

New Year Appeal of the Year 2009

The year 2009, the year to change gears toward to a country filled with hope, has begun.

The ideology of free financial market which neo-liberalism had put up and overwhelmed all over the world and the market fundamentalism which had been called the global standard collapsed after running out of control and causing world-wide simultaneous financial crisis, and at last came to an end by the end of 2008. The new year 2009 is the year to break off the illusion of neo-liberalism and change our sense of values so far held. Let us make the year 2009 a year to radically turn our course toward a society in which people can feel warm and the consideration for other people is shown upon the cooperative principle of “solidarity and mutual support”.

Traces of the damage caused by the rampancy of neo-liberalism throughout this period and still seen remaining in our society are extraordinarily big. The social foundation such as social fairness, security and stability is shaking. The crisis of employment and work is deepening its seriousness. We have to look squarely at reality. In particular, the situation of unorganized non-regular workers who are placed outside the umbrella of trade unions as well as of those workers who work in small and medium-sized enterprises is extremely serious. The distortion brought about by neo-liberalism has accelerated the expansion of disparities and poverty, depriving working people of the hope to live and even invited the crisis of life. Now it is the time for the trade union to be asked the significance of its existence. Let us show the strength of trade union movement with visible actions and concrete achievements.

Incidentally, JTUC-RENGO is celebrating its 20th anniversary in the year of the historical turning point. Twenty years have passed since the earnest wish for the unification of trade union movements was achieved with the slogan of “Peace, Happiness and Opening Ways” raising. Looking back at the course which JTUC-RENGO has followed with strenuous efforts successively made by our senior leaders, and sincerely facing its achievements and challenges, it is the responsibility of us who bear JTUC-RENGO at this moment to promote the reform of our movements so that the trade union movements can further display its role and responsibility. By outgrowing toward evolution, let us pass on the evidence of our progress made over the last twenty years, so that trade union movements can play further roles in coming ages and continue to be an existence to be expected by the society and to secure sympathy from it

At the beginning of the New Year 2009, the year of a historical turning point, JTUC-RENGO solemnly pledges to take the lead to change the course of an era through deepening cooperation with political circles, the administration and business organizations and moreover with NPOs and NGOs which are making activities for the betterment of the lives of the working people and families.

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Japanese Trade Union Confederation (JTUC-RENGO)