



**ADDRESS TO ALL JAPAN SEAMEN'S UNION
(JSU) CONGRESS**

NOVEMBER 2010

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**NATIONAL SECRETARY
MARITIME UNION OF AUSTRALIA (MUA)**

**PRESIDENT
INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT WORKERS
FEDERATION (ITF)**

Good morning President Fujisawa-san, and to members of the All Japan Seamen's Union (JSU) Executive, comrades, delegates, and friends, and to the international guests present here.

It is a great honour, as both National Secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia (MUA) and as the President of the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) to be given the opportunity to address the JSU Congress 2010.

On behalf of the MUA, I bring warm greetings from the National leadership of the MUA, its Branches and the membership. There is a deep friendship and connection between the MUA and the JSU and I hope to further strengthen that connection, in the interests of our respective membership, and in the interests of international trade union solidarity, while I am here.

The friendship and connection between our two unions goes back a long way. It is a friendship founded on mutual respect and trust, and a relationship consolidated by solidarity initiatives and organising campaigns that both our unions have participated in over a long time.

It is a relationship that has matured as Australia and Japan have forged closer trading, foreign policy and security ties over the past decades. It is a relationship that has proven to be durable and I am committed to ensure the relationship continues to build as we engage in even more joint trade union initiatives, be they organising union members, defending and improving our members' rights or lobbying our Governments on the big policy issues of the day.

One area that I want to mention that is a demonstration of how an active organising campaign can further consolidate friendship and solidarity is the Flag of Convenience (FOC) campaign.

The MUA and the JSU together have had enormous success in advancing the FOC campaign, past what some may call a reactive inspection regime. For example, by identifying and targeting Leonhard & Blumberg ships trading in our region we have forged a new way of prosecuting our campaign in our region and around the world.

Our respective ITF FOC inspectorates carefully mapped the trading patterns of this German owned FOC operator and made precise and considered actions against his uncovered ships and focussed heavily on a single ship – the *NYK Prestige*.

At the time CEO Frank Leonhard had bragged to the German Shipowners Association of which he was the chairman that he would never bend to sign ITF agreements for any of his vessels.

Through the L&B campaign Japan and Australia coordinated the ITF's first targeted attack on non compliant FOC ships and after more than 2 years were successful in having the entire Leonhard & Blumberg's fleet signed onto ITF agreements.

The bonds formed between your proud union and the MUA have grown even stronger through the FOC campaign and shipowners know that the direct trade between Japan and Australia demonstrates the strongest network of international solidarity.

We also have established strong connections and friendships through the structures and campaigns of the ITF. The ITF has provided many examples where we have worked together:

- In the Seafarers Section and the Fair Practices Committee;
- In the work of the International Bargaining Forum; and
- In the FOC campaign that I have mentioned.

I also want to particularly thank Comrade Fujisawa for his personal support and that of the entire JSU in my election to President of the ITF. He is one of the important leaders in the maritime industry internationally and is greatly respected and is leadership has been critical to the success of the IBF negotiations with Japanese shipowners

You all know that my election was based on a genuine desire to ensure the ITF continues to evolve and develop as an organising Global Union Federation (GUF) with its sights firmly focused on campaigns and initiatives that improve the economic and social well being of seafarers and indeed all transport and logistics workers throughout the world.

You all know that I want the ITF as a GUF to reach out to other GUFs and to work with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) in growing and strengthening union power worldwide.

You all know that my desire to continue to play a leadership role in the ITF is to further advance the interests of workers everywhere, to ensure we use modern and effective organising and campaigning that activates and involves our membership, including our younger members and our women members.

I pay tribute to the principled position you took in ensuring that is the path of the ITF, and I look forward to working with you in moving forward on that journey.

The decisions taken at Congress in August, a number of which were proudly sponsored by the JSU, have provided the ITF with a substantial yet activist agenda over the next 4 years. It is now incumbent upon every affiliate to identify how they can play a constructive role in making progress on the Congress decisions.

I know the JSU is up to the challenge and I am confident that with the leadership that Comrade Fujisawa and the JSU bring to the ITF that we will have much to be proud of in 4 years time at the next Congress.

There are many issues where we look to Governments, particularly in major developed nations like Japan, to take up and act on the big maritime policy issues.

Some of these include the coming into force of the ILO Maritime Labour Convention. I hope you are lobbying your Government for early ratification.

Ratification and the coming into force if the ILO MLC will be a significant step in tightening the noose around the neck of FOC ships and the corruption of maritime standards in too many registries.

Other issues such as addressing piracy, the criminalisation of seafarers and protection and extension of domestic maritime cabotage are all matters on which we need strong and active unions to play a role at home and abroad

Once again, I am grateful and honoured to be invited to your Congress. I know that in my role as MUA National Secretary and as President of the ITF that we will be working closely together in the interests of global seafarers and other docker and transport workers. I look forward to furthering that partnership and solidarity, and wish you a successful Congress.