REINVENTING THE FACE OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES

Presentation on Current Developments and New Organizing Initiatives

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Trends and initiatives in the labor movement in the Philippines

Presentation outline

I. The emergence of a new broad labor front
II. Organizing campaign on sportswear brand
III. Concluding remarks
1. The emergence of a new labor front

A. NAGKAISA! (UNITED!): The broadest labor coalition in the past twenty years was initiated by major labor federations as our collective response to the declining numbers of organized labor and the massive casualization of labor.

Reasons for NAGKAISA formation:

- Broader labor solidarity seen as a common good among NAGKAISA! members
- Defense and protection of security of tenure in the face of continued contractualization
- Demonstration of a new and invigorated labor movement capacity for responsible leadership
- Creation of a critical mass for political action and lobbying work

Among the 40 member federations and centers:

- TRADE UNION CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES (Democrito Mendoza)
- SENTRO
- FEDERATION OF FREE WORKERS

NAGKAISA!: POLITICALLY CORRECT, GENDER SENSITIVE, MEMBERSHIP ACROSS THE ENTIRE POLITICAL SPECTRUM
**B. NAGKAISA! : OUR ADVOCACIES**

NAGKAISA! is committed to:

- Provide unified support for key issues involving promotion of the core labor standards, increased wages and uphold consumer interests

- Provide a stable base for advocacy and dialogue between and among trade unions and labor federations and present the public with a symbolic affirmation that Philippine trade unions are solidified into one group.

Our Advocacies (within the next 6 months):

- Passage of Mendoza – Baggao bill to strengthen security of tenure
- Continued struggle to raise wages for workers
- Campaign to lower power costs and fight cartels in electricity industry

Activities:
- Nationwide Labor Day mobilization
- Coordinated wage campaign
- Seminar on the high cost of electricity
- Coordination Meetings
B. What has been done by NAGKAISA!?

- Convergence of all major labor unions and the largest labor federations in the May 1, 2012 Labor Day rally. This was the largest Labor Day rally in 25 years marching all the way to the Palace gates.

- Joint advocacy before the Asian Development Bank on CLS and issues involving workers’ rights in the face of ADB-promoted privatization

- Education against the power cartels in Visayas and Mindanao and the advocacy against the spiralling cost of electricity nationwide

C. The Need to Win Small Victories

Next steps:
- Audience with President Benigno Aquino III
- Audience with Speaker Feliciano Belmonte
- SONA
- Campaign to lower the price of electricity
PROJECTING THE CRITICAL MASS OF A UNIFIED LABOR MOVEMENT TO THE NATION/ LAUNCH OF NAGKAISA!, APRIL 23, 2012
NAGKAISA! : Manila Labor Day, May 1, 2012, SHOW OF FORCE, 25,000 STRONG!
STREET POLITICS AND POLICY LOBBYING: COMBINING HIGH-LEVEL STRATEGY AND GRASSROOTS STREET ADVOCACY
NAGKAISA! : A NEW CRITICAL MASS FOR ADVANCING THE WORKERS’ STRUGGLE
IN UNITY AND IN NUMBERS IS OUR STRENGTH!: THE AQUINO CABINET MEETING US IN THE STREETS OF MANILA
ASSESSMENT OF NAGKAISA! ON PRES. AQUINO’S LEADERSHIP, JULY 20, 2012: NAGKAISA! IS BEYOND AGIT-PROP, NAGKAISA! IS ENGAGED IN RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A POLITICAL LINE AMONG WORKERS

- Working people’s assessment of the state of labor and workers under President Aquino
- In anticipation of President Benigno Aquino III’s third State of the Nation Address (SONA) on Monday, July 23, some 400 trade union leaders of NAGKAISA! attended
- NAGKAISA! gave their critique on President Aquino’s failure to meet the expectations of Philippine society
- Criteria for grading: accomplishment (60%), number of beneficiaries (20%), and openness (of Aquino) to dialogue and listen to inputs (20%).
- Issues: Failure of the Aquino Administration to address precarious work, living wages, lower tariffs of power and socialized housing
The SONA rally was attended by delegates from trade unions in England, Brazil, Bangladesh and Pakistan.
NAGKAISA! AND THE CLAMOR FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE CONTINUES IN THE SONA (STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT AQUINO BEFORE THE PHILIPPINE CONGRESS) RALLY
**NAGKAISA! MOVING FORWARD**

- **COLLECTIVE LEADERSHIP.** The NAGKAISA! would have a rotating leadership with a chairperson to be selected from the drawing of lots every 3 months. The Chair once selected will designate additional members to the Secretariat which will come from his federation.

- **SHARING IN THE FINANCIAL BURDEN.** NAGKAISA! finances its operations and activities entirely from voluntary contributions and secondment of personnel.

- **SECRETARIAT.** There is a Secretariat currently coming from TUCP, FFW, and BMP. Additional staffing through secondment of personnel is greatly encouraged. Right now, the Secretariat are all part-time as they are all full-time trade unionists for their respective organizations.

- **SPECIAL TASK FORCES.** Wages, Power, PALEA
II. Organizing campaign on sportswear brands

- Took off from the GLU research on Mega sports events and union revitalization: case study of adidas group and suppliers in the Philippines
- Followed by an ITGLWF and Play Fair research on sportswear sector in the Philippines
- Then another research on adidas supplier facilities in Mactan Economic Zone which was supported by the ITUC
• Play Fair campaign incorporated the Philippines research report with China and Sri Lanka report published the “Fair Games? Human rights of workers in Olympic 2012 supplier factories”, co-published by the Play Fair 2012 campaign, coordinated by TUC and LBL which seeks to influence the London Games organizers, MNC sportswear brands and licensees to raise the bar in workers’ rights in the run-up to the 2012 London Olympic games
• The Philippine trade union affiliate of the ITGLWF make use of the complaint and dispute resolution of the LOCOG sustainable sourcing code to highlight some of the issues raised at the report: FOA, wages, workplace conditions, verbal and physical harassment and juvenile workers
Dialogue with adidas, LOCOG, sportswear suppliers and trade unions and Multi-stakeholder dialogue in the sportswear industry
What do we want to achieve?

- Improvement of working conditions for the workers in the sportswear sector
- Realization of FOA thru the “right to access” guarantee
- Establishment of a joint and functional monitoring mechanism
Concluding remarks

- Unity among trade unions contribute to achieving union power and strength

- The power of collective action can win victories
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!!!