



## ITUC – Asia Pacific

### International Trade Union Confederation – Asia Pacific

One Marina Boulevard, 9th Floor NTUC Centre, Singapore 018989  
Tel: (65) 6327 3590 Fax: (65) 6327 3576  
E-mail: gs@ituc-ap.org

**ITUC – Asia Pacific**

*President: Dr. G. Sanjeeva Reddy*

*General Secretary: Noriyuki Suzuki*

5 March 2014

#### **Message to Closing Ceremony of the Burma Office Japan**

On the occasion of the Closing Ceremony of the Burma Office in Japan (BOJ), I express my deepest appreciation to the JTUC-RENGO and its leadership for their continued support to the BOJ since its establishment in 2001. The office, indeed a fortress of Myanmar people in Japan, is now being closed having rendered strong solidarity support to them and made significant contribution toward democratization in Myanmar.

Since the General Election in 1990 and severe repression on democratic movement thereafter, numerous people had to leave their home country into exile. In extremely difficult situation socially and politically, sometimes in the depth of crushing despair, however, maintaining wider network in strong comradeship, our friends, with firm belief in democracy and social justice, never gave up their hopes for the democratization of Myanmar. In fact, our friends, Brother Maung Maung and his team, Dr. Min Nyo, General Secretary, BOJ, have been leading figures of our movement.

We, on behalf of the Federation of Trade Unions Myanmar (FTUM), formerly knew as the Federation of Trade Unions - Burma (FTUB), and the International Trade Union Confederation – Asia Pacific (ITUC-AP), express deep appreciation to the JTUC-RENGO for having hosted the ITUC Burma Conference in Tokyo two times, first in 2001 and second in 2010. The solidarity expressed by the JTUC-RENGO has been always a strong encouragement to the BOJ and the Burmese people forced into exile, combating the then-Military Junta.

Democracy never retreats. Driven by our democratic actions globally, political change was initiated in 2011. This development, albeit fragile but had already crossed a point of no return, was brought about by the international solidarity. The BOJ had been an important instrument in Japan for the change by conducting rigorous campaigns for human and trade union rights, for the political prisoners and against forced labour. In supporting its action, the JTUC-RENGO played a pivotal role in lobbying the government, the Diet and policy makers.



5 March 2014

Message to Closing Ceremony of the Burma Office Japan

Pg: 2

The BOJ is now concluding its historic mission in Japan. However, our strong aspiration for building a democratic Myanmar will continue. Brother Maung Maung, General Secretary of the FTUM and his team have returned to Myanmar after 24 years in exile. They are now working hard to build the FTUM, the free, independent and democratic trade union organisation in Myanmar. With their all efforts, the number of FTUM unions is increasing day by day. Taking this opportunity, I thank the JTUC-RENGO for its continued support to the FTUM and for sending Brother Shigeru Nakajima, former ILO Governing Body Member, to Yangon as Director of the ITUC – Myanmar Office.

In closing the BOJ, I extend, on behalf of the ITUC-AP, heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Min Nyo, for his principal role since 2001 and express our firm commitment to continue our joint action for a democratic Myanmar.

In solidarity,

Noriyuki Suzuki

General Secretary