

Dear colleagues,

I would like to extend my season's greetings to all affiliates and colleagues who have played such an active role in the life of UNI Global Union in 2011.

The pace of our work has not dropped since our Nagasaki Congress, with two Regional Conferences – UNI Apro and UNI Europa - and several Sector Global Union Conferences. We have two new Regional Secretaries in office: Oliver in Europe and Adriana in the Americas, where we have been able to make a fresh.

As the year closes, it was impressive to see that the Time magazine person of the year was the 'protester'. Over the year our members have taken to the streets in large numbers in all continents in the pursuit of justice, jobs and democracy. The Time award recognises the courage and sacrifice of a new generation, as it does the ability of civil society to mobilise for democratic change and justice. From the Middle East to the streets of Europe and capitals around the world, the protest movement has made its mark. This has to be translated into tangible change.

The hopes that the protest movement have brought are now fighting strong headwinds, with protracted battles against the military in Egypt and with Occupy Wall Street camps facing forcible closures.

Last week in New York, I spent time with activists from the Occupy Wall Street movement, having just addressed a noisy 10,000-strong SEIU rally on 6th Avenue, Central Manhattan, in a protest for a fair wage deal for janitors in the city. Their contract expires on December 31; it is a contract that has given these invisible workers a decent life.

In all the analysis of growing inequality, the role of collective agreements to give people a fairer share is ignored. The new deal in the USA gave working people a fair deal at work. We are now seeing the results of a four decade campaign by the business elite and their political allies to turn back the new deal achievements. The result is record inequality.

It was also good to meet up with the RWDSU who have campaigned for a living wage in New York; the NY authorities have now agreed a statement to deliver this promise.

At OWS, despite being moved from Zuccotti Park to 60 Wall Street, the enthusiasm to seek change remains undimmed. OWS New York has 100 working groups in place. There is a union group, which attracts many participants as they debate and mobilise for action. UNI's US affiliates have actively supported the OWS movement across the nation. The OWS does not have formal structures; there is no single spokesperson and no written constitution. Social media provides the info network, which is matched by an overwhelming desire for visible action. We should not doubt how this movement has shifted political debate in the USA and worldwide. The 'We are the 99%' resonates widely. I will continue my dialogue with the OWS and we will explore how to globalise action.

In New York, I also took part in the UN Global Compact (UNGC), where I am a board member. The UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon participated and gave his support to the goal to increase the number of companies who have signed up to the 10 principles - from the current 6,000 to 20,000 over the next four years. The weaknesses of the principles are the voluntary nature of the commitment and the integrity measures which aim to encourage adherence, the lack of adequate vetting and shortcomings in enforcement. At each board meeting there is a review of outstanding cases. On this occasion, the board reviewed Deutsche Post DHL, where the UNGC office acted on a

detailed complaint from UNI. The company was invited to and attended talks at the UNGC. UNI and the ITF have begun a new round of discussions with management. This follows a vigorous campaign by UNI Post and Logistics Global Union and the ITF. I also raised the case of T Mobile. Ironically, Deutsche Telekom has joined 49 other multinationals at the UNGC with the aim to be identified as one of the top Global Compact performers. This ambition does not sit with T Mobile's aggressive union busting in the USA. I will pursue this at the UNGC. We have published a detailed investigation by TUAC into the failure of Deutsche Telekom to adequately report on its CSR policies. I will continue to work with the ITUC to improve the UNGC integrity measures with regard to disputes over failure to apply the labour principles. At the UNGC, I also acknowledged their help to pull off the services dialogue forum in Colombia.

As the year of protest closes, our postal workers in Kenya have been on strike for several days, our Australian union has been on the streets for their cleaners and UNI has supported street action, from Atento in Mexico City to Novartis here in Nyon.

In the space of the last 3 weeks, there has been major protest action in Greece, Portugal, Italy, Spain, the UK, Belgium, Chile and Slovakia. Our affiliates are playing prominent roles in the push against austerity and for policies that will bring growth.

2012 promises to be another year of struggle, as the global economy stutters, with the threat of a double dip recession in the EU.

In sending my compliments of the season, I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to all affiliates for their contribution to the work and life of UNI.

We are holding the course for our *Breaking Through* strategy, which is transforming our work in so many ways as we head towards Cape Town in 2014.

My special thanks go also to all those unions who have contributed to the organising fund. We are now putting this important new resource to work to grow unions and to win.

With my best wishes,

Philip J. Jennings
General Secretary
UNI Global Union