

SINGAPORE NATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION LEADS LOCAL CO-OPERATIVES IN FUND-RASING FOR JAPAN

- *Singapore co-operatives, like NTUC Fairprice and Seacare, and their members encouraged to make donations to affected co-ops in Japan through Japan Consumer's Co-operative Union and the International Co-operative Alliance*
- *Singapore National Co-operative Federation contributes seed fund of \$35,000 to kick-start fund raising initiative*

SINGAPORE, 1 APRIL 2011 – The Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF), the apex body for the Singapore co-op movement, started a fund-raising initiative for the Japan disaster that struck on 11th of March, in which it rallied Singapore co-ops to make donations towards fellow co-ops in Japan.

To kick-off this on-going donation drive, the SNCF team pledged a seed fund of \$35,000 to the “Tohoku Area Pacific Ocean Earthquake Victim Relief Fund” and the “Japan Disaster Recovery Fund”, which were set up by the Japanese Consumer's Co-operative Union (JCCU) and the ICA respectively. Part of the seed fund was raised from personal donations by SNCF's 17-member staff in Singapore, and the SNCF executive council.

In her letter of appeal to Singapore's co-ops¹, SNCF Chief Executive Officer, Dolly Goh, wrote “This once-in-three-hundred year catastrophe is projected to have inflicted irreparable damage to farms, fisheries and families across the entire Tohoku region, indiscriminately leaving many fellow Japanese co-operatives in a state of devastation². This is a tragedy that no one single co-operative community can unilaterally brave.”

Dolly adds “The spirit of the co-operative movement knows no boundaries, especially in this time of great difficulty. We wish to call upon you and your members to rally behind our fellow Japanese co-operatives and their members, as one movement, and offer them our single-hearted support.”

To date, SNCF's call for co-operative solidarity has garnered encouraging response from local co-ops. Seacare, a co-op that supports Singapore's seamen and their families, has pledged \$20,000 to the Japan's Seamen Union (JSU), while leading supermarket co-op, NTUC Fairprice, has partnered the Singapore Red Cross to raise funds from the public, at over 250 Fairprice outlets island-wide. NTUC Fairprice has also pledged a seed donation of \$20,000 to the fund-raising drive.

Contributions to the JCCU fund will be donated to Prefectural Governments in Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, and other affected prefectures, while contributions to the ICA fund will be forwarded to respective co-operative organizations in Japan, as specified by donors.

“Co-ops from both Singapore and Japan share a special relationship that has been forged by decades of mutual support and co-operation. From as early as the 1980s, some of Singapore’s most successful co-operatives have been enriched by exchanges of best practices with our Japanese counterparts. And so, we are deeply appreciative of SNCF’s overwhelming support to aid disaster-hit co-ops in Japan. Your commitment to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with victims of this disaster is clear evidence of the strong relationship that we share.” said Kanako Miyazawa, ICA AP Special Advisor and representative of JCCU.

As fund-raising efforts intensify in the coming weeks, SNCF expects to be notified of more contributions from its co-ops and members. In 2004, more than \$1.1 million worth of aid and funds were raised by Singapore co-ops in support of victims of the Asia tidal wave disaster.

Members of the public who are interested to make donations to affected Japanese co-ops are encouraged to contact SNCF at (Tel) 65-66020747 or (email) sncf@sncf.org.sg.

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1. Appendix A: Letter of Appeal to SNCF Affiliates – “Singapore Co-operatives to aid Japan Quake & Tsunami Victims”
2. Appendix B: Photographs of Quake and Tsunami devastation

About Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF)

The Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) is the apex chamber of Singapore’s co-operative movement, and secretariat of the Central Co-operative Fund (CCF). Formed in 1980 with the aim of developing Singapore’s co-operative movement, the apex body represents 75 co-operative enterprises and a base of more than 1 million members (as of December 2010).

SNCF aims to promote and develop co-operatives as sustainable enterprises that address social and economic needs through co-operative principles of self and mutual help, so as to foster a more resilient society. SNCF is an affiliate of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU). It is also a member of the Consumer Association of Singapore (CASE). It enjoys co-operative relationship with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and other international and regional bodies.

For more information on SNCF and the Singapore Co-op movement, visit www.sncf.org.sg

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APPENDIX A: LETTER TO SNCF AFFILIATES

Dear Affiliates,

SINGAPORE CO-OPERATIVES TO AID JAPAN QUAKE & TSUNAMI VICTIMS

We are all deeply saddened by the devastation and destruction caused to Japan, by a series of massive earthquakes and tidal waves, 9 days ago. This is one of the worst ever natural disasters that have happened to a country, which has never shunned from rendering generous aid to others, in their time of need.

This once-in-three-hundred-year catastrophe is projected to have killed more than 10,000 people, and inflicted irreparable damage to farms, fisheries, and families across the entire Tohoku region, especially the Miyagi, Fukushima and Iwate prefectures, indiscriminately leaving many of our fellow Japanese co-operatives in a state of devastation. This is a tragedy that no one single co-operative community can unilaterally brave.

The spirit of the co-operative movement knows no boundaries, especially in this time of great difficulty. As the apex body of co-operatives in Singapore, we wish to call upon you, our affiliates and your members to rally behind our fellow Japanese co-operators and their members, as one movement, and offer them our single-hearted support. Help is urgently needed, and I would like to appeal to you for your generous donation to one, or both, of these fellow co-operatives bodies:

- **Japanese Consumer's Co-operative Union**
JCCU has set up a "Tohoku Area Pacific Ocean Earthquake Victim Relief Fund". Contributions to the fund will be donated to Prefectural Governments in Iwate, Miyagi, Fukushima, and other affected prefectures, through prefectural consumer cooperative unions
- **International Co-operative Alliance**
ICA has set up a "Japan Disaster Recovery Fund". Contributions to the fund will be forwarded to co-operative organizations in Japan, specifying names of the donor organizations

Please keep us informed of any donation made by your co-operative to all donation-receiving agencies, so that we may acknowledge these contributions at an appropriate time. In addition

to your heartfelt contributions to these funds, personal messages of solidarity and comfort to our fellow Japanese co-operatives will also be deeply appreciated.

I wish to thank you in advance for your kind attention, and we look forward to your generous support.

Yours sincerely,

DOLLY GOH

Chief Executive Officer

APPENDIX B: PHOTOGRAPHS OF QUAKE AND TSUNAMI DEVASTATION

Photographs	
 <p data-bbox="180 712 742 763">Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union, Tohoku branch temporary construction office</p>	 <p data-bbox="804 723 1394 752">Damages to the Sendai distribution centre (Miyagi Prefecture)</p>
 <p data-bbox="172 1198 746 1249">A scene of quake devastation near Kamaishi City Hall (Iwate prefecture)</p>	 <p data-bbox="783 1205 1417 1256">Damages to Kamaishi center (Iwate prefecture), where emergency supplies are stored</p>
 <p data-bbox="201 1662 721 1713">Damages to a Fukushima co-op consumer retail outlet (Fukushima prefecture)</p>	 <p data-bbox="802 1693 1398 1722">A scene of quake devastation to Onagawa (Miyagi Prefecture)</p>

(Note: More photographs available upon request)