in which the role of government has been so critical. In order to realize a government that places importance on employment and lives of workers and citizens, RENGO has long pursued a two-party system in which leadership changes are possible and actually contributed to the recent change of government. What we hope for is a realization of visions and policies proposed by RENGO. To this end, we must now also reexamine the nature of RENGO’s participation in politics and the political process.

(6) Efforts to Realize “a Secure Society Built around Work as Its Core”

At the 59th Central Committee meeting held on December 2, 2010, RENGO confirmed “secure society built around work as its core” as its guiding vision for a participatory society in which primary value is placed on work, in which every member can participate in society through various types and forms of work performed under fair conditions, and in which there is a safety net to support social and economic independence and encourage self-realization.

This vision is also reflected in RENGO’s five guiding principles of solidarity, fairness, discipline, development, and inclusion, which are laid out in the 2012-2013 Demands and Recommendations on Policies and Systems.

The immediate reconstruction and recovery efforts following the earthquake disaster should also be guided by the broader goal of realizing “a secure society built around work as its core.”

First, an effort must be made to present to and discuss this vision with various groups in society, and work towards developing a common concept of a “secure society.”

By actively promoting dialogue between government, workers and employers, by expanding the community of the like-minded individual, and by cooperating with a broad range of social groups and organizations, RENGO must take on a central role in the social movement to realize a “secure society.”

2. Focal Points of Actions

(1) Basic Ideas

(i) First, RENGO, as an organization with a membership of 6.8 million, confirms its commitment to continuing all-out effort toward reconstruction and recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake, a disaster of unprecedented scope caused by the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear plant accidents.

Above all else, “restoration of employment and livelihood” must be the central goal of reconstruction activity. To this end, restoration and recovery of industry in the disaster-affected areas is essential. There is a need to incorporate the concept of “restoration of employment and livelihood” in “reconstruction plans” and “reconstruction programs” put forth by the central and local governments.

Even before the earthquake, Japanese society and the Japanese economy faced numerous challenges requiring immediate attention, including an aging population coupled with a falling birthrate and declining working-age population, an increasing number of non-regular workers, increasing polarization of employment, increasing poverty, and precarious national finances. Through our efforts to restore the disaster-affected areas, and in addition to reexamining Japan’s society, economy, and lifestyle, we will seek to pursue the recovery of Japan as a whole.

(ii) Second, we must reaffirm at all levels of the organization the value of the concept “secure society built around work as its core” proposed by RENGO in December 2010, as well as the role and mission of the labor movement and trade unions. RENGO will actively promote a dialogue with various stakeholders and strive to build a consensus in the community as a whole on what constitutes a “secure

society.” At the same time, RENGO will strengthen its efforts to enact policies and implement systems to achieve this goal and actively campaign for the realization of the “secure society.”

(iii) Third, RENGO will promote social activities with the goal of achieving the solidarity of all working people.

To this end, RENGO will focus its efforts on expanding the organization and establishing collective labor-management relationships which will enable the labor movement and trade unions to assume their roles as part of the social infrastructure.

In this process, by building partnerships with a wide range of like-minded persons and organization, RENGO will strive to become a central pillar of Japan’s social movements.

(2) Focal Points of Actions

Based on awareness of and basic thinking regarding the situations and issues discussed above, RENGO will conduct its campaigns in 2012-2013 focused on the following points, deliberately and with force:

- RENGO will make the utmost effort to support the reconstruction of areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, and, in so doing, strive to realize “a secure society built around work as its core.”
- RENGO will make the utmost effort to support recovery activities, including early resolution of the accident at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant, preventions of additional damage, and proper handling/disposal of radioactive materials.
- RENGO will make the utmost effort to implement the mid-term policy measures laid out in “RENGO’s New Vision for Social Security in the 21st Century” the “Third RENGO Outline of Tax Reform,” and “2012-2013 Demands and Recommendations on Policies and Systems” (including policies related to recovery from the disaster).
- In the context of the impacts and issues arising in two-year period following the change of government, RENGO will continue, through various consultations and partnerships with the government and political parties, to call on political leaders to develop policies and systems from the standpoint of working people.
- RENGO will strive to realize decent work by improving work conditions for all workers regardless of status (regular or non-regular), by promoting the horizontal spread of improved wage levels, by improving the employment safety net, and by establishing work rules.

- In the face of the aging population combined with the falling birthrate and rapid decline in the working-age population, RENGO will campaign for realizing a society in which work-life balance is valued and achievable by accelerating the achievement of gender-equality, equal treatment of all workers, reducing working hours, and changing our work culture and lifestyle.
- RENGO will work towards improving and strengthening the international labor movement, with the goal of realizing a sustainable society through fair globalization and will cooperate with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and Global Union Federations (GUFs) to carry out a wide range of actions to promote international solidarity.
- RENGO will engage in various activities to achieve its membership goal of 10 million, including: developing strategies for organizing workers (including non-regular workers); forming trade unions and integrating them into the social infrastructure and building collective labor-management relations nationwide, promoting the face-to-face labor movement rooted in communities, cooperating with labor welfare organizations, related organizations, NPOs and so on, to carry out a wide range of actions; cultivating human resources to support the labor movement; and providing labor education.

ACTION POLICY 1

RENGO's goal is to create a labor movement with social impact through efforts to strengthen and expand its membership and achieve the goal of 10 million members, and by emphasizing the cultivation of human resources and by promoting solidarity among unions.

Expanding membership to bring together all workers

1. If we consider RENG0's present status, it is apparent that we have not yet managed to embrace all industrial sectors. In addition, we have not managed to welcome the majority of non-regular workers and workers at SMEs as RENG0 members. As the role and responsibility of the labor movement in society grows, we take the view that trade unions and collective labor-management relations are an integral part of the social infrastructure and work towards expanding and strengthening RENG0 with the goal of creating a labor movement that embraces all workers, regardless of location or occupation, in both the workplace and in living space.
2. Affiliates will contribute to the goal of expanding RENG0's membership by working towards organizing nonunionized corporations in the same industry and bringing as-yet unaffiliated unions under RENG0's umbrella. Affiliates will actively support efforts by enterprise-based or industry-based unions to achieve higher rates of unionization for business groups by organizing non-regular employees of subsidiaries or associated companies, directly-employed non-regular workers, and indirectly-employed workers in the same trade.
3. Local RENG0s will work with affiliate unions to organize workers of SMEs and local employees. Specifically, Local RENG0s will promote unionization by establishing frameworks for increasing unionization based on the recommendations of special committees to promote expansion as well as improving the labor consultation system with the help of advisors.
4. In order to achieve the mid- and long-term goal of "RENG0 with 10 million members," RENG0 will set up a project team under the organizing committee tasked with drawing up an "Action Plan to achieve RENG0 with 10 million members," which will include a description of the (a) process, (b) role of the project team, (c) goals, (d) structure for promoting unionization, and (e) focal points for action. The Plan will subsequently be confirmed at the 62nd Central Committee scheduled to be held in June of 2012.
5. To promote expansion of membership, RENG0 will designate an

as-yet-to-be-determined month in the future as a month for intensive organizational expansion nationwide and work with affiliates and Local RENGOS to raise public awareness and conduct a large-scale, nationwide campaign to promote union organizing.

6. RENGO will cooperate with associations for retired persons and labor welfare organizations to draw up a plan for organizing retired individuals and pensioners, which will be implemented with the cooperation of local RENGOS and local councils.

Creating a community-based face-to-face labor movement

7. In order to promote a community-based face-to-face labor movement, affiliates will commit themselves to participating in local campaigns. In addition, they will strengthen partnerships with local RENGOS and local councils. Affiliates will determine their full-time staffing needs and office locations based on plans for the reorganization and integration of local councils and submit applications for relocating to new local councils by June of 2012.
8. Local RENGOS will mainly engage in five activities: (a) expand membership, (b) support small and local unions, (c) work towards realizing policies and systems, (d) participate in local community events, and (e) participate in the political process.
9. Local councils will partner with labor welfare organizations and NPOs to steadily fulfill the 12 functions, within the context of local priorities, recommended by the 3rd study group for organization and financial soundness.
10. In order to support the livelihood of workers and citizens who work and live in a given community at the local level, RENGO will work with labor welfare organizations and NPOs to strengthen the activities of the Life Support Center, which is a pillar of the voluntary labor welfare movement at the local level.
11. In order to promote equality among the affiliates and better coordinate the efforts of RENGO Headquarters and local RENGOS, RENGO will work to rectify disparities between persons registered at RENGO headquarters and at the local level. RENGO will engage in dialogue with each affiliate to achieve the mid-term goal (100% registration by 2017) put forward by the 3rd study group for organization and financial soundness.

Enhancing organizational strength

12. RENGO will designate the three months from May to July as a period for intensive

campaigns to expand membership and educate and increase public awareness regarding unionization.

13. Affiliates will work towards strengthening industrial unions by formulating and realizing appropriate industrial policies and bolstering local organizations. They will also work to promote the cultivation of human resources in the workplace to counteract the decreasing number of young workers, who will be the future leaders, and the declining awareness of the need for trade unions and the labor movement. Moreover, in order to strengthen the labor movement, RENGO will work to improve the environment for restructuring and integrating industrial unions, which includes industry-level labor-management relations and frameworks and structures for expanding membership.
14. The Industrial Liaison Council will strive to enhance its tasks of (1) formulating and realizing industrial policies and (2) encouraging unaffiliated unions to join RENGO and encouraging nonunionized workers to join RENGO-affiliated unions.

Cultivating human resources and enhancing labor education

15. RENGO will continue to nurture organizers, who are essential for expanding membership, through basic and follow-up training sessions. In particular, to ensure better results, RENGO will carry out RENGO Central Training in coordination with training efforts by affiliates and Local RENGOs.
16. Responding to labor consultations and using labor consultations to organize workers are very important both from the standpoint of expanding and strengthening membership which is RENGO's top priority, and for creating a community-based face-to-face labor movement." In order to improve the competency of "RENGO advisers," who engage in labor consultations with unorganized workers at Local RENGOs and local councils, RENGO will enhance training and host a national workshop to facilitate exchange of information and experiences among advisors.
17. Trade unions and the labor movement are essential for building a sustainable society, so continued cultivation and education of trade unionists is crucial. RENGO will focus on two goals: (1) establishing collective labor-management relations as part of the social infrastructure and carrying out labor education in all areas of society, to this end and (2) fostering union leaders, including those engaged in the voluntary labor welfare activity.
18. As a part of its efforts to promote labor education in all areas of society, RENGO will proactively promote labor education at elementary, junior-high and high

schools, as well as continuously cooperating with universities through endowed courses. RENGO will also start to work towards establishing a graduate school for cultivating human resources that will go on to assume leading roles in the labor movement.

Promoting activities of RENGO's junior members

19. In order to raise awareness regarding RENGO actions among junior members (both female and male) and thereby strengthen the organization, each regional block will take turns hosting a "RENGO Youth Forum." The first forum will be hosted by the Kyushu bloc (Miyazaki Prefecture). RENGO will also reexamine the nature of the existing "RENGO Youth Rally." At the same time, RENGO will hold discussions with affiliates and local RENGOs on the theme of how to best encourage young female and male members to participate in trade union actions.
20. With regard to issues that are of greatest concern to young members, RENGO will strive to incorporate, as much as possible, the opinions of its younger members, primarily through the vehicle of the "Youth Activity Committee" established in the RENGO Headquarters. RENGO will also work to strengthen the youth committees within Local RENGOs and affiliates as opportunities to recruit and cultivate human resources. Furthermore, RENGO will encourage the participation of women in youth actions, to make these the creation of both young women and men.

Promoting peace

21. As steps towards achieving world peace, RENGO will work with relevant organizations to (1) encourage the consolidation and reduction of US military bases in Japan and call for a fundamental review of the Japan-US Status of Forces Agreement, (2) realize the elimination of nuclear weapons and secure governmental compensation for *Hibakusha* (A-bomb survivors), and (3) resolve the issue of the Northern Territories.

RENGO will continue discussion on security affairs, including the nature and status of US military bases in Japan.

22. A document calling for "a world without nuclear weapons" was unanimously adopted at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) held in May of 2010. In order to ensure steady progress on the agreed-upon items leading up to the 2015 conference, RENGO will strengthen its cooperation with Gensuikin and the National Council for

Peace and Against Nuclear Weapons and work with the ITUC and the Mayors for Peace to increase the number of parties to the NPT.

Promoting human rights and solidarity activities

23. RENGO will work with the Unified Central Congress for Buraku Liberation on various actions and study sessions aimed at enactment of the Human Rights Abuse Remedies Act. As for the elimination of employment discrimination, RENGO will work with affiliates and local RENGOs to provide guidance to management through respective enterprise-based unions. Concerning the abduction of Japanese persons by North Korea, RENGO will, in partnership with relevant organizations, call for the expedient liberation of victims and extradition of those responsible, and work to raise public awareness of the issue through study sessions, etc.
24. RENGO will continue the “RENGO Fund-raising Campaign with Love.” RENGO will conduct follow-up field surveys on the activities of NGOs and NPOs, and work towards strengthening its partnership with affiliates and local RENGOs.
25. RENGO will work with like-minded organizations, including labor welfare councils, worker’s credit unions banks and ZENROSAI to energize a social movement to realize RENGO policies and systems, particularly those related to national issues.

ACTION POLICY 2

Advancing the social movement to organize and improve the working conditions of non-regular workers

Further advancing the “let’s start in the workplace” campaign

1. RENGO will further advance its “start in the workplace” campaign by increasing awareness among members that the issues faced by non-regular workers are everyone’s concern and encouraging the organization of non-regular workers in their respective workplaces.
- (1) Meeting with relevant affiliate and Local RENGO representatives, RENGO Headquarters will gather information regarding actual implementation of the initiative in order to share and expand experiences as well as identify good practices. Moreover, RENGO will consider mechanisms for building relationships with unorganized non-regular workers through mutual aid associations and employment support services.
- (2) Affiliates and Local RENGOs will expand their contact with directly or indirectly employed non-regular workers in order gather information about their actual work conditions and, through the use of “Guidelines” and “Case Studies”⁴ encourage their unionization.
- (3) Local RENGOs, primarily through internal non-regular employment divisions and local unions, will promote the unionization of local, non-regular workers by expanding opportunities for contact in the form of labor and livelihood consultations and employment support services.

Improve the working conditions of non-regular workers

2. RENGO will make an effort throughout the year, and particularly during the *Shunki Seikatsu Shunto* (Spring Labor Offensive for a Better Life), to improve the treatment of non-regular workers.
3. Through meetings with relevant affiliate and Local RENGO representatives, RENGO will collect and share information on good practices for improving treatment of non-regular workers.

Raising public awareness of problems associated with non-regular work and promoting the formation of worker networks

4. RENGO will promote social actions and extensive networking aimed at raising public

awareness of the treatment of non-regular workers and to encourage non-regular workers to form or join trade unions.

- (1) The RENGO Headquarters will make efforts to raise public awareness of the problems associated with non-regular employment and will provide information to non-regular and unorganized workers through meetings and symposia, intensive labor consultations, websites and other internet tools.
- (2) Affiliates and enterprise-based unions will proactively join campaigns conducted by RENGO and Local RENGOs and will also work to raise public awareness within the workplace by, for example, expanding communication with non-regular workers in the workplace and in the community and educating the families of union members about the RENGO movement.
- (3) In addition to joining national campaigns of RENGO headquarters, Local RENGOs and councils will work with local affiliates to carry out their own campaigns and, in the process, strengthen their partnerships with relevant NPOs.

4 “Mid-Term Guidelines for Organizing Part-Time Workers and Equal Working Conditions and Treatment”; “Case Examples for Indirectly Employed Workers”

ACTION POLICY 3

Efforts to realize policies and systems aimed at establishing a secure society based on fairness and solidarity

Recovering from the Great East Japan Earthquake and putting the Japanese economy back on the sustainable and stable growth track

1. RENGO will work towards ensuring that a reconstruction plan is drawn up and implemented in an expedient manner and that national and local financial resources for reconstruction are secured to help restore the livelihoods of victims, build safe and secure communities in the disaster-affected areas, reconstruct industry and businesses, and create jobs. RENGO will promote policies based on “solidarity economy,” and work to connect reconstruction efforts in disaster-affected areas to the revitalization of Japan as a whole.
2. RENGO will make an all-out effort to expediently resolve the situation at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Plant, limit the scope of damage, and promote reconstruction, including efforts to decontaminate areas affected by radiation.
3. RENGO will contribute to getting the Japanese economy back on a sustainable and stable growth track by creating new employment and demand by adopting new strategies in strategic growth areas such as the environment, health, and Asia, by revitalizing local economies, realizing decent work, and strengthening the social security system and income redistribution function.
4. RENGO will campaign to stop the “hollowing-out” of industry and to create and maintain domestic jobs by implementing the “program to encourage Japanese domestic investment,” by supporting the small enterprises that serve as the manufacturing base, and by establishing measures to stabilize foreign exchange rates.

Realizing a secure society by enhancing the social safety net

5. RENGO will promote efforts to realize its comprehensive vision for proactive social security policy laid out in the “New Vision of Social Security in the 21st Century” and to support the government’s “comprehensive reform of social security and taxation.”
6. RENGO will promote a system of comprehensive local care that combine healthcare, nursing care and welfare. RENGO will reexamine systems for compensation and staff assignments to ensure that healthcare, nursing care and welfare services can be provided stably.

7. RENGO will help create a three-layered safety net comprising (1) employment and social insurance, (2) support for employment, housing support, health insurance, etc., and (3) livelihood security benefits.
8. RENGO will work to reform the public pension system through unification of pension plans, as well as expanding the eligibility for social insurance to include short-time workers.
9. RENGO will help realize a “new system for children and child-rearing” based on RENGO’s vision of a “Child-Rearing Fund (tentative title),” which is a mechanism for the community as a whole to support all children and child-rearing.
10. RENGO will work for the establishment of national laws, including a comprehensive “law banning discrimination based on disability (tentative title)” and a “law on comprehensive welfare for persons with disabilities (tentative title),” to replace the current Services and Supports for Persons with Disabilities Act, in an effort to move towards the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
11. RENGO will conduct a campaign to “check your medical treatment by reviewing your detailed medical receipt.”

Achieving tax reform based on “fairness, solidarity, and agreement”

12. RENGO will work towards realizing its “3rd Tax Reform Outline,” which includes a charter of taxpayers’ rights, implementation of an identification number to be used for both social security and payment of taxes, strengthening of the tax system’s income redistribution function, and increased transfer of tax revenues from national to regional levels.
13. RENGO will promote tax reforms along with a social security system reform as a part of its “New Vision for Social Security in the 21st Century,” with a view to paving the way for sharing the burden in a secure society.
14. RENGO will continue providing assistance in filing final income tax returns, both in communities and in the workplace.

Comprehensive review and overhaul of the resource and energy policy and realization of a low-carbon society

15. RENGO will reexamine and review its resource and energy policy in view of the accident at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Plant following the Great East Japan Earthquake.
16. RENGO will help ensure the creation of a fair framework in the post-Kyoto Protocol

negotiations in which all major emitters participate.

17. RENGO will work to facilitate social dialogue, and based on the understanding and cooperation of Japanese citizens, and to strengthen and advance measure to reduce carbon emissions, especially in the civilian sector.
18. RENGO will continue to augment its Eco Life 21 campaign and, as part of the campaign, to undertake the Peak Cut Action 21 initiative to encourage energy conservation in response to the necessary reductions in power supply and demand in the summer and winter.

Establishing a “new public” and realizing democratic civil service reforms

19. In order to realize quality public services through a variety of providers, RENGO will incorporate its vision of a “new public” into policies and work towards their implementation.
20. RENGO will work to realize democratic, transparent and fair civil service reforms by establishing basic labor rights for public servants and banning personnel practices such as *amakudari* (golden parachuting – moving to comfortable positions in industry or independent organizations after retirement from the civil service) and the “career-track system.”

Revitalizing local economies, nurturing and supporting SMEs and local industries

21. RENGO will bring together industry, government, academic, financial and labor sectors in an effort to revitalize local economies and create jobs, particularly in the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, and also to secure and cultivate human resources that will carry out such revitalization.
22. RENGO will promote regional development and job creation, by transforming Japan’s first industry (i.e. agriculture) into a “sixth industry.”
23. RENGO will promote policies to nurture and support SMEs and local industries and to ensure that subcontracting arrangements are fair and equitable.

Ensuring safe and trustworthy food and life, improving social infrastructure

24. RENGO will work to improve Japan’s food self-sufficiency by promoting the cultivation of human resources engaged in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, efficient farmland use, and consumption of domestic food products.
25. In order to ensure consumer safety and trust, RENGO will work to strengthen policies to protect consumers including measures to prevent harm to consumers or to support

consumers harmed by products, by improving consumer consultation services, and making full use of consumer education efforts.

26. RENGO will work to ensure consumers safety and trust by thoroughly confirming the safety of foods that might have been affected by radiation and by providing accurate and easy-to-understand information.
27. RENGO regards the right of residence as a basic human right and will work to create a housing safety net⁵.
28. RENGO will work to ensure the safety and trust of all citizens by promoting measures to rebuild Japan's aging infrastructure and lifelines. RENGO will also promote the development of disaster-tolerant and environmentally-friendly communities (or "compact cities") based on its vision of an "eco-friendly, disaster-tolerant cities of the future," each of which contains the full complement of lifeline-related functions.
29. RENGO will promote the improvement of transportation networks through expeditious enactment of the "basic transportation law" and by considering a mid- and long-term highway system as part of a comprehensive transportation policy.
30. RENGO will work to realize enactment of a "basic water law" that specifies the basic principles and policy concerning water.

Reducing disparities and ensuring equal opportunity in education, promoting worker and community-based education

31. RENGO will work to significantly increase public spending on education to reduce the burden on individual households. RENGO will strive to maintain free high-school education and to further increase subsidies for school expenses and improve public scholarship systems for low-income individuals and families.
32. RENGO, as part of its effort to provide lifelong education, will promote "worker education" intended to cultivate a sense of a career and work as well as "citizenship education" designed to help citizens acquire the basic knowledge and attitudes they will need to function as independent members of society.

Establishing fair and equitable market rules, and adjusting legislation concerning corporations

33. RENGO will work to realize the reform of corporate legislation to further the interests of workers and other diverse stakeholders and establish accounting criteria that will be satisfactory and supported by a variety of users.
34. RENGO will strengthen its efforts towards enactment of the basic public contract law

and the expansion of local ordinances on public contracts.

35. RENGO will work to establish international rules for trade, investment and financial trade that are fair and equitable. RENGO will also promote economic partnerships based on such rules.
36. RENGO will promote responsible investment of worker's capital, pension funds being first and foremost among these, in accordance with RENGO's "Guidelines for Responsible Investment of Workers' Capital."
37. RENGO will work to encourage the social responsibility of organizations by disseminating and promoting the acceptance of the ISO 26000 standard in Japan and implementation of the "collaboration strategy toward the safe, secure and sustainable future," formulated at the round-table conference on social responsibility.
38. RENGO will strive to establish a new criminal justice system that reflects the views of the public and is appropriate for the times.

⁵ Housing safety net: The "right of residence" was recognized as a basic human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" and at the UN Conference on Human Settlements in 1996. It is stipulated in Article 25 (the "right to life") of the Japanese Constitution that the social security system will provide housing aid. Japan's housing policy has mainly promoted home ownership, but the rapid degradation of the employment situation since 2008, has led to an increase in the number of "residential poor" who have lost both employment and housing. It is necessary, from the standpoint of the "guarantee of the right of residence," to develop a housing safety net, mechanisms to support residence through benefits in kind (public housing) and cash payouts (social allowances including rent subsidies).

ACTION POLICY 4

Improving and promoting the horizontal spread of working conditions, realizing decent work

Linking job creation with industrial policy

1. In order to improve the safety net and foster new industries in conjunction with job creation, RENGO will campaign to promote employment policies linked to industrial policies and to cultivate dynamic SMEs.
- (1) In order to realize decent work, RENGO will pursue the enactment of an “employment charter” (or a “basic employment law”), which lays out principles of employment and labor to serve as a basis for government policy.
- (2) RENGO, with the cooperation of local unions, will enhance efforts toward job creation linked to industrial policy.
- (3) RENGO will strive to return the duration and level of employment insurance benefits to those in place before the 2003 revision and to return the government share of contributions to 25%.
- (4) To ensure effective operation of the support system for job seekers implemented in October 2011, RENGO will call for restructuring of the system to use funds from the general-account budget, coordination of the system with the employment insurance system, and the easing of benefit requirements.
- (5) To address natural disasters that are beyond the scope of the existing employment insurance framework and employment issues resulting from government-enforced evacuations, RENGO will campaign for the development of a system for maintaining employment, financed through the general-account budget.

Improving wage and working conditions and promoting social horizontality of working conditions

2. RENGO will strive to enhance the ability of joint-struggle liaison committees to correct disparities in distribution and improve working conditions and establish, raise and support a social market price for wages. At the same time, RENGO will set up local joint-struggle liaison committees to determine local pay rates.
3. In order to promote the horizontal spread of working conditions, while further segmenting the characteristics of workers at each joint-struggle liaison committee, RENGO will strive to establish wage level standards by occupation and company size and strengthen indices for evaluating the progress of joint-struggle committees.

At the same time, RENGO will seek to strengthen cooperative efforts by disseminating information on funding sources for maintaining wage curves and data on wages.

4. RENGO will campaign to rectify wage disparities, raise wage levels, and improve working conditions by encouraging joint struggles between SMEs (small- and medium-sized enterprises) and non-regular workers (part-time and fixed-term workers).
 - (1) While also considering the need to cultivate and secure human resources necessary for SMEs, RENGO will campaign to improve working conditions by rectifying fundamental wage disparities and preventing curb wage polarization.
 - (2) RENGO will strengthen and expand local efforts in conjunction with joint struggles to improve the working conditions of non-regular workers. The Joint Struggle Congress for Part-time and Fixed-term Workers will serve as the central vehicle for the joint struggle to expand the participation and realize equal work conditions and treatment of irregular workers.
 - (3) RENGO will host a “forum” with a view on rectifying disparities and realizing equal treatment.
5. RENGO will strengthen efforts to raise minimum wages to levels that constitute livable wages.
 - (1) RENGO will strive for higher wages by encouraging companies to conclude in-house minimum wage agreements and raise pay levels.
 - (2) RENGO will strive to significantly increase legal minimum wages to levels that constitute livable wages in their respective locations.
 - (3) With respect to legal special (industrial) wages, RENGO will strive to establish new wage standards and raise existing wages in the tertiary sector, including nursing and other services, and transportation.

Realizing work-life balance

6. RENGO will campaign to reduce annual working hours to be enable achievement of work-life balance.
 - (1) Given the shift in focus to work-life balance and demographic changes in working-age population, RENGO will begin the process of revising its midterm policy to reduce working hours, which will include a review of overtime work and regulations of long working hours (such as “interval regulation”).
 - (2) Based on the midterm policy of reducing working hours, each joint-struggle liaison

- committees will, taking into consideration the specific situation in their respective industries, conduct campaigns to reduce working hours as a pillar of joint struggle
- (3) Based on its official response to the revised Labor Standards Law, RENGO will strive to raise the overtime premium irrespective of enterprise size.

Promoting appropriate business transactions and the campaign for public contracts

7. To improve the working conditions of workers at SMEs, RENGO will call on employers' associations and relevant ministries and agencies to ensure that business transactions are conducted appropriately. At the same time, RENGO will explore how it can enter into a dialogue with and work with SME organizations to address issues related to business transactions.
8. In order to analyze changes in business transactions since the "Survey on Business Relations in SMEs" (conducted in September, 2007), RENGO will conduct a follow up survey in 2012.
9. To guarantee fair labor standards for those working under public contracts, RENGO will strengthen its campaign for the enactment of a basic law and local ordinances concerning public contracts.
10. RENGO will dispatch an overseas research team to examine the future and potential for SMEs and to explore industrial policies to establish a corporate infrastructure that would enable companies to thrive.

Establishing work rules with a view to realizing decent work

11. RENGO will work towards legislation related to fixed-term labor contracts, including effects under private law (civil effects), to address unstable employment and disparities in worker treatment.
12. RENGO will strive to revise the law concerned with employment stabilization for senior citizens, develop related policies, and promote labor-management dialogue so that workers can work until the age of 65, if they desire to do so.
13. RENGO will encourage early revision of the Worker Dispatch Law (or Temporary Staffing Services Law) with a view to protecting workers.
14. RENGO will work to ensure the early application of Article 37 (1) of the revised Labor Standards Law, which took effect in 2010, to SMEs, and legislation of maximum working hours of car drivers.
15. RENGO will consider legislation on working hours, including interval regulation, in

view of work-life balance and human health.

16. RENGO will work towards legislation to protect workers' rights and create collective industrial relations, including laws on continuation of labor contracts, maintenance of working conditions, and consultation with trade unions, from the viewpoint of protecting workers during corporate restructuring, including transfers of businesses to new owners.
17. RENGO will strive for the legislation related to worker representation in order to establish collective labor-management relationships.

Recovering from the earthquake and expeditiously resolving the nuclear plant issues

18. To restore industries and livelihood in areas affected by the disaster areas, RENGO will work towards job creation, proactive hiring, and human resource development linked to industrial policy.
19. In response to the accident at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Plant, RENGO will work towards improving systems for personnel management as well as health and safety management.

Promoting measures for occupational safety and health

20. RENGO will call for revision of the Industrial Safety and Health Act to incorporate measures related to mental health, prevention of passive smoking in the workplace, provision of safety information for machinery, and effective, tighter regulations regarding the management of chemical substances.
21. RENGO will make efforts to prevent overwork, including promoting risk assessment, mental health care, and reduction of long working hours.
22. RENGO will call for a change in the *modus operandi* of the Industrial Health and Safety administration from one of reaction (after-the-fact) to preventive action and pursuit of basic safety.
23. To further reduce the number of industrial accidents, RENGO will strengthen preventive measures, particularly in the tertiary industry where the rate of accidents is rapidly increasing.

Strengthening measures for persons with disabilities and foreign workers

24. RENGO will work to strengthen measures related to the employment of persons with disabilities, and will campaign for the early ratification of the UN Convention

on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and enactment of a law banning employment discrimination on the grounds of disability.

25. RENGO will urge the government to carefully monitor changes related to the revision of the law concerning the Technical Intern Training Program for foreigners and, with regard to the liberalization of the movement of persons resulting from the EPA or the receiving of high-skilled human resources, to not relax requirements for residence and work status without careful consideration.

Cultivating human resources and building organizational capacity

26. In order to maintain and improve Japan's competitiveness, RENGO will call on the government, companies and institutes of higher education to cooperate in building a system for developing individuals with strong technical skills and who can act globally with a view to building a "nation built on skilled human resources." (Aggressive approach.)
27. In order to prevent workers from becoming unemployed and to ensure that unemployed can return quickly and smoothly to the labor market, RENGO will strive to expand public vocational training and capacity building for non-regular workers, job seekers and young people with the Job-Card system serving as an employment safety net. (Defensive approach.)
28. To promote vocational capacity development, RENGO will work to ensure that policies to support career development, including education and training provided by public vocational training facilities and the use of the "career qualification system," will be formulated with the participation of corporations, industry groups, and trade unions, as well as consideration paid to the importance of the inheritance of skills and techniques.

Improving the labor dispute resolution system

29. RENGO will review the roles and functions of systems for settling individual labor disputes and consider how these roles and functions can be coordinated. In addition, RENGO will make efforts to coordinate the role of labor unions in conjunction with labor consultation with systems for settling individual labor disputes.
30. RENGO will consider ways to promote the use of labor committees and examine their use in addressing labor disputes involving public servants.
31. RENGO will call for the improvement of the industrial tribunal system introduced in 2006, including the recognition of the proxy representation of trade union official.

32. RENGO will work with Local RENGOs to expand the latter's function to include education to raise awareness regarding the protection of workers' rights.

Responding to revision of the Civil Code e (the law of obligations)

33. RENGO will request that the Civil Code (the law of obligations) be revised for the first time in 110 years to the protect workers without weakening workers' rights.

ACTION POLICY 5

Promoting equal participation towards realization of a gender-equal society

Promoting equal participation by women and men in all areas

1. In its report, the 3rd Study Group on Organization and Financial Soundness added “Promoting equal participation by women and men” as a new area for action. Accordingly, RENGO will advance efforts to implement the 3rd Action Plan to Promote Equal Participation by Women and Men (November 2006-October 2012).
 - (1) RENGO will work towards the following three integrated goals:
 - Action goal: (i) incorporate the promotion of equal participation by women and men into action policies.
 - Numerical goal: (ii) appoint at least one female executive in every organization.
 - (iii) designate the number of female executives based on the proportion of female union members.
 - (2) RENGO will perform “RENGO gender audits” to assess and encourage progress towards equal participation by women and men in affiliates and Local RENGOs.
 - (3) RENGO will explore specific activities for the period after November of 2012, based on the status of equal participation.
2. RENGO will call on the government to unwaveringly implement the 3rd Basic Plan for Gender Equality (2011-2016) and will engage in active discussions with the Council for Gender Equality in the Cabinet Office.
3. RENGO will campaign for revision of the Civil Code, particularly sections related to family law, as well as expeditious ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. To this end, RENGO Headquarters will hold study sessions, etc. to promote a shared understanding within RENGO.

Rectifying wage gaps between women and men and promoting compliance with the Equal Employment Act in the workplace

4. RENGO will work to rectify gender gaps at all stages of employment, from recruitment to retirement (or dismissal) and to monitor and encourage compliance with the Equal Employment Act. RENGO will attempt to get a handle on indirect discrimination.
5. To rectify wage gaps between women and men, RENGO will employ the wage plot method to analyze the cause(s) of such disparities and wage a campaign during the *Shunki Seikatsu Shunto* (Spring Labor Offensive for a Better Life) to improve wages.

6. RENGO will identify, collect and provide opportunities for information exchange regarding examples of the elimination of the “head-of-household requirement” for allowances related to living, including a family allowance.

Maintaining women’s employment and improve working conditions for part-time workers

7. To enable women to continue working and resolve the M-shaped employment curve, RENGO will work to realize work-life balance by promoting gender equality in the workplace, improving support for balancing work with child-rearing and childcare, and reviewing the manner of work.
8. RENGO will work towards raising awareness and applying the revised Child Care and Family Care Leave Law and the Law on the Promotion of Measures to Support the Fostering of the Next Generation. At the same time, RENGO will strive to expand the application of the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law to all non-regular workers, including fixed-term and part-time workers.
9. In order to comprehensively improve the working conditions of part-time workers, RENGO will work to establish equal treatment of part-time workers by revising the Part-Time Workers Law. RENGO will also hold study sessions and symposia on tax and social security systems that are neutral in terms of work arrangement (i.e. regular, non-regular, etc).

Cultivating female union leaders and more effective information dissemination

10. To empower and encourage initiative-taking of women, RENGO will hold a central rally for women in October to study and discuss gender equality issues.
11. RENGO will hold a local bloc meeting during the *Shunto* (Spring Labor Offensive) to raise awareness of policies related to gender equality issues, including wage gaps between women and men.
12. In order to raise awareness of women’s labor issues and improve negotiating and problem-solving skills, RENGO, in conjunction with the Institute of Labor, Education, and Culture, will offer a “basic training seminar for female union leaders” at two venues in the eastern and western regions and an applied course in Tokyo. RENGO will also conduct follow-up surveys of seminar participants.
13. RENGO will hold a “gender equality seminar,” to provide an opportunity for male leaders to learn about RENGO’s 3rd Action Plan to Promote Equal Participation by Women and Men, gender equality issues, and the importance of gender equal

participation in union activities.

14. RENGO will provide information related to women's labor, progress towards gender equal participation, and activities of the Women's Committee. RENGO will also improve equipment and materials to be used in study sessions.
15. RENGO will designate July as the "month of gender equality," during which a campaign will be waged to increase awareness of gender equality issues within and outside the organization.

Improving and revitalizing RENGO activities, including those of the Committee for Promoting Gender Equality and the Women's Committee

16. To increase awareness of RENGO's 3rd Action Plan to Promote Equal Participation by Women and Men and gender equality issues, RENGO will hold a national meeting of chairpersons of the Committee for Promoting Gender Equality. RENGO will set up a forum for exchange among female executives of Local RENGOs.
17. RENGO will clarify the roles and activity areas of the Committee for Promoting Gender Equality and the women's committee of Local RENGOs and, through the organic partnership between these two committees, promote gender equal participation.
18. RENGO will encourage affiliates and Local RENGOs to monitor the gender-related data, including the number of female union members, which serves as the basis for gender equal activities.

Promoting international solidarity activities and partnerships with women's organizations in Japan

19. RENGO will actively participate in the Women's Committees and other gender-related activities of the ITUC and the ITUC-AP.
20. RENGO will actively participate in campaigns to promote gender equality, including the International Women's Day (March 8), the World Day for Decent Work (October 7), the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25), which are supported by the ITUC.
21. RENGO will discuss "gender equality" issues with Federation of Korean Trade Unions (FKTU) and prepare a report by the summer of 2012, to promote gender equality in Japan and South Korea.
22. RENGO will pay close attention and respond to developments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Commission on the

Status of Women (CSW) and the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations.

23. RENGO will deepen exchanges and partnerships with NGOs, NPOs and women's organizations, including the International Womens' Year Liason Group comprising 38 women's groups in Japan, whose objectives are consistent with those of RENGO.

ACTION POLICY 6

Strengthening political activities to realize policies advocated by RENGO

Basics of political activities

1. RENGO will emphasize cooperation with political parties and politicians and actively work to realize RENGO's vision of a shift to a decentralized society created through the participation of a broad range of community members that prioritizes livelihoods and a political system that values employment and livelihood of workers and community members.
2. To realize "a secure society built around work as its core theme," RENGO will hold closer consultations with the DPJ and other political parties with which RENGO has concluded policy agreements. In particular, RENGO will enhance its ties with the caucus of RENGO-endorsed Diet members to realize RENGO policies. Furthermore, RENGO will consult with parties as appropriate regardless of party status (majority or minority).
3. RENGO will make efforts to ensure that the DPJ-led administration becomes firmly established and continues to develop. RENGO will, however, respond to each policy based on its merit alone. Moreover, RENGO will review its Political Program (revised at the 8th Regular Convention) in view of the successful change of government and subsequent changes in the political situation.

Supporting election campaigns

4. RENGO will endorse candidates who meet its standards, primarily those belonging to the DPJ and other political parties with which RENGO has concluded policy agreements and make an all-out effort to ensure their election. RENGO will present policy priorities for the 23rd Upper House election (to be held in July of 2013) and the 46th Lower House election (the current term will end in September, 2013). Therefore, RENGO will call on the DPJ to harmonize its policies with those of RENGO and to emphasize policies geared towards support working people.
5. Affiliates will proactively endorse and back up their own candidates in various elections. In particular, in proportional-representation districts of the Lower House, RENGO will encourage all affiliates to be involved in the election campaign and urge union members to cast their votes using the candidate name, rather than the party name, to ensure that all of the endorsed candidates win in the top ranks.
6. In constituency districts of the Upper and Lower Houses where a synergistic effect by

the proportional-representation system is expected, RENGO will develop campaigns under the leadership of Local RENGOs. Moreover, RENGO Headquarters or the Political Center of each Local RENGO will host discussion meetings and training workshops so that endorsed candidates can deepen their understanding of RENGO policies.

7. In order to realize RENGO policies at the regional and local levels, RENGO will be involved in local elections, while taking into account the expansion of the DPJ' power base in local communities.

Revitalizing local politics

8. In order to revitalize and reactivate local communities, RENGO will promote fundamental reforms to decentralize government. To this end, Local RENGOs will actively work to foster the ability of local assembly members to make policy and to improve institutions for promoting "legislation by assembly members." As to the dual representation system, from the standpoint of efficient functioning of local administrations, RENGO will examine how authority should be distributed between the local head of government and the assembly.
9. Local RENGOs will strengthen cooperation with RENGO-endorsed Diet members and local assembly members by establishing a Caucus of Diet Members Endorsed by RENGO, or a similar forum, and, thereby, work to realize RENGO policies and to expand RENGOs political influence. In addition, Local RENGOs will seek to broaden their social influence through regular consultations with the heads of local government.

Advancing political reform

10. RENGO will work to revise the Public Offices Election Law and the Political Funds Control Law with a view to realizing an electoral system that is equitable, fair, and the expands voters' rights, establishes a functional system for both Houses, liberalizes election campaigns and encourages participation by citizens in politics and healthy political party activities, and ensures the effective management of political funds.

Strengthening the functions of the political center

11. As a first step to strengthening its political activities, RENGO will hold training and education sessions. RENGO will also enhance political education at all levels from

RENGO Headquarters to the workplace and work to cultivate future leaders who will be responsible for political activities, increase the political awareness of union members, and encourage union members to recognize the importance of and to participate in political activities.

12. RENGO will call on union members to diligently comply with all laws regarding elections, including the Public Offices Election Law and the Political Funds Control Law, in both national and local elections. In addition, RENGO will actively campaign to discourage abstention and encourage voting as the trade union's social responsibility.

ACTION POLICY 7

Strengthening international activities for realizing sustainable societies through fair globalization

Promoting core labor standards and decent work

1. To build a society where anyone can live with hope and a sense of security, RENGO will promote decent work (meaningful and humane work), also advocated by the ILO. To this end, RENGO will cooperate with Global Union Federations (GUFs) to participate in the ITUC's World Day for Decent Work (October 7). RENGO will also work towards implementation of the Global Jobs Pact, which confirms the commitment of government, labor and management to deal with the global employment crisis. RENGO will contribute to the establishment and promotion of decent work in Asia and the Pacific through active participation in the ILO Asia and the Pacific Regional Meeting.
2. RENGO will call on the government to immediately ratify ILO Conventions 105 (abolition of forced labor) and 111 (discrimination in respect of employment and occupation), which Japan has not yet ratified, and strive for the full-fledged application of the six ILO Conventions, which Japan has ratified. In addition, RENGO will strengthen its efforts for the ratification of "Conventions designated by RENGO as high priority." RENGO will continue its efforts to realize civil service reform based on the recommendations of the ILO Committee on the Freedom of Association.
3. RENGO will work with trade unions of respective countries to more strongly urge relevant ministries and agencies to ensure that regional trade agreements, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement and the ASEAN Plus Three (Japan, China and South Korea), and bilateral FTAs/EPAs (free trade agreements/economic partnership agreements) not only comply with core labor standards for workers but also contribute to sustainable economic growth, improve people's lives and employment, protect the environment, and the promote safety and health.
4. As a step towards realizing a paradigm shift in the global economy, RENGO will pursue a new model of global governance to promote fair and sustainable economic development whose central policies include compliance with core labor standards and promotion of decent work. To this end, RENGO will work with Global Unions such as the ITUC and the OECD Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) and bolster activities to present policy recommendations at intergovernmental meetings

including G8 and G20 summits and to related institutions such as the ILO, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). In doing so, RENGO will pay due attention to linking such advocacy to RENGO's own vision for policies and systems.

Encouraging the social responsibility of multinational enterprises

5. RENGO will work to disseminate the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises⁸ (which was revised for the first time in a decade) and the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy.
6. To improve the efficacy and facilitate implementation of the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, RENGO will work to enhance the function of the Japan National Contact Point (NCP) Committee, to lobby the NCP in Japan, and to consult with employers' organizations.
7. RENGO will work with affiliates and GUFs to campaign, by holding symposia, etc., to encourage the conclusion of Global/International Framework Agreements (GFA/IFA) between multinational enterprises and GUFs.
8. RENGO will hold bilateral seminars whose primary purpose will be disseminating the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises with the ultimate goal of building sound labor-management relations in Japan-based multinational enterprises in Asia.

Promoting development cooperation for the eradication of poverty

9. RENGO will work to eradicate poverty in the world. Specifically, RENGO will strive to strengthen and develop a shared understanding of the activities of the Forum for NGO-Trade Unions in International Cooperation towards the resolution of various issues referred to in the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and to create an environment in which each and every union member can readily participate. In addition, RENGO will conduct joint campaigns with NGOs to raise public awareness of progress towards achievement of MDGs, including the Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP). In addition, RENGO will call on the government and financial institutions involved in international development (the World Bank, the ADB, etc.) to improve cooperation in development efforts such as Japan's ODA (official development assistance).

10. RENGO will cooperate in the activities of the Japan International Labour Foundation (JILAF) to promote development cooperation in the area of labor.

Protecting and establishing human rights, trade union rights and democracy

11. RENGO will proactively participate in campaigns organized by the ITUC, the Global Union Federations, and others to protect human rights and trade union rights in every country of the world. Focusing particularly on issues in the Asia-Pacific region, RENGO cooperate with the ITUC-Asia Pacific (ITUC-AP) and each national center with a focus on problems in the Asia-Pacific region. Although there has been no progress with regard to democratization in Burma since the formation of the new government, RENGO will continue to work with Burma Office Japan and other groups supporting democratization in Burma. In addition, while monitoring progress towards democratization, RENGO will participate in the ITUC's Burma Campaign and call for Japanese companies cease economic activities in Burma.

Joint actions with international trade union organizations, regular consultations and exchanges with overseas trade unions

12. RENGO will join campaigns organized by the ITUC and the ITUC-AP to promote decent work, realize peace and nuclear disarmament, protect human rights and trade union rights, establish democracy, address climate change, and eradicate poverty and child labor.
13. With the advance of globalization, there is a growing need for labor organizations around the world to strengthen their cooperation. RENGO will enhance ties with GUF organizations in Japan by holding regular meetings, etc., and further promote information exchange and increase efforts to address common issues.
14. RENGO will hold bilateral discussions with major trade unions in Asia, the US and Europe on timely topics including economic policy, non-regular and precarious employment, climate change, nuclear disarmament and peace and thereby strengthen partnerships for dealing with common issues and exchanging information sharing. In addition, RENGO will also hold discussion and promote exchanges with trade unions in East and Southeast Asia.