

ILO Project Launch on Mobilization and Capacity Building of Teachers' Union and Wider Trade Unions in Combating Child Labour

Child labour remains one of the most significant developmental challenges facing the international community and affecting many countries worldwide. Of all the world's children aged 5 to 17, an estimated one in seven is involved in child labour of some kind. In Indonesia, the 2006 national labour survey found that 2,749,353 children aged 10 to 15 years in 33 provinces are working in various sectors and services.

Some of the most powerful agents in helping to keep children in school and to avoid child labour are teachers and their organizations. Teachers have direct contact with children, allowing them to influence their thinking about the importance of education and their futures. They also interact with parents, communities and religious leaders, education authorities and other stakeholders.

To ensure stronger actions and movements against child labour, the International Labour Organization in collaboration with the Indonesian Teachers' Union (PGRI) launched a new project titled "Mobilization and Capacity Building of Teachers' Trade Union and Wider Trade Unions in Combating Child Labour in Indonesia". Funded by the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (RENGO), the project will run for three years (2008-2011). The President of PGRI, Mr. Sulisty, together with ILO Country Director in Indonesia, Mr. Alan Boulton, officially launched the Project on Wednesday, 4 March 2009. The launch was marked by signing of a placard entailing "Reaching the Future without Child Labour: All Teachers Combating Child Labour in Indonesia." The placard was signed by ILO, represented by Mr. Alan Boulton, ILO's Director and PGRI, represented by Mr. Sulisty, President of PGRI witnessed by representatives from Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, employers' association, and Confederation of Indonesia Trade Unions.

During the launch, Mr. Sulisty, the President of PGRI emphasizes PGRI's concern about the important role of education in combating child labour. "PGRI is now struggling for government to commence 12 years of compulsory education. 12 years of compulsory education will help preventing children from entering the world of work too early." He added that PGRI teachers in 28 provinces had recently started a campaign to end child labor by getting children to attend classes.

"The elimination and prevention of child labour remain one of the fundamental objectives of the ILO. Through this new project, the unions, together with the teachers' union, can play a greater role by forming meaningful allies and building concrete actions to combat child labour and to ensure that children stay in school.", said Alan Boulton in the launch. Finally, with the support and optimism shown by the Trade Unions attending the launch, we hope that this program will bring together the trade unions in the combat against child labour.

Established in 1945, PGRI has direct contact with children that allow them to positively influence the children's education and guide them into their future. In 2003, PGRI together with other 13 Independent Trade Unions (not associated with any political party) established KSPI (the Congress of Indonesia Trade Unions).

RENGO, founded in 1989, is the largest national trade union centre in Japan with 6.8 million members which works from the standpoint of "defending the employment and livelihoods of all working people."



Left to Right: Mr. Djimanto, Secretary General of Indonesian Employers Association, Ms. Ms. Wahyu Indrawati, Head of sub-directorate of Industrial Relations representative of Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, Mr. Alan Boulton, Director of ILO Jakarta, Mr. Sulisty, President of PGRI and Mr. Djufnie Ashary, Vice President of the Confederation of Indonesia Trade Union to which PGRI affiliates, showing to the audiences the signed placard entaling "Reaching the Future without Child Labour: All Teachers Combating Child Labour in Indonesia." The signing of the placard symbolizes that they are supporting the works of combating child labour by PGRI.



Ms. Unifah Rosyidi, PGRI's Vice President for the International Cooperation informs the attendees about the activities to be implemented by PGRI under the project supported by ILO-IPEC and RENGO



Mr. Alan Boulton, Director of ILO Jakarta is delivering his speech