



# KILUSANG MAYO UNO

(May First Movement Labor Center)

**TAGAPAMANDILA NG TUNAY NA UNYONISMO**

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*KMU is a founding member of the International League of Peoples' Struggle*

3 December 2007

Solidarity Message

*Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May First Movement)

To: The Australian unions (through the Australian Council of Trade Unions [ACTU]; Australian Labor Party and President-elect Kevin Rudd

Re: Federal election 2007 victory, 24 November 2007

*Kilusang Mayo Uno* (KMU), the Philippines' independent labor centre promoting genuine, militant and patriotic trade unionism congratulates the unions in Australia and the Australian Labor Party on your recent victory in what you all have made a landmark election for national leadership on November 24 for workers, the people in Australia, and everywhere.

We salute you in gaining the votes and confidence of the people of Australia by successfully propagating a program that represents their needs and aspirations. Certainly, the Australian Labor Party's commitment to work towards a fairer distribution of political and economic power, restoration of full employment, and greater distribution of income, wealth and opportunity among others, effectively connected to the day-to-day interests of the Australian people.

KMU looks forward to the advancement of your campaign for workers' rights and the strengthening of the union movement for Australian workers and their families. We acknowledge you for your efforts to address the struggle against the appalling 457 visa program of the Howard government. We know the importance of staying true to and defending the hard-won rights of workers for decent wages, jobs, benefits and working conditions in the face of increasing attacks on their rights to unionize and collectively bargain. Beyond these struggles, workers fight for their very right to live, with decency and with hope, in respect for human rights.

In the Philippines, a staggering number of unemployed and underemployed constitutes more than 45% of the labor force. Those who are employed earn very little. The minimum daily wage (AUS \$9/day) is not even a half of what, the government itself says, is needed by an ordinary family to live decently. Meanwhile, workers' interests and wellbeing are not considered an immediate concern in Philippine laws and institutions of authority. In fact, workers' rights are among the first to go and to be violated in the race towards higher profits and cheaper labor.

In the face of increasing attacks, workers and unions must continue to educate and encourage more people to stand against neo-liberal globalization and its economic and social consequences which exacerbate the already critical state of employment and poverty in the Philippines and around the world.

KMU therefore commends all of you in your organized efforts to ushering in a new era of defending labour rights and the interests of Australia's working people and families.

This is where we hope to strengthen links with the unions in Australia and the newly-elected parliamentarians, to advance our collective fight for higher wages, decent jobs, and job security across borders.

In solidarity,

(sgd)

Elmer C. Labog  
National Chairperson  
*Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May First Movement)  
Philippines