

Epoch-making Recommendations Made by the Fact-finding Mission of the CEART

* **CEART (Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel)**

As a part of its neo-liberal educational reforms, the Ministry of Education and Science of Japan has promoted a system of personnel management for 'incompetent' teachers and a new teacher appraisal system. In June 2002, ZENKYO submitted CEART allegations against the Japanese government on non-observance of the 1966 Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers.

In the course of the examination of the allegations, CEART Fact-finding mission visited Japan in April 2008 for the first time in the world. The mission had hearings from ZENKYO, Japan Teachers Union and the Ministry of Education and Science and visited Tokyo, Osaka and Takamatsu to examine the allegations. ZENKYO made its utmost efforts to cooperate with the mission as a litigant. The Japan Teachers Union also actively enlisted in the examination in cooperation with the Education International. The work of the mission was published in December 2008 as the Report of the CEART Fact-finding mission and as the Interim report of allegations received from teachers' organizations on non-observance of the Recommendations of 1966 and 1997 concerning teachers. The Joint Committee communicated them to ZENKYO and the Ministry of Education and Science of Japan.

Epoch-making recommendations to review and modify the systems

The Joint Committee recommends the Ministry of Education and Science of Japan and all prefecture boards to make further improvement.

Regarding problems concerning 'incompetent teachers', the Joint Committee requests objective criteria and procedures (paragraph 35) and also recommends to solve problems not by disciplining those teachers but by "ethos of collegiality and professional collaboration" on school-based systems (para.34).



The Joint Committee requested the Government of Japan and all prefecture boards of education to make further improvements in teacher appraisal systems

With regard to teacher appraisal systems, the Joint Committee recommends the Government "to thoroughly evaluate the teacher assessment systems" (para.37) not around quantifiable objectives and criteria. The Joint Committee requests to reorient of the policy based on "in-depth surveys" of teacher attitudes to merit-rating (para.19).

The Joint Committee recommends also "steps to create stronger institutionalized systems of consultation and negotiation according to the relevant issues for the teaching profession (para.41).

Academic freedom of teachers afresh!

The Report of the Joint Committee recommends the authorities to note the 1966 Recommendation's guidelines that attaches importance on "teachers' academic freedom, judgment, initiative and responsibility as highly trained professionals" (para.18).

The Report also points out that nonexistence of social dialogue with teachers' organizations "underpins ...the chances of success in education reforms for greater quality and relevance in Japan" (para.32).

It is considered that these standpoints of the Joint Committee are not only directed to educational policies in Japan but also to whole neo-liberal education reform policies in the world. They sound like a resolution of the ILO and UNESCO towards those policies.

ZENKYO plans to convene an International Symposium on the CEART Report in June 2009, calling upon those teachers' organizations suffering from neo-liberal education reform policies.

Extracts of the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART)

Full text <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/techmeet/ceart08/ceartffr.pdf>

Interim report on allegations received from teachers' organizations on non-observance of the Recommendations of 1966 and 1997 concerning teachers

Recommendations

Teacher assessment, competence and disciplinary measures

33 The Joint Committee recommends that the Government, both at ministry level and prefecture boards, should take steps to address poor perceptions of teacher evaluation systems as they apply to teachers considered to "have insufficient ability" or providing "insufficient instruction". These steps would include ongoing review and modification as needed of the national Guidelines and their use by prefecture boards particularly with regard to their influence on professional standards, responsibilities, initiative and autonomy in the classroom.

34 The Joint Committee recommends that a review and modification in the Japanese context should draw on the country's own reputed ethos of collegiality and professional collaboration. Greater emphasis could be placed on school-based systems and mentorship, with external training deployed to consolidate daily experience, to address more general areas and to provide the opportunity to establish peer networks and support groups, with other teachers thus designated.

35 The Joint Committee further recommends that objective criteria and procedures guaranteeing due process to determine whether teachers may be designated as not having sufficient aptitudes or skills to carry out their teaching responsibilities and require remedial training or re-assignment should be strengthened in line with the findings in this report. This would mean ensuring the individual teacher's right to be heard and represented before any recommendation is made, and guaranteeing the impartiality and sensitivity of the appeals procedure.

36 It also suggested that such processes ensure opportunities for the boards to share experiences and good practices and for teachers and their organizations to

actively contribute through a process of full and effective dialogue with a view to making sustainable improvements, widely accepted by all education stakeholders, including parents and students.

Merit assessment

37 The Joint Committee recommends that the Government, both at ministry level and prefecture boards, should thoroughly evaluate the teacher assessment systems that have emerged as they relate to teacher remuneration and motivation. Such a review should be based on more comprehensive surveys of teacher attitudes, motivation and impact in the classroom, as well as advice from a range of experts on how best to utilize evaluation systems in the interests of quality learning on the foundation of strong teacher professional standards, responsibilities, initiative and autonomy.

38 In this connection, and within a context of consultation and negotiation on such systems, the Joint Committee recommends to the employing authorities a certain number of principles advanced by the teachers' organizations. The recommendations are to:

- make pay increment decisions in ways that avoid wider pay differences among teaching staff which have the potential for creating tensions that work against effective teamwork;
- allow more training and time for assessors to carry out their task so as to reduce subjective or superficial evaluations;
- place greater emphasis on multidimensional assessment criteria;
- ensure that assessments are non-discriminatory in regard to race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, or economic condition as set out in the 1966 Recommendation, as well as considerations of a private nature; and
- seek joint agreement on an appeals (or grievance) procedure in which teachers' organizations are represented and the

procedures are thoroughly known to all teachers. In line with recommendations made concerning teacher competence above, the educational authorities should consider how peer evaluation and whole school evaluations in use in, for example, other OECD countries, which avoid the negative aspects of individual merit assessment schemes, would not better suit the future needs and objectives of Japanese education. The Joint Committee, through its secretariat, would be prepared to assist with identification of such practices, if requested.

39 In line with more detailed provisions below, the Joint Committee recommends that employing authorities immediately take steps to subject the further design and implementation of performance assessment schemes that impact on salary increments and bonuses to a process of good faith consultation and agreement with the all representative teachers' organizations of the authority concerned.

Consultation and negotiation

40 The Joint Committee recommends that the Government, both at ministry level and prefecture boards, should reconsider their approach to consultation and, as appropriate to the issues in question, negotiation with teachers' organizations in line with the provisions of the 1966 Recommendation. Consultations on teacher assessment criteria, the procedures for assessment, guarantees of due process for individual teachers and the operation of merit or performance appraisal systems should be the object of good faith consultations. Similarly, matters affecting teacher remuneration and working conditions derived from merit assessment in particular should be the object of negotiations leading to an agreement.

41 The Joint Committee understands that reforms to achieve these objectives imply a change in the organizational culture to accept that decisions could be made or altered based on the substantive inputs of teachers and their organized representatives. The Joint Committee further recommends steps to create stronger institutionalized systems of consultation and negotiation according to the relevant issues for the teaching profession. To ac-

company these efforts, the Joint Committee recommends that capacity-building measures be adopted along the lines of the Guidelines developed by MEXT for many local employing authorities, and for teachers' organizations, to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of both parties are sufficiently understood and successfully applied towards agreed outcomes. As the mission was informed, there would appear to be several instances of good practices in this respect at different levels, which could be analysed more specifically and used as models for more widespread application.

42 The Joint Committee has previously noted that the 1966 Recommendation does not presume to remove certain issues from managerial authority. At the same time, respect for the numerous provisions of the 1966 Recommendation on consultation with teachers' organizations cannot be achieved in an environment whereby no contentious issues are subject to real consultation or negotiation on the basis of legal constraints considered applicable broadly to all public servants. The Joint Committee therefore recommends that the authorities apply relevant recommendations previously made by ILO supervisory bodies in this connection.

43 The Joint Committee recommends further that the Governing Body of the ILO and the Executive Board of UNESCO:

- (1) take note of its findings and recommendations as indicated above;
- (2) communicate to the Government of Japan, and through it to prefecture boards, the Joint Committee's commendation respectively for the Guidelines issued by MEXT on teacher assessment and on steps taken by prefecture boards to improve procedural guarantees of teacher appraisal

systems;

(3) request the national Government and all prefecture boards to make further improvements in teacher appraisal systems, including merit or performance related criteria and procedures, in line with the relevant paragraphs of the 1966 Recommendation and identified good practices in Japan or elsewhere;

(4) request the national Government and all prefecture boards to review and, as needed, revise relevant legislation and practices so as to more fully apply the provisions of the 1966 Recommendation in matters of consultation and negotiation with all representative teachers' organiza-

tions, national and local;

(5) request the boards of education to ensure that the procedures for appeal of decisions by teachers whose performance is deemed to be insufficient are compatible with the principles of the 1966 Recommendation; and

(6) request the Government of Japan and all representative teachers' organizations to keep the Joint Committee apprised of progress and difficulties on the above, as well as to consider further technical and policy advice of the Joint Committee and its joint secretariat on these matters that might be considered helpful to the resolution of any difficulties.

Chronological table concerning the allegations

Year	Proceedings
October 1966	Adoption of the Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers by the Special Intergovernmental Conference on the Status of Teachers
June 2002	ZENKYO submission of its allegations to the CEART
December 2003	The first recommendations The CEART recommendations were adopted by the ILO governing body and communicated to ZENKYO and Japanese government.
January 2006	The second recommendations The CEART Interim Report was adopted by the ILO and communicated to ZENKYO and Japanese government.
May 2007	The third recommendations The CEART recommendations were adopted by the ILO and communicated to ZENKYO and Japanese government.
April 2008	Visit of the CEART Fact-finding mission to Japan.
December 2008	The fourth recommendations The CEART Interim Report was adopted by the ILO governing body and communicated to ZENKYO, Japanese government and through the latter to prefecture boards.

Present states of neo-liberal education reforms in Japan

Now in Japan, neo-liberal education reforms begin to go bankrupt. Parental choice that used to be one of eye-catchers of neo-liberal education reforms is under review in Koto Ward, Tokyo and was abolished in Maebashi City, Gunma prefecture. With regards to standardized achievements tests, governors of Akita, Osaka and Tottori gave pressures on education boards to publish tests results of all municipalities and boards concerned severely criticized the move.

The government and the Education Ministry are going to introduce teacher certificate renewal system from 2009 school year. The system is an unexceptional system in the world that oblige yearly about 100,000 teachers to take part in course for certificate renewal, to have test after the course, to make his/her certificate lose effect in case of failure in the test and to quit from teaching profession. The system has been severely criticized by teachers. ZENKYO called upon its members to

join in a signature collecting campaign to demand the freeze of the execution. Up to now, more than 124,000 signatures have been collected.

It has become more and more evident that neo-liberal education reforms have been inconsistent with the demands of parents, citizens as well as teachers. Aiming at such an education as to develop each child's personality, ZENKYO is firmly determined to continue the struggle against neo-liberal education reforms.

Child Poverty in an Industrialized Country, Japan

"Gap among children", "Descendent gap", "Child poverty", "Japan among countries with high rate of child poverty"

The people remember 2008 as a year when "child poverty" was rediscovered in an industrialized country, Japan.

According to the statistics of governmental monetary facilities, the percentage of education expenses of those households with annual income between 2 million to 4 amounted to 55.6%. There appeared a number of students one

after another who gave up unwillingly to go to higher schools or had to quit schools due to inability to pay the highest school expenses in the world. According to the OECD Report, the poverty rate of single parental families is 59%, twice the average of OECD affiliates 31% and more than half of those families fell in poverty line. According to another OECD Report, Japan is the only one country among OECD affiliates where child poverty rate increases after the intervention of the government.

Those circumstances demonstrate

clearly the consequence of the recent neo-liberal policies that have continuously given damages on education and social welfares as a safety net function in the society.

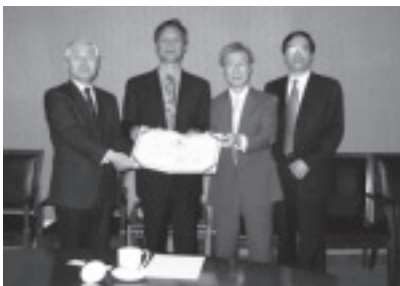
It took place also in 2008 that movements of high school and university students, citizens and teachers demanding the expansion of remission measures for tuition fees and the stoppage of depriving health insurance cards from children under 15 years of age of needy families moved public opinions and politics.

International Activities

Great Sichuan and Wenchuan earthquakes in China and cyclone in Myanmar

- Donation of raised funds to victim children -

On the two disasters that assaulted China and Myanmar in May 2008, ZENKYO called upon its members immediately a campaign to raise funds for victim children. In October, 6 months after the disasters, the funds amounted 7.5 million yen. Out of the funds, 3.5 million yen was sent to China through the National Confederation of Trade Unions (ZENROREN). ZENKYO Secretary General, Hideo Higashimori visited the All China Federation of Trade



Unions to hand over 3 million yen for victim schools and children. ZENKYO President, Tadashi Yoneura visited the office of the UNHCR in Japan and entrusted 1 million yen for the aid of victim children in Myanmar.

Fifth Forum of Public Service Workers



ZENKYO Vice President, Kumiko Honda participated in the Fifth Forum of Public Service Workers held in the United States in October 2008. The representatives of public service workers unions in the United States, Canada, Mexico and Japan participated in the Forum and discussed about common issues

concerning public service workers including struggles against neo-liberal policies for public service workers. After the Forum, Ms. Honda made a survey on the basic trade union rights of public service workers in the United States.

Peace Tour to Cambodia by the Youth Department

ZENKYO Youth Department organizes peace and friendship tour abroad every year in December. In December 2008, 39 members across Japan participated into the tour to Cambodia. The delegation visited some schools in Cambodia and had a friendly talk with teachers and students and also visited Angkor ruins.

