

Philippine Solidarity for Migrants Trade Union in Korea (PS-MTUK)
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December 18, 2007

**To the South Korean Ministry of Justice
Through the South Korean Embassy in Manila**

**Stop the Targeted Crackdown and Deportation Against the Migrants Trade
Union (MTU)!**
Uphold Migrant Workers Right to Organize and Form Trade Unions!
Migrants Rights Are Human Rights!

Today, as the world celebrates the International Migrants Day, we, representatives of various labor unions and migrants rights organizations who came together under the **Philippine Solidarity for Migrants Trade Union in Korea (PS-MTUK)**, affirm our solidarity with our brothers and sisters in the KCTU-affiliated Seoul-Gyeonggi-Incheon Migrants Trade Union (MTU). At the same time, we manifest our protest and indignation to the South Korean government for its blatant violation of the labor and human rights of migrant worker-leaders of the MTU.

We denounce in the strongest terms possible the recent targeted crackdown, arrest, detention and immediate deportation of MTU president Kaji Man, Vice President Raju, both of whom are Nepali nationals, and its General Secretary Masum, a Bangladeshi national. The top leadership of the MTU were arrested on the same day on November 27 and summarily deported on December 13 in total disregard for their human rights and due process under the Korean legal and justice system.

Formed in 2005, the MTU's base includes both documented and undocumented migrant workers in South Korea. Last year, the Korean Ministry of Labor denied MTU's application for official accreditation as a trade union. The Seoul Appellate Court however opined differently and upheld MTU's right to form a trade union for migrant workers regardless of their immigration status. We hailed the decision of the Appellate Court.

The targeted and selective arrest, detention and deportation of the MTU leadership were yet another obvious moves on the part of the Korean government to suppress the MTU from its trade union activities. In 2005, immediately following his election as the first president of the MTU, Bangladeshi migrant worker Anwar Hussain, was also arrested and detained and was released only early this year for health reasons. He voluntarily agreed to return to Bangladesh in July this year only to face continued harassment from his own government on charges of alleged "anti-Korean and anti-government activities".

By maiming the MTU, the South Korean government also hopes to prevent the forging of a strong alliance and solidarity between migrant workers and local Korean

workers affiliated with the 15-million-strong Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), which affiliates the MTU.

The MTU initiatives to organize the migrant workers in trade unions, to promote decent jobs and uphold migrant workers dignity--regardless of one's immigration status--is an inspiration not only to the more than 400,000 migrant workers in Korea, 70,000 of whom are Filipinos, but also to all the millions of toiling migrant workers around the world.

The anti-migrant policies and practices of the South Korean government can only bring shame to its global commitment to peace, democracy and human rights. It can also alienate itself from its own people and own workers who have consistently struggled alongside the migrant workers to ensure that human and labor rights are guaranteed for and enjoyed by all – both South Korean and migrant workers.

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Endorsed by the following organizations:

Akbayan Citizens' Action Party (www.akbayan.org)

Alliance of Progressive Labor (APL) (www.apl.org.ph)

Alliance of Progressive Labor Hong Kong (An alliance of Filipino migrant workers trade unions and associations in Hong Kong)

Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA) (www.pinoy-abroad.net)

Kanlungan Center Foundation (www.kanlungan.ngo.ph)

KASAPI HELLAS (the Union of Filipino Migrant Workers in Greece, with official address at the Athens labor Center, the largest labor center in Greece, has consultative status with the Greek government agencies, particularly the Ministry of Employment)

Partido ng Manggagawa-National Workers' Party
(www.partidongmanggagawa.org.ph)

Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) (www.tucp.org.ph)

Unlad Kabayan Migrant Services Foundation (www.unladkabayan.org)

Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) (www.mfasia.org) [a regional network of more than 290 organizations, grassroots and trade union formations in more than 14 countries in Asia]