

Engaging You, Enabling Inclusive Growth

More than 560 trade union representatives from 23 Asia Pacific countries converged in Bangkok, Thailand for the UNI Apro Joint Sector Conferences held during the period 28 August – 1 September 2013.



The Conferences carried the theme of “Engaging You, Enabling Inclusive Growth” reflecting the determination of trade unions to be instrumental in building a better world and in advancing a humane globalization process. Coming together in solidarity, UNI Apro affiliates showcased diverse trade union empowerment initiatives to confront the globalization challenges, cope with changes in the working place and promote decent work for workers in an emerging Asia Pacific.

As in past Conferences, the various statutory meetings were held in conjunction with the sectors conferences. This arrangement is cost effective and facilitates the participation of Committee members, particularly women and youth union officials at the respective sector conferences. The 14th UNI Apro Women’s Committee Meeting and the 9th Youth Committee Meeting were held on 28 August 2013.

In addition, some of the conference participants, especially young women union officials were invited to participate at the UNI Apro Empowerment Course on 26 - 27 August 2013. Union organizers of some of the UNI/UNI Apro organizing campaigns who were gathered at the 2nd UNI Apro Organising Forum held in Bangkok on 27-28 August 2013 were invited to participate at the respective sector conference.

Participants of the six sector conferences

gathered together at the Joint Session held on 30 August where the Conferences were inaugurated, common issues and challenges confronting the six sectors were deliberated.

The Joint Session started with the keynote address by the UNI General Secretary that set the backdrop to guide the Conference deliberations. Philip shared with the Conference his perception about the socio economic political situation in the world, the challenges confronting UNI, the affiliated organizations, and their membership and the strategic and priority response to the challenges. He highlighted the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, explaining in detail the process that led to the Accord and about the Accord.

Philip Jennings also reminded participants that the largest chunk of union membership is in the services sector, and said that UNI has a very strong position in the national and global economic debate, in the social debate and as a labor movement.

The inaugural session was graced by the Thailand Deputy Prime Minister, H E Mr. Phongthep Thepkanjana who noted UNI’s effort to conclude Global Framework agreements with multinationals.

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Inauguration by Thailand Deputy Prime Minister



UNI TLC Thailand President, Sister Nilaimol Montreekanon welcomed participants to Bangkok and expressed delight for UNI Thailand affiliates to be hosting the Conference.

In his Presidential Address, UNI Apro President Tomayasu Kato pointed to the impressive growth of countries in the Asia Pacific region as reported and documented in the press. But he regrets that economic growth in Asia Pacific has not equated to trade union strength.

He impelled UNI Apro affiliates to focus their efforts on organizing and increasing union density in order to strengthen the trade union movement. He commended UNI Apro's work in establishing a strong foundation to socialize the ASEAN economic integration process and highlighted UNI Apro's partnership industrial relations organizing strategy that have supported the growth of trade unions in various countries. He is confident that UNI Apro will

grow in strength and influence to be the voice for workers in the Asia Pacific region.

Extending fraternal greetings and best wishes to the Thailand Deputy Prime Minister and the Conference delegates, the UNI General Secretary Philip Jennings reiterated UNI's commitment to work in partnership with local unions to convince global businesses to respect workers rights. Philip said Asia needs another revolution to develop a pattern of inclusive growth and to put across a dynamic new growth path.

Thailand Deputy Prime Minister, H E Mr. Phongthep Thepkanjana welcomed the delegates to Bangkok. He noted UNI effort to conclude Global Framework Agreements with multinational companies to ensure their respect for the ILO core labour standards and indicated that it should also apply to workers at their subsidiaries. He emphasized on the importance of tripartism and attributed the effective implementation of the ILO Decent Work Program in Thailand to the "constructive cooperation" among the Thai Tripartite Constituents.

Hiroshi Usuki, UNI Apro Deputy President delivered a vote of thanks to the Deputy Prime Minister and guests for honoring the Conference with their presence.

Women's Access to Decent Work

Following the inaugural session, delegates continued deliberations of the Conference theme in two panel discussions.

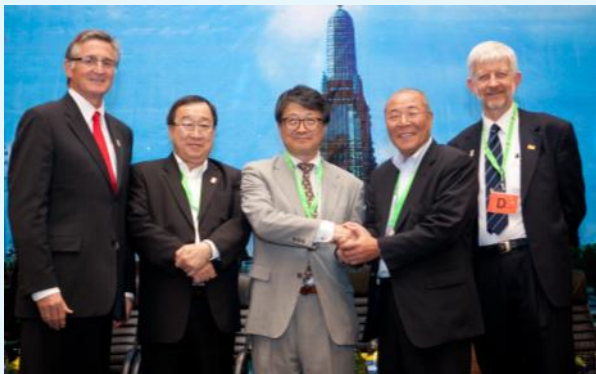
The panel discussion on the theme of "**Women's Access to Decent Work**" discussed and debated best practices to facilitate and ensure women's access to decent work.

Economic, social and employment policies in many countries remain gender blind and contribute to persistent gender inequities that continue to disadvantage women in their pursuit of employment and career.

Therese Bryant, SDA Australia moderated the session composed by Maxine Gay of FIRST Union New Zealand, Mizuho Wada of UA Zensen Japan, Nora Kang of DBSSU Singapore, Michelle Belino, President of UNI Apro Youth and Anjali Bedekar of UNI ILC India.



UNI Apro bids farewell to Kato, welcomes Ohmi as UNI Apro President



The Joint Session was closed by the President Naoto Ohmi who was elected at the 16th UNI Apro Executive Committee held on 30 August 2013 to succeed Tomoyasu Kato who has stepped down as President of UNI Apro on his retirement from his union.

President Ohmi commended President Kato for his hard work on behalf of UNI Apro since he was elected as President at the UNI Apro Conference held in Manila in July 2011.

President Ohmi assured Kato and the delegates that he will try his best to achieve the five goals set by Kato, namely to recruit more unions into UNI Apro, to challenge new fields out of the

existing box, to request more allocation from UNI for UNI Apro to develop UNI Apro's infrastructure, to conclude more Global Framework Agreement with multinationals and to promote women's participation and integration into trade unions and society.

Echoing the sentiments of Kato and Philip, President Ohmi said that Asia is the center of the world economy and will lead the world economy from now on. However, the social structure of Asian Pacific countries is still immature and there is a big gap between economic growth and social system. Its prime example is the weakness of trade union as manifested by the low union density in many countries. Among others, Ohmi emphasized the need to change government and companies to pro-union using new ideas and initiatives such as the Regional Secretary's strategy to socialize the ASEAN economic integration process.

President Ohmi also said that there is a need to strengthen cooperation with other GUF and ITUC at Asia Pacific level and increase trade union's political influence in each country through activities such as lobbying.

Utilizing the experience of his union, UA Zensen, President Ohmi said he will work with affiliates to strengthen the trade union movement.

A Social Contract for an Inclusive Asia Pacific

The interactive session on **"A Social Contract for an Inclusive Asia and Pacific"** provided a platform for stakeholders to discuss and debates on ways and means to promote inclusive and sustainable growth by balancing the business competitiveness challenges and the workers need for security of sustainable income and decent jobs.

Informalization of employment has become a widespread phenomenon and inequality is most vividly reflected in the "informalization" process that has swept Asia's labour market.

Living on the margins, the informals and the non-regular workers are also denied a voice in industry and in society. In some countries, unionism and the enforcement of labour standards are even curtailed by governments and employers, which claim that unions and protective labour laws subvert industry competitiveness under globalization. This has generated widespread resentment within the ranks of the trade union movement, which blames employment casualization as the primary cause for the downward spiral of workers' job security, benefits and entitlements.



From Left: Prof. Rene E Ofreneo University of Philippines, Y Aihara President of UNI LC Japan, Joseph De Bruyn UNI President, John West Executive Director of Asian Century Institute, Shamsuddin Bardan Executive Director of MEF Malaysia, Dr. Pravin Sinha Secretary General of ILERA India, Sarah Deloraya President of PALSCON Philippines, Luke Hee General Secretary of SIEU Singapore, Robert Reid, General Secretary FIRST Union New Zealand, Dr. Melisa Serrano University of Philippines

UNI Apro ICTS Gears Up for Digital World



The 4th UNI Apro ICTS Sector Conference was held from 29 - 30 August 2013 with 117 participants from 26 affiliates across 15 countries. It was also participated by union leaders from Telenor in the Asia Pacific region such as DIGI Malaysia, DTAC Thailand and Grameenphone Bangladesh.



Francisco Hernandez Juarez, UNI ICTS Global President, emphasized the importance of organizing workers as the only way to ensure workers' rights and to improve their living standards and better work conditions.

Tomoyasu Kato, UNI Apro ICTS President, gave an inspirational speech. He highlighted various challenges, particularly the increase of non-regular employment and the emergence of new ICTS services and technology innovation. President Kato rallied participants to be prepared for the challenges by strengthening the trade union movement, and campaign for secure employment for all.

Philip Jennings, UNI General



Secretary, said the breaking through strategy should aim at growing unions, building relationships with employer, freeing workers from distressed environments, enabling equality on the job, giving young people a voice, and influencing regulations.

Christopher Ng, UNI Apro Regional Secretary, stressed the importance of organizing the large potential membership in this region. He said that organizing will empower unions and enable unions to become an integrated part of the enterprise and the industry. "UNI Apro will continue to provide support for ICTS sector to grow in influence and strength."

Kun Wardana Abyoto, UNI Apro ICTS Director, said that the ICTS organizing campaigns have resulted in union presence in Telenor investments in Malaysia (Digi Telecommunications), Thailand (DTAC) and Bangladesh (Grameen Phone). This is facilitated by the UNI Telenor GFA.

Another breakthrough is the Global Framework Agreement with Telkom Indonesia, the biggest telecom operator in the most populated country in South East Asia.

The Conference unanimously agreed on an action plan that



includes organizing targeted at mobile telecom employees, call center workers, IT Workers and Professional and Managers (P&M) in the ICTS Sector.

The conference also agreed to develop creative organizing strategy directed at women, youth and the flexible work force in the ICTS sector such as part-time workers, agency workers and contractual workers.

The organizing campaign will be supplemented by trade union development support for newly established unions such as Digi Telecommunications, DTAC, and Grameenphone.

The other key elements of the action plan include promoting social dialogue.

Bro Minao Noda, President of ICTJ Japan was unanimously elected as the President of UNI Apro ICTS.



Universal Services and Decent Work for all

Priorities of the UNI Apro Post & Logistics

The 4th UNI Apro Post & Logistics Conference held in Bangkok 30 - 31 August 2013 saw a turn up of 31 delegates (2 women), 18 observers (6 women) and 43 guests from 22 trade unions across 16 countries.

Wilart Karnsasom, President of SEWU-THP welcomed the delegates to the conference. UNI Apro Regional Secretary Christopher Ng commended Somchai, APPU Director, for his instrumental role in bridging the relationship between APPU and UNI Apro. He outlined the challenges confronting the Post & Logistics sector and encouraged unions to develop strategic response to confront the challenges and take preemptive measures to manage the changes.

DeMattheo, Head of UNI P&L congratulated UNI Apro P&L on its progress and thanked Usuki Hiroshi, President of UNI Apro Post & Logistics, for his good leadership.

APPU Director Somchai expressed delight in working with UNI Apro Post & Logistics. He attributed the constructive partnership to the common understanding between the two organisation.

This sentiment was echoed by Usuki Hiroshi. He thanked Somchai for his support and express the hope to expand cooperation with APPU. Highlighting the challenges, Usuki emphasized the importance of universal service and urged all unions to organize and campaign for the decent work agenda.

The conference adopted an action plan that focuses on

- organizing and trade union development particularly in countries where there are still no unions for postal and logistic employees
- utilizing GFAs and MOUs to engage global and regional companies to promote the decent work agenda
- utilizing forums and focused studies on FTAs and IPOs to increase political and regulatory influence
- strengthening ties and interest of postal workers in the region through humanitarian activities for rank and file postal workers.

The Conference elected a new UNI Apro Postal and Logistic Sector Committee led by President Toshimichi Omata, the newly elected President of JPGU Japan.



📷 on the Reel







UNI Apro MEI Founding Conference



37 union leaders of 14 media, entertainment and arts unions from 13 countries across the Asia Pacific region met in Bangkok 28-30 August to set up a regional structure within UNI Apro. The UNI Apro MEI Founding Conference was honoured to be graced by the CEO of MCOT Thailand Broadcasting Co., Dr Anak Premwongsaynee, a leading broadcaster in Thailand who spoke about the digitalization process and the new regulatory environment in Thailand.

The Conference is another breakthrough for UNI Apro and UNI MEI following the signing of the MOU between UNI MEI and the Asian Broadcasting Union (ABU) in 2012. The establishment of UNI Apro MEI is the culmination of more than 2 years of concerted effort to bring together trade unions under UNI MEI jurisdiction in the region and to better serve the expanding needs to grow UNI MEI affiliates.

The launch of UNI Apro MEI sector is a big step towards cross-sectoral cooperation with UNI Apro ICTS as regulatory reforms continue to evolve in a digital

economy. It will also allow for strengthening of the cooperation with sister GUFs – IFJ in the region and with FIM and FIA, particularly in India.

Over the course of the two days, delegates vigorously discussed core issues ranging from approaches and strategies to grow union members of various employment status, building the union strength to collectively bargain, pushing the agenda on an international health and safety framework for media workers in television and film and on ensuring the gender mainstreaming in the sector.

UNI Apro MEI and the ABU represented by Ms. Olya Booyar also deliberated on core common interests and explored concrete areas of partnership and cooperation in line with the MOU to develop health, safety and gender policies among Asia's broadcasters.

The conference endorsed the UNI Apro MEI Breaking Through Action Plan to organize in Asia Pacific and the digital economy, build power for collective bargaining, respect dignity, rights and equality at work, and to propagate international health and safety standards in the industry.

The Conference elected the first UNI Apro MEI Sector Committee led by President Christopher Warren, MEAA Australia.



UNI Apro Graphical & Packaging Conference Charts Way Forward

The 4th UNI Apro Graphical and Packaging Sector Conference held from 30 August - 1 September 2013 was attended by 31 participants from 15 affiliates across 8 countries and chaired by Lorraine Cassin, President of UNI Apro Graphical & Packaging Sector.

The conference heard reports and presentations on developments in the graphical and packaging industries from throughout the region including Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, New Zealand, Nepal, Indonesia, Thailand and Australia. It was evident that while newspaper production and publishing continues to decline there is massive investment in the packaging sector in particular by multinational companies.

Conference unanimously agreed an action plan which focused on improving affiliates organising capacity, establish new organising campaigns, build networks, increasing the number of global agreements and ensuring our own structures are effective.

Lorraine Cassin was re-elected as President and Kyoji Takei, Soosai Raja Savarmuthu and Amnuay Lemraksa were elected as Vice Presidents.



Global Agreements Empower Commerce Unions



The 4th UNI Apro Commerce Conference held on 30-31 August 2013 adopted the UNI Apro Commerce Strategic Action Plan what will continue to focus on organising and building global labour relations, Corporate Social Responsibility, and address precarious work.

The conference was chaired by Ian Blandthorn, President of UNI Apro Commerce Sector, and was attended by 79 participants from 16 trade unions across 13 countries.

“We want to grow the commerce sector into an effective and relevant sector for workers in this region as part of UNI Global Union’s Breaking Through Strategy,” said Ian Blandthorn. “To achieve this vision, UNI Apro Commerce has decided to raise the bar in all areas of work and take concrete steps to influence the rules of engagement at the corporate, national and regional levels.”

The OSH Guidelines for the retail industry, a joint effort by UNI Apro and the ASEAN Services Employees’ Trade Unions Council (ASETUC), was launched at the conference. The manual will provide information and guidance for social partners and stakeholders to improve and enhance health and safety standards at the workplace and the retail sector.

In the panel sessions for “Confronting the Organising Challenge” and the “Decent Work Agenda”, panelists and contributors shared their creative strategies and approaches in recruiting and organizing workers into trade unions and in negotiating and promoting decent work at the workplace.

Participants discussed how global agreements can be further utilized in countries with weak labour laws and limited workers or trade union rights. The conference celebrated the success stories of Hero Supermarket Workers’ Union Indonesia, Tesco Lotus Thailand Workers Union and Tesco Homeplus Union in Korea.

Alke Boessiger, HOD UNI Global Commerce provided updates on the Bangladesh Building and Safety Accord that will provide protection to workers in the manufacturing sector.

The conference re-elected Ian Blandthorn as the President of the UNI Apro Commerce Committee.

Step up Financial Inclusion for Job Creation



The Finance Sector Conference held in Bangkok from 29 - 30 August 2013 was attended by over 140 participants representing 29 affiliates from 14 countries in the region.

The conference adopted a new work plan including a new goal to step up “Financial Inclusion” in the Asia & Pacific region and to channel workers savings towards responsible investments to create decent jobs stimulating the real economic growth.

“It is our priority to address the widening income inequality in the finance industry,” said Jayasri Priyalal UNI Apro Director of Finance. Jayasri quoted an IFC survey which revealed that 60% of SMEs do not have credit facilities from formal banking system and 1.5 billion adults in Asia and Pacific do not have bank accounts.

“Trade unions should take the lead in providing financial services to SMEs and marginalized workers. This will create jobs in the whole economy,” said John West ED of Asian Century Institute.

Marcio Monzane Head of UNI Finance shared results from the UNI Finance Global Job Loss Survey and the various initiatives introduced by

UNI Finance to propagate effective financial regulations.

The conference took pride in the affiliation of new members and the overall fee paying increment reported of 11.5% between the period 2009 to 2013.

Yutaka Seki reported a 100% increase in participation at the conference compared to the last UNI Apro Finance Conference. He thanked union officials for their enthusiastic participation and support extended to achieve results in the finance sector.

Pav Akhtar UNI Director for Professionals & Managers introduced the UNI P&M Strategy to the conference and highlighted the need for trade unions to encourage and protect whistle-blowers.

The conference elected a new UNI Apro Finance Sector Committee led now by President Mazakazu Tahara, the newly elected President of FNIU Japan. The new steering group consists of four women titular members representing every region in Asia Pacific. This is a breakthrough for the UNI Apro Finance Sector.





Acknowledgements

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We are thankful to the UNI General Secretary and the Head of the various Sectors, Groups and UNISCORE for their support in preparing and implementing the series of activities, meetings and conferences. We appreciate the contributions of the numerous persons that facilitated the deliberations during the conference and the panel discussions in particular.

We record our gratitude to the Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand H E Mr. Phongthep Thepkanjana for inaugurating the Sectors Conferences

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Send a letter:
Letters must include the writer's full name, address and union and may be edited for purposes of clarity or space.

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