

# Clean Clothes

A black and white photograph of a piece of fabric with an embroidered doll. The doll has a round face with large eyes, a small nose, and a wide smile. It has a simple body with short arms and legs. The embroidery is done in a dark thread on a light-colored fabric. The doll is positioned in the lower right quadrant of the image. The background is a close-up of the fabric, showing the texture and the stitching of the doll.

**Newsletter no. 24  
October 2007**

- 04 Norwegian CCC Launched**
- 10 Cambodian Activists  
Tour Europe**
- 12 Play Fair 2008 Underway**
- 17 CCC & Partners Sued in India**

# How to Contact the Clean Clothes Campaigns & Projects in Europe

## AUSTRIA

**Clean Clothes Kampagne**  
c/o Südwind Agentur  
Laudongasse 40  
A1080 Wien  
Austria  
T: +43-1-405-55-15  
F: +43-1-405-55-19  
E: cck@oneworld.at  
www.cleanclothes.at

## BELGIUM

**Schone Kleren Campagne**  
c/o Wereldsolidariteit  
Haachtsesteenweg 579  
1031 Brussel  
Belgium  
T: +32-22-46-36-81  
F: +32-22-46-38-85  
E: campagne@schonekleren.be  
www.schonekleren.be

## Vêtements Propres

Place de l'Université, 16  
1348 Louvain-la-Neuve  
Belgium  
T: +32-10-45-75-27  
E: info@vetementspropres.be  
www.vetementspropres.be

## CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE (INCLUDING TURKEY)

Bettina Musiolek  
Protestant Academy Meissen  
Freiheit 16  
01662 Meissen  
Germany  
T: +49-35-21-47-06-16  
E: bemusi@web.de

Regina Barendt  
Münchener Str. 2  
97292 Uettingen  
Germany  
T: +49-93-69-98-10-67  
E: oreginally@yahoo.de

## FRANCE

**L'Éthique sur l'étiquette**  
c/o CFDT  
4, Boulevard de la Villette  
75019 Paris  
France  
T: +33-1-42-03-80-00

F: + 33-1-42-03-81-44  
E: contact@ethique-sur-etiquette.org  
www.ethique-sur-etiquette.org

## GERMANY

**Kampagne für Saubere Kleidung**  
c/o Vereinte Evangelische Mission  
Rudolfstr. 131  
42285 Wuppertal  
Germany  
T: +49-202-89-00-43-16  
F: +49-202-89-00-479  
E: ccc-d@vemission.org  
www.sauberekleidung.de

## ITALY

**Campagna Abiti Puliti**  
c/o Centro Nuovo Modello di Sviluppo  
Via della Barra 32  
56019 Vecchiano (PI)  
Italy  
T: +39-50-82-63-54  
F: +39-50-82-71-65  
E: coord@cnms.it  
www.abitipuliti.org

## THE NETHERLANDS

**Schone Kleren Kampagne**  
Postbus 11584  
1001 GN Amsterdam  
the Netherlands  
T: +31-20-412-27-85  
F: +31-20-412-27-86  
E: info@schonekleren.nl  
www.schonekleren.nl

## NORWAY

**Kampanjen Rene klær**  
Fredensborgveien 24 G  
0177 Oslo  
Norway  
T: +47-22-03-31-78  
F: +47-22-03-31-51  
E: info@reneklaer.no  
W: www.reneklaer.no

## SPAIN

**Campaña Ropa Limpia**  
c/o SETEM Madrid  
c/ Gaztambide, 50  
Madrid 28015  
Spain  
T: +34-91-549-91-28  
F: +34-91-549-95-72

E: info@ropalimpia.org  
www.ropalimpia.org

## SWEDEN

**Kampanjen Rena Kläder**  
c/o LO-TCO Biståndsnämnd  
Upplandsgatan 3  
S-111 23 Stockholm  
Sweden  
T: +46-87-96-28-66  
F: +46-82-49-79-4  
E: info@renaklader.org  
www.renaklader.org

## SWITZERLAND

**Clean Clothes Campaign**  
c/o Erklärung von Bern  
Postfach  
8031 Zürich  
Switzerland  
T: +41-44-2-77-70-00  
F: +41-44-2-77-70-01  
E: campaign@evb.ch  
www.cleanclothes.ch

## Clean Clothes Campaign

c/o Déclaration de Berne  
Case Postale 212  
1000 Lausanne 9  
Switzerland  
T: +41-21-620-03-03  
F: +41-21-620-03-00  
E: info@cleanclothes.ch  
www.cleanclothes.ch

## UNITED KINGDOM

### Labour Behind the Label

38 Exchange Street  
Norwich NR2 1AX  
United Kingdom  
T: +44-16-03-66-61-60  
F: +44-16-03-62-50-04  
E: info@labourbehindthelabel.org  
www.labourbehindthelabel.org

## INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

### Clean Clothes Campaign

Postbus 11584  
1001 GN Amsterdam  
the Netherlands  
T: +31-20-412-27-85  
F: +31-20-412-27-86  
E: info@cleanclothes.org  
www.cleanclothes.org

## Editorial

In May 2001, the media reported that Beijing's mayor, Liu Qi, pledged that by hosting the 2008 Olympic Games, "social progress and economic development" in China and Beijing would move forward, as would China's human rights situation.

Will this promise be kept? This is something that a range of human rights organisations are keeping an eye on. Actually more than watching; they are actively pushing for progress. The CCC, along with its partners in the Play Fair 2008 campaign (PF08), is among them, calling for action to be taken, specifically on human rights in the workplace – in China, in Olympic supply chains, and throughout the global sportswear sector (an industry with a huge presence in China) – in the lead up to the 2008 Olympics.

While PF08 is not the first campaign the CCC has helped to organise in the context of the Olympics or the sportswear industry, this campaign also draws attention to working conditions in China, a country that presents specific challenges for garment workers' seeking to exercise their rights. The report released by PF08 on working conditions at four Chinese factories producing goods that bear the Olympic logo (see page 10) highlights many issues deserving of serious attention.

As this newsletter was going to press PF08 was gearing up for a number of creative, thought-provoking activities. We invite you to join this energetic mobilisation to engage the International Olympic Committee, the National Olympic Committees in your own country, governments, and the sportswear industry in constructive steps outlined by Play Fair to address the problems workers in the sector currently face.

In addition to campaigning on sportswear workers' rights at a time when the world is focused on international sporting events, there are many other ways to raise awareness of garment workers' realities. One of the most effective is to create spaces for workers to tell their own stories, preferably in person. During the CCC's Cambodian speaker tour (page 13) two former garment workers, now union and NGO activists, shared their experiences at a range of events that brought them face to face with varied audiences. Extensive media coverage meant that a vast public received their message; but just as important their

The Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) aims to improve working conditions in the garment industry worldwide and empower (women) garment workers. The CCC is made up of coalitions of consumer organisations, trade unions, researchers, solidarity groups, world shops, and other organisations. The CCC informs consumers about the conditions in which their garments and sports shoes are produced, pressures brands and retailers to take responsibility for these conditions, and demands that companies accept and implement a good code of labour standards that includes monitoring and independent verification of code compliance. The Clean Clothes Campaign cooperates with



*Olympic campaigning material being used by Hong Kong labour rights organisations.*

time spent in direct conversations with the public, CCC staff and volunteers, and representatives of unions and NGOs resulted in more people becoming engaged in activities to support worker empowerment.

Another initiative that aims to boost understanding of garment industry conditions, but uses a more targeted approach, is the "fashion colleges" project (page 15). Now underway in four countries, these efforts focus on a very specific audience – people planning a future for themselves in the fashion industry. By aiming to raise awareness among future buyers and designers the project seeks to arm these decision-makers-in-training with knowledge that will make respect for workers' rights an integral part of their mindset from their very first day on the job.

For more on other ways the CCC is seeking to influence public opinion and motivate people to take positive action, see "News from the CCCs" (page 4). With the news of the new Norwegian CCC you can see that this active network continues to grow. We hope you'll be inspired to join us as well!



*As always, we encourage readers to share, reprint or distribute any information found within this newsletter. A digital version can be found at [www.cleanclothes.org/news.htm](http://www.cleanclothes.org/news.htm).*

organisations all over the world, especially self-organised groups of garment workers (including workers in factories of all sizes, homeworkers, and migrant workers without valid working papers).

Editors: Celia Mather, Marieke Eyskoot and Nina Ascoly  
Design: Roel Dalhuisen, [www.roeldalhuisen.nl](http://www.roeldalhuisen.nl)  
Printing: PrimaveraQuint,  
Amsterdam

# News from the CCCs



*Rene klær, the Norwegian CCC, held its first leafleting action in Oslo directly after the launch of the campaign.*

## Norway: New CCC Launched

Norway is the latest country to set up a CCC. Rene klær, as it is known, was launched on June 14, 2007, in the capital city Oslo. It will be coordinated by the environmental and consumer organisation Framtiden i våre hender (The future in our hands), and partners include the youth organisation Changemaker and the retail and office workers' trade union Handel og Kontor.

At the launch ceremony, Athit Kong, vice president of the Cambodian garment workers' union CCAWDU (see pages 13-14) gave a graphic account of workplace conditions and the struggle by garment workers to unionise in his country. Marieke Eyskoot of the CCC International Secretariat spoke about how CCCs work together internationally. The goals for the campaign and how Rene klær will work to achieve them were outlined by the new Norwegian CCC Coordinator Carin Leffler.

Demonstrating how the campaign intends to proceed, directly after the launch representatives of Rene klær took part in the campaign's first street action. They handed out leaflets to customers outside several shops. They asked them to answer questions such as: "Do the workers producing clothes for this shop get a minimum wage — or a wage that they can live from?" and then to pass the leaflets on to the shop staff, in the hope of eventually receiving a reply from the management. They succeeded in getting good national press coverage of the launch.

In the few months since then, Rene klær campaigners have been very active and have achieved their first major success. The Norwegian Olympic Committee has promised to take active steps to draw up a code of conduct for its work that will meet the requirements of the ILO core conventions on labour rights. In the run-up to the Beijing Olympics in 2008, Rene klær will be prioritising PlayFair campaign activities (see page 12).

They have also been working on the case of rights violations at the Metraco factory in Turkey (see [www.cleanclothes.org/urgent/07\\_07\\_03.htm](http://www.cleanclothes.org/urgent/07_07_03.htm)), since the Norwegian brand Helly Hansen is directly involved in this case. Meanwhile, throughout the autumn they are giving presentations and holding workshops for activists and other interested groups with the aim of generating greater awareness and engagement in their country on these issues of workers' rights in the global garment and sportswear industry. Towards the end of the year, they will be publishing a report about public procurement in Norway.

*To contact the Norwegian CCC, call or e-mail campaign coordinator Carin Leffler at [carin@framtiden.no](mailto:carin@framtiden.no) / tel. +47-22-03-31-50. For more information (in Norwegian) see [www.reneklær.no](http://www.reneklær.no).*

## Netherlands: Let's buy up HEMA!

In March 2007, the extremely popular Dutch retailer HEMA came up for sale. The CCC (Schone Kleren Kampagne) called upon the Dutch people to collectively buy the store and then help improve the conditions of the workers that make HEMA's clothes.

The campaign generated enormous publicity, with the public pledging to buy over € 340,000 worth of shares in the company. Though quite a success, this was nowhere near the € 1.2 billion that Lion Capital, a British private equity investor, eventually paid for the company.

The CCC has now transformed the "Let's buy up HEMA" campaign into "Friends of HEMA". This made HEMA the first retailer with a critical fan club. The Friends continue to push their favourite retailer to sell clean clothes, though private equity investors are notoriously difficult to pin down on ethical questions. Nevertheless, retailers and brands usually respond well to pressure from their customers.



*Carin Leffler, coordinator of the new Norwegian CCC, interviewed at the time of the campaign's launch in June.*

As the number of fans grew, HEMA invited the Friends of HEMA for a meeting at their headquarters. Although not very willing to discuss issues such as payment of a living wage or supply chain transparency, they did agree that the way HEMA monitors working conditions needs to be improved. Especially when it comes to multi-stakeholder involvement, the Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI) system they work with lacks credibility. To make sure that workers are a serious part of the monitoring and that their voices are heard when solutions are developed to improve their situation, HEMA has agreed to do a pilot project with the Fair Wear Foundation (FWF). This multi-stakeholder initiative works closely with workers' organisations in garment-producing countries when it comes to monitoring and verifying their conditions.

*"Friends" of the Dutch retailer Hema are pushing for the chain to take concrete steps to improve conditions for the workers who produce their clothes.*



Opening up this dialogue and agreeing to participate in a project with FWF is a good first step. However, the Friends will continue to keep a close watch on their favourite store to see that significant progress in important areas, such as transparency and worker pay, are really made.

*For more information on the campaign (in Dutch), see [www.schonekieren.nl/nieuws/07-08-25-hema.htm](http://www.schonekieren.nl/nieuws/07-08-25-hema.htm) and [www.helpdehema.nl](http://www.helpdehema.nl)*

## **Belgium South Launches (Fake) Clothing Brand**

TRASO is the newest fashion brand to hit the Belgian consumer market. But it is a fake one, made up by the CCC in Belgium South (Vêtements Propres) to raise awareness of the price paid by garment workers for clothing sold at discount prices.

TRASO is short for "TRAvail SOLDé", or "discount labour" or perhaps "work for sale". Launched in the city of Liège on June 23, 2007, the campaign brings together people from the Christian youth movement, retail workers' unions CNE and SETCA, women's organisations and other NGOs.

"TRASO guarantees the cheapest prices through the worst exploitation of the workers", announce the campaign materials. By this, the campaign means workers in both the production chains and in the shops. The idea, developed out of discussions between all the Vêtements Propres partners, is to show that workers are facing the same powerful companies, and are confronting the same employment trends such as "flexibilisation" (short-term, temporary contracts, for example), low wages, pressure on union rights, and gender discrimination.

"In this way", says Carole Crabbe, coordinator of Vêtements Propres, "we think it is easier for members of the public to understand the link between their own behaviour as consumers and their own situation as workers."

At the launch action in Liège, the job of the activists was a cynical one — to persuade shoppers to go and look for the cheap TRASO trousers, T-shirts, jeans, and other products in order to benefit from the exploitation of workers. Some were keen to know where they could find a TRASO shop, to which the activists replied "All the shops in the street sell TRASO products!" Others, though, were very concerned about the precarious situation of the workers.

There were also activities inside several fashion shops, those where there are trade union members. Union activists led discussions, and in one of the shops they decided to put a TRASO campaign leaflet in each of the customers' bags.

The leaflet advertises clothing at discount prices and goes on to explain what lies beneath those cheap prices, so attractive to consumers. It shows, for example, Nur and Jahangir Alam, two workers from the Spectrum factory that collapsed in Bangladesh in April 2005, visiting a Belgian store. Nur lost an arm in the accident and thus far has received only a pittance in compensation; several Spectrum clients (such as retail giant Carrefour) continue to refuse to contribute to a fund to compensate Nur and

Advertisement for the Traso brand, launched by the CCC in Belgium South in June, to highlight the terrible conditions garment workers face to make inexpensive clothes for the Belgian market.

others. Sweaters produced at his factory sell in Belgium for just € 2 each. (For more information on the Spectrum case, see [http://www.cleanclothes.org/news/spectrum\\_disaster.htm](http://www.cleanclothes.org/news/spectrum_disaster.htm)).

As if to illustrate the impact on Belgian workers too, just a few days before the TRASO launch Carrefour announced the closure of 16 supermarkets in Belgium and the firing of about 900 workers. It also announced that the shops might be re-opened, under franchise. Workers in a franchised shop, compared to those in a wholly-owned shop, almost always earn less, get fewer benefits, and their union rights are less respected. This led one union activist in the TRASO campaign to say, "Franchising in the retail sector is just like relocation in the production sector".

"All in all", Crabbe adds, "it was a very interesting and funny way to take action, and we are thinking about how to develop it. In the future we might link such an action with follow-up activities like an exhibition or even a "real false TRASO shop".

The TRASO campaign's promotional leaflet (in French) can be found at: [www.vetementspropres.be/doc/tractTRASOscreen.pdf](http://www.vetementspropres.be/doc/tractTRASOscreen.pdf) For more information on the campaign, contact Carole Crabbe at [carole@vetementspropres.be](mailto:carole@vetementspropres.be) /tel. +32 10 45 75 27.

## Germany: Shareholder Actions

Among its recent activities, the CCC in Germany (Kampagne für Saubere Kleidung) has been working with "critical shareholders" and speaking up at the shareholder meetings of German sportswear companies Puma and adidas.

At the entrance to Puma's Annual General Meeting in Nuremberg on April 11, 2007, activists stood under a "Made in Hell" banner and handed out information to shareholders. Inside, some spoke from the platform about the impact of Puma's purchasing practices on working conditions in its supply chains. They particularly criticised the company, which made a profit of €400 million in 2005, for then refusing to provide continuation funding for a "pilot project" in El Salvador and Mexico that it was running with the CCC and Latin American partners.

A month later, at the adidas meeting at Fuerth on May 10, 2007, five CCC representatives made interventions about cases at adidas suppliers where the company's response has been utterly inadequate: the Hermosa factory closure in El Salvador, the BJ&B factory closure in the Dominican Republic; and the lack of freedom of association at PT Panarub in Indonesia. They used the cases to highlight what is wrong generally about the company's sourcing strategies. Overall, their interventions lasted over an hour, to the obvious frustration of the adidas Executive Board.

Despite security guards' attempts to stop her, CCC's Evelyn Bahn managed to mount the platform to hand a document over to the Board. The CCC representatives came away frustrated at the Board's bland responses, saying there was "nothing new". But they were happy with the support from shareholders present, and it led to good coverage in the newspapers and on radio. A TV team now wants to make a documentary film about the INKOTA network in Germany (part of the German CCC), with a special focus on the CCC and the BJ&B case.

For more information (in German) see [www.saubere-kleidung.de](http://www.saubere-kleidung.de)



Berndt Hinzmann of the German CCC speaks out at the adidas shareholder meeting in May about problematic working conditions in the company's supply chains.

# Frequently Asked Questions



*Volunteers from the Maquila Solidarity Network, a CCC ally in Canada, protesting in front of a La Senza store in Vancouver, to draw attention to problems at a supplier in Thailand.*

## Is the Clean Clothes Campaign the only organisation campaigning to improve working conditions in the garment industry?

No, we are certainly not the only ones. We cooperate with a wide variety of organisations and networks worldwide who share similar concerns and aims.

In the United States, for example, Sweatshop Watch ([www.sweatshopwatch.org](http://www.sweatshopwatch.org)) focuses on eliminating exploitation around the world and particularly in California's garment industry. United Students Against Sweatshops ([www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org](http://www.studentsagainstsweatshops.org)) is a US-campus based student movement fighting for sweatshop-free labour conditions.

In Canada, the Maquila Solidarity Network ([www.en.maquila.solidarity.org](http://www.en.maquila.solidarity.org)) is a labour and women's rights advocacy organisation, promoting solidarity with grassroots groups in Mexico, Central America, and Asia to improve conditions in garment factories and export processing zones. Australian Fair Wear ([www.fairwear.org.au](http://www.fairwear.org.au)) works to eliminate the exploitation of homeworkers in the Australian clothing industry, while the NikeWatch campaign ([www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/labour/index.html](http://www.oxfam.org.au/campaigns/labour/index.html)) is coordinated by Oxfam Australia to persuade sportswear brands to respect workers' rights.

In Europe, the CCC works with NGOs that focus on garment workers' rights and may establish a new CCC campaign in their country. The Portuguese environmental NGO Gaia ([gaia.org.pt/?q=node/1673](http://gaia.org.pt/?q=node/1673)) includes consumerism in its portfolio and is currently looking at whether other organisations might be interested in forming a CCC

coalition. In Ireland, NGO Cultivate is doing the same. In Denmark too, the NGOs Mellemløst og Samvirke ([www.ms.dk/sw72893.asp](http://www.ms.dk/sw72893.asp)) and BAV are collaborating with the 3F union.

The international trade unions are very important for the CCC's work. Together with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Textile, Garment and Leather Worker's Federation (ITGLWF) we are organising the "Play Fair 2008" campaign ([www.playfair2008.org](http://www.playfair2008.org)) in the lead up to the 2008 Olympic Games (see pages 10-12). Its predecessor, the "Play Fair at the Olympics" campaign in 2004, was one of the biggest mobilisations against abusive labour conditions the world has seen.

At the heart of our work lies the information on working conditions, workers' demands and industry trends that we receive from the organisations in our grassroots network in Asia, Africa and Eastern Europe. They stand up for workers' rights in their own countries, often at great risk. We have been building alliances with these workers' groups and unions, women's groups, legal groups, cooperatives, activists and organisers for over 15 years. We work with them on international campaigns, but also on urgent appeals against specific workplace violations (see for example [www.cleanclothes.org/appeals.htm](http://www.cleanclothes.org/appeals.htm) and pages 17-19).

All these organisations are just a few examples of the huge amount of important and inspiring work that takes place all over the world. And not just by organisations; millions of individuals take part too.

*For more FAQs about the CCC, please visit: [www.cleanclothes.org/faq/index.htm](http://www.cleanclothes.org/faq/index.htm)*



# Inside a National CCC: United Kingdom

The Clean Clothes Campaign is an international campaign, consisting of a loose, informal international partner network of NGOs, unions, individuals and institutions in most countries where garments are produced, organisations in "consumer" countries where these garments are sold, an international secretariat (based in Amsterdam) and Clean Clothes Campaigns (CCCs) in eleven European countries. These CCCs are autonomous coalitions consisting of NGOs (consumer, research, women's, fair trade and youth organisations, solidarity groups, churches, etc.) and trade unions, each with a coordinator and a secretariat. CCC coalitions can be found in Austria, Belgium (North and South), France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

Although the European CCCs share a common aim and cooperate on joint projects, they each have their own flavour - due to their composition, history, cultural context and style. We'd like to share with you the workings of the different campaigns. Fifth in this series is the CCC in the United Kingdom: Labour Behind the Label (LBL).



## LBL in the UK

In the early 1990s, a global development education centre called NEAD, based in the British city of Norwich, started including in its educational work the rights of workers in garment supply chains. At the same time, Women Working Worldwide (WWW), the international network for women workers' rights based in Manchester, was involved in similar pioneering awareness-raising activities. They and others got together and, in 1996, Labour Behind the Label (LBL) was launched, as a project jointly coordinated by NEAD and WWW. The first LBL newsletter came out ten years ago.

Many of the organisations that are part of LBL have been with it since the start. They include trade unions and their local branches, consumer organisations, campaign groups, and charities (see box).

When LBL first started, the focus was on global companies such as Nike and Gap. It was easier to start there as other organisations were already doing work on these big brands. Developing your own policy work takes time. Then, around the turn of the millennium, LBL began to focus more on British brands and retailers.

One outcome of the campaigning by LBL and others in the UK was the formation of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI - see [www.ethicaltrade.org](http://www.ethicaltrade.org)) in the late 1990s. This multi-stakeholder initiative brings together companies, NGOs and unions to promote and improve the implementation of corporate codes of practice that cover supply chain working conditions. The emergence of the ETI had a big effect on labour rights work, with a general shift by some NGOs from public campaigning to lobbying work behind the scenes.

LBL, however, thought it was important to continue with public education and campaigning, informed by its members, several of whom are also in the ETI. It has issued a range of significant publications, often in collaboration with partner organisations. Many focus on the ethical performance of the biggest brands and retailers in the UK such as Primark, Asda and Tesco. In 2006, "Let's Clean Up Fashion" was published. The companies' responses to this report were, however, mostly "a combination of procrastination, stalling, and fairly transparent excuses", says LBL. "Only a few companies admitted that there was a problem, and even fewer that they had a responsibility to fix it". So an update has just been published (see image on page 9).

These reports have helped labour rights issues move up the media agenda, with regular coverage in the press and a number of TV documentaries in development.

Also, LBL has itself recently engaged more in lobbying individual companies, as companies seek to lessen the impact of the public criticism they receive. Increased work on urgent appeals has also resulted in more contact with particular companies.

In 2005, LBL launched a new project: "Fashioning an Ethical Industry" (FEI), which now operates semi-autonomously. This



project works with fashion college students and educators to help equip students to play an active role in raising standards throughout the supply chains of the companies they will be working for. This British initiative has helped spawn others in Austria, Poland and the Netherlands, as described elsewhere in this newsletter (see pages 15-16).

## LBL's Structure

Both organisations and individuals can belong to LBL. It is governed by a management committee, elected by the members at an annual general meeting (AGM), which gives organisational and policy direction. Apart from the AGM, there is a campaign meeting for member organisations roughly every two months.

### Member organisations of Labour Behind the Label/CCC UK

- Women Working Worldwide
- War On Want
- Oxfam
- CAFOD
- National Group on Homeworking
- HomeWorkers Worldwide (UK centre for Homenet)
- Central America Women's Network
- PCS trade union for public sector workers
- Unison trade union for public sector workers
- GMB trade union: London and Lancashire regions
- Transport and General Workers' Union: Region 4 (Wales), Region 5 (Midlands), and Region 7 (Scotland)
- Community trade union
- Ethical Consumer magazine
- Tearfund

LBL encourages its individual members to become active volunteers, joining in actions such as consumer leafleting, writing letters, and responding to urgent appeals.

## UK Context

The structure of the fashion industry in the UK is different from that in other countries. There are many strong British brands, and the dominance of supermarkets is more of an issue in the UK than, for instance, in Scandinavia.

The UK does have a large NGO movement. This makes their voices strong, but can result in "compassion fatigue" among the public, as many organisations fight for their attention.

Having the ETI in the country also provides a defining context for the campaign. Companies have become used to discussing/defending their policies, and some LBL member organisations are therefore more involved in dialogue with companies than similar organisations at other CCCs might be. It has also created a "CSR community": corporate people and consultants see each other regularly at meetings, and are used

to rehearsing the same arguments! Of course, the ETI also creates more opportunities for the sector-wide collaboration necessary to address many key labour rights issues.

## LBL's Future Priorities

LBL is growing and doing better and better, but continues to develop as an organisation. It is keen to get more unions to join in, and to increase the amount and involvement of other NGOs. LBL's urgent appeals work, fashion colleges project, and policy reports have boosted its profile among companies, the fashion industry and the labour rights community; these are all areas of work which LBL plans to continue. The media coverage that LBL and its members have achieved is helping to turn up the heat on companies, and it will be important to keep up the pressure.

LBL's goal is also to increase both the depth and breadth of its individual supporter base. A new bite-size "action update" is being produced for supporters, to encourage them to take more action. LBL will also continue to build its e-supporter base, with more and better online actions.



### Labour Behind the Label / CCC UK

38 Exchange Street  
Norwich NR2 1 AX  
United Kingdom  
+44-16-03-66-61-60  
info@labourbehindthelabel.org  
www.labourbehindthelabel.org



# “We are not machines;

Athit Kong, vice president of the Coalition of Cambodian Apparel Workers Democratic Union (C.CAWDU) and Phereak Ly of the women’s rights NGO, Womyn’s Agenda for Change (WAC), recently in Europe to take part in a CCC speaker tour, spoke about the problems facing workers in the Cambodian garment industry, struggling to maintain their rights to decent work in the context of intense global competition.

**How long have you worked for your organisation and how did you get involved?**

**AK:** I joined C.CAWDU in 1999 when working as a washer at the Tack Fat factory and became active in the union the following year. The factory didn’t like that, and the managers kept moving me to different sections and I was demoted. At the end of 2001, I was sacked as a result of my union organising. Even then I stayed with the union and was elected their general secretary in 2002. After four years as C.CAWDU general secretary, I was elected the union’s vice president and also general secretary of the Cambodian Labour Federation.

**PL:** I started as an organiser for WAC in 2003, when I was still working at a garment factory producing for Gap. During this time I talked to other women workers about what WAC was doing and about their rights, and encouraged them to speak out about their problems. After I had worked in the industry for eight years, my factory closed, following the phase out of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement in 2005. From then on, I worked as an intern with WAC until I was taken on as a staff member for the Garment Workers’ Empowerment project.

**What do you see as the main problems facing Cambodian garment workers right now?**

**AK:** One of the biggest problems is with temporary contracts. These have been put in place by companies in order to exploit workers and put pressure on the union struggle in Cambodia. Before, workers would be on permanent contracts but now lots are employed on one to three month contracts, even if they have worked at the same factory for over two years. If workers are on temporary contracts, it’s really hard to form a union. They will be immediately fired or just not get their contracts renewed.

**PL:** It also means workers are under a lot of pressure. If you refuse overtime or take sick leave, if you don’t meet your targets all the time, or try to speak out about your problems, they say you are “not a good worker” and won’t renew your contract.

**AK:** The other big problems are the wages and working hours. Garment workers do long hours, from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day and the wages are too low. Right now the minimum wage in Cambodia is (US)\$50 per month. In the city it’s impossible for workers to live on this, and most are expected to send money back to their families each month. This means they need to work two to four hours’ overtime each day just in order to live.

**PL:** Even if you don’t want to do overtime, you have to. If we refuse, they punish us and stop us from being able to do overtime in the future. The salary is very low; we can’t survive on it and so we need overtime. But we want to be able to choose when to do it. We work hard and need to rest or take time off if

*Kong Athit (left to right) visiting a Zara shop with Belgian trade unionist Lotte Ockerman; speaking at press conferences in Vienna and in Madrid; participating in an action at the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm, Germany with Phereak Ly and Evelyn Bahn of the German CCC. Ly speaking at a public event in Norwich and Kong addressing the public at the launch of the Norwegian CCC in Oslo.*



Belgium



Austria



Spain

# but they want us to be”

we are sick. We are not machines; but they want us to be. They only want us to work for them and not have any other life.

**AK:** Lots of workers want to speak out to change these conditions, but it's hard. If you join a trade union you will never be promoted, you will never get a higher wage, you won't get your contract renewed, or you might be fired. An example of this is the River Rich factory (see page 17).

## Have things got worse since the end of 2005?

**PL:** There is a lot less security for workers. Lots of factories closed, like the factory I was working for. And most workers never received any compensation or redundancy money. Often we were just told to take a month off and, when we came back, the factory had gone. The brands never did anything to make sure workers got the money they were legally owed.

## The ILO set up the Better Factories programme to help Cambodia develop a comparative advantage on labour rights. What difference did this make to workers in Cambodia?

**AK:** It meant that unions got some training and some small improvements were made at factories. It was a good programme but there are still many problems, particularly in organising unions.

## What about the Cambodian Government – are they doing anything to protect the rights of workers?

**PL:** The Government says they are trying to create job opportunities for people and, in order to keep these jobs, we have to keep investors happy.

## How are your organisations working to improve conditions?

**AK:** C.CAWDU tries to organise workers and negotiate and support them to improve conditions. We aim to represent garment workers with one voice. We also do research on working conditions and the economic and social context, and support women workers to become political and socio-economic leaders. We build international relationships to strengthen the defence of workers' rights. Also we lobby the government to protect workers' rights, to improve relationships between unions, and to uphold democratic decision-making.

**PL:** Most of our work with garment workers is focused on our six drop-in centres, where women can come and get information and talk about their problems with others. These are places where WAC can build trust between workers, listen to their problems, and collect case studies and labels as a part of our research into the Cambodian garment industry. We also talk to the women workers about the global context of the industry and do research into topics such as the MFA phase-out and health issues.

## How can consumers and activists help support Cambodian workers?

**AK:** They need to inform people here in Europe about the real situation facing workers and the trade union movement in Cambodia. The ITGLWF and Clean Clothes Campaign have been supporting us, but it's hard because the companies really hate trade unions. We know that the relationship between consumer and brand name is powerful; if consumers say something to the brand, it can be really effective. A thousand letters about a case or a company can really help to improve conditions for workers.



Germany



UK



Norway

# Beijing Olympics Here we come

**Play Fair 2008** is the campaign that will see “clean clothes” supporters around the world focus on the sportswear worn by the world’s top athletes as they compete for gold at the next Olympic Games – or rather on the rights of the workers that made it. The Games will be held in Beijing, China, in August 2008.

PF08, as it is known for short, is the follow-up to the highly successful “Play Fair at the Olympics” campaign that focussed on the Athens games in 2004. Launched on June 11, 2007, PF08 is being coordinated by the CCC, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), and the International Textile, Garment and Leather Worker’s Federation (ITGLWF). CCC partners Centre for Education and Communication (India), IHLO (Hong Kong) and FNV (the Netherlands) are also active in the working group that guides the campaign internationally.

A wide range of organisations from 28 countries have already signed up as supporters of the PF08 campaign, including national trade unions, workers’ rights groups, women workers’ support groups, and “no sweat” campaigns.

Obviously, we are hoping that more and more organisations will join in along the way. Play Fair aims to involve as many members of the public, athletes, teams, athletic coordinating bodies, sports fans and consumers as possible. The campaign is just getting going, and much more is to come.

As before, our aim is to put pressure on the sporting industry to extend the Olympic ethos of “fair play” to the workers who make the clothing and shoes worn by all who take part in sports. The ongoing need for improvements in the sector is highlighted by the fact that these games are being held in China, the world’s larger producer of sportswear and a country that refuses to recognise and respect workers’ right to freedom of association.



PLAYFAIR2008.org

We know that exploitation and abuse in the sportswear and athletic footwear industries can only really be brought to an end when governments take up their responsibilities, nationally and internationally, to protect workers’ rights and to hold business accountable for labour practices. Fundamentally, it will only happen when workers are able to organise to advance their own interests.

Still, sporting bodies such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC) have a responsibility to play a much more constructive role, especially through their licensing arrangements. So could the National Olympics Committees (NOCs) in each country. Plus all the companies which market or produce sportswear, athletic footwear and other sporting

## What did we achieve in Athens?

The “Play Fair at the Olympics” campaign in 2004 (PFOC) saw unprecedented levels of collaboration between NGOs and trade unions in many countries, North and South. The campaign also received positive responses from several National Olympics Committees (NOCs).

Organising committees of future Olympic games also felt the impact of increased pressure to take responsibility for supply chain conditions. The Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic Winter Games expressed a commitment to include workers’ rights issues in its contracts with suppliers. In the UK, the British Olympics Association originally refused to meet with Play Fair but later agreed to “look at contracts and at what needs to be

changed to improve the conditions [of workers]”. The ‘London Bid’, the organisation that won Britain’s right to host the Olympic Games in 2012, met with the UK CCC, the trade union federation TUC, and Oxfam and committed itself to including workers’ rights issues in its contracts with suppliers. The CCC and partners in Canada and the UK continue to monitor progress on how the organising committees make good on these promises. Meanwhile, dialogue between the CCC and NOCs in various other countries is also ongoing to ensure that as much as possible the entire “Olympic family” lives up to its responsibility to see that conditions in their supply chains meet international standards.

The IOC, on the other hand, categorically refused to take any responsibility for workers’ rights in the Olympics sponsorship and licensing programmes. The IOC did accept that the

## Key PF08 Campaign Demands

To read the full set of demands see the Play Fair 2008 Campaign Statement at [www.playfair2008.org](http://www.playfair2008.org)

### **International Olympics Committee (IOC):**

- Make it a condition for future Olympic Games that the host country must have ratified, implemented and respected the core ILO Conventions.
- Put a contractual condition in IOC licensing, sponsorship and marketing agreements that labour practices and working conditions in the production of IOC branded goods comply with international labour standards.
- Investigate working conditions in IOC and NOC supply chains, and set up mechanisms for ending any exploitation found.
- Publicly promote the need to end exploitation in the sportswear industries.
- Make respect for workers' rights an integral part of the Olympic Charter and the IOC Code of Ethics.
- Support efforts to ensure respect for workers' rights in other aspects of Games-related employment.

### **National Olympics Committees (NOCs) and Organising Committees of the Olympic Games (OCOGs):**

- Work through the IOC to put in place mechanisms for ending exploitative labour practices in the sporting goods industries.
- Publicly disclose companies with which they have licensing, sponsorship and marketing agreements.
- Make it a contractual condition in their licensing, sponsorship and marketing agreements with companies that they publicly disclose their production locations, and ensure that labour practices and working conditions involved in producing their branded goods comply with internationally recognized labour standards.

campaign's aims are in the spirit of the Olympic ideals of fair play and ethics, but wouldn't take any action themselves.

The campaign helped put more pressure on leading sportswear brands such as Nike and adidas/Reebok, but it also powerfully conveyed to some of the lesser-known brands that they could no longer ignore the issue of workers' rights. Asics, Mizuno, Puma, and Umbro responded seriously. However, some — notably Fila, Kappa, and Lotto — failed to engage with us in any meaningful way.

*Stories, photos, and analysis — country-by-country — of the "Play Fair at the Olympics" campaign in 2004 can be found at: [www.fairolympics.org](http://www.fairolympics.org)*

### **Sportswear brands and other companies seeking financial gains from the Games:**

- Adopt sourcing policies that require suppliers and sub-contractors to respect internationally recognized labour standards.
- Address, as an integral part of their sourcing policy, the negative impacts that their purchasing practices can have on working conditions in their supply chains.
- Take immediate and positive steps to ensure specifically that the right of workers to form and join trade unions and to collectively bargain is respected throughout their supply chains.
- Maintain production in unionised facilities and, when expanding production, give preference to locations where trade union rights are respected in law and practice.
- Take concrete steps to address the living wage issue.
- Disclose the identity, location and country details of all their supplier factories.

### **Companies supplying sportswear, athletic footwear and Olympic logo goods:**

- Engage in proper industrial relations and ensure working conditions that comply with international labour standards and national labour legislation.
- Make sure that all workers in their supply chains are protected by having a proper employment relationship and their rights respected.
- When goods are sourced from homeworkers, ensure respect for their basic rights as provided in the ILO Convention on Homeworking (C177).

### **Governments:**

- Facilitate the right of workers to form and join independent trade unions and engage in collective bargaining by immediately ratifying (if they have not already) and applying ILO Conventions.
- Implement policies that promote socially responsible behaviour in international business activity, including the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy.
- Promote respect for workers' rights in international and bilateral treaties and trade agreements.
- Promote a role for the ILO in making codes of labour practice more effective.
- Adopt a procurement policy that guarantees respect for workers' rights.

### **Chinese Government, as the host country:**

- Live up to the "promise" made on securing the Olympics to improve human rights.
- Ratify and fully implement ILO Conventions 87 and 98.
- End labour rights abuses such as harassment, dismissal or detention of labour activists; release all detained labour activists.
- End the culture of impunity for companies that violate labour laws and for government officials who are complicit in this.
- Commit to serious improvement in health and safety at work.
- End the systematic discrimination of domestic migrant workers.



*Lee Cheuk Yan, general secretary of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions (HKCTU) being interviewed in June in Hong Kong. Activists from the HKCTU, the ILO, Labour Action China, and the Clothing Industry, Clerical and Retail Trade Employee General Union gathered at Olympic House, the headquarters of the Hong Kong Olympic Committee, to deliver the PlayFair 2008 report "No Medal for the Olympics on Labour Rights" to the Committee.*

goods — and profit from the Olympics — can take far greater responsibility for labour practices than they do as yet. Some of the demands Play Fair is making regarding these responsibilities are summarised in the box on page 13.

### PF08 kicks off

The PF08 campaign kicked off on June 11, 2007 with the launch of the report "No Medal for the Olympics on Labour Rights", which documented working conditions at four factories in China that produce Olympic-licensed goods. The report reveals appalling disregard for workers and for local labour laws on working hours, pay, child labour, and health and safety conditions. Play Fair activists in the Netherlands and Hong Kong held actions to draw attention to the report findings and the need for follow up.

The report generated a great deal of media coverage worldwide, including radio and TV coverage and hundreds of newspaper articles. The Beijing Olympics' Organizing Committee (BOCOG) responded within weeks. In fact, they confirmed widespread use of overtime at three of the suppliers, and the use of underage workers at the fourth, the Lekit factory in Dongguan.

Unfortunately, BOCOG then suspended contracts with the three, saying they must "rectify their operations in accordance with the Labour Bureau's requirements", without saying what these are, or how workers can participate and benefit from the action being taken on their behalf. As for Lekit, BOCOG decided to cut ties altogether instead of working with the company and PF08 to improve the situation there. PF08 is making it clear that the IOC and BOCOG must not "cut and run" from these factories, but take positive action to improve conditions and involve stakeholders, including labour support groups.

As for the other problems identified in the report, BOCOG seems to be ignoring them. In any case, we believe these four factories to be the rule not just for other Olympics licensees but the sector as a whole. Our follow-up research suggests that Lekit's employment of children is just the tip of the iceberg in China.

In the coming months expect more PF08 campaigning materials (including more research) and possibilities to directly engage in meaningful action to push for respect for workers' rights in the sportswear industry. Organisations can join the

### Campaign Resources

#### "No Medal for the Olympics on Labour Rights"

Play Fair 2008, June 2007

[www.playfair2008.org/docs/playfair\\_2008-report.pdf](http://www.playfair2008.org/docs/playfair_2008-report.pdf)

#### "Child Labour, Forced Labour and 'Work Experience' in China – The blurred lines of illegality"

ITUC/GUF/HKCTU/HKTUC Hong Kong Liaison Office (ILO), August 2, 2007

[www.playfair2008.org/docs/Child\\_labour\\_July\\_2007.pdf](http://www.playfair2008.org/docs/Child_labour_July_2007.pdf)

*For the latest news and more information on the Play Fair 2008 campaign, see [www.playfair2008.org](http://www.playfair2008.org)*

campaign as "Play Fair Supporters" (see [www.playfair2008.org](http://www.playfair2008.org) to sign up). To learn more about how you can become involved in PF08 activities, please see the website.



*Two of the official Beijing Olympics mascots ("fuwas") were at the main post office in Amsterdam, the Netherlands to mail the PlayFair 2008 report to the Dutch members of the International Olympic Committee.*

# Future Fashion Trend:

## Ethical!

CCC reaches out to fashion students and educators to raise awareness

CCC coalitions and partners in the UK, Netherlands, Austria, and Poland have all begun to work with fashion colleges. The aim is "to inspire students — as the next generation of industry players — to raise standards for garment workers in the fashion industry of the future", according to Labour Behind the Label (the UK CCC).

In each country, work has begun to engage not only with students but also those teaching fashion-related courses. The groups are encouraging discussion on the impact of the fashion industry on working conditions in garment manufacture and how improvements can be made to garment workers' lives. Above all, they are hoping to foster a more ethical and responsible approach among the students as they enter the industry.

The UK activities started in 2005; in 2007 they were joined by the three other countries in a joint project funded largely by the European Commission. Within the project, which runs until 2010, they will mainly concentrate on activities in their own countries. But they are also keen to share best practices and will be developing educational resources together. Towards the end of the project, they will host a Europe-wide conference,

hoping to attract groups from across the continent interested in learning from their experiences.

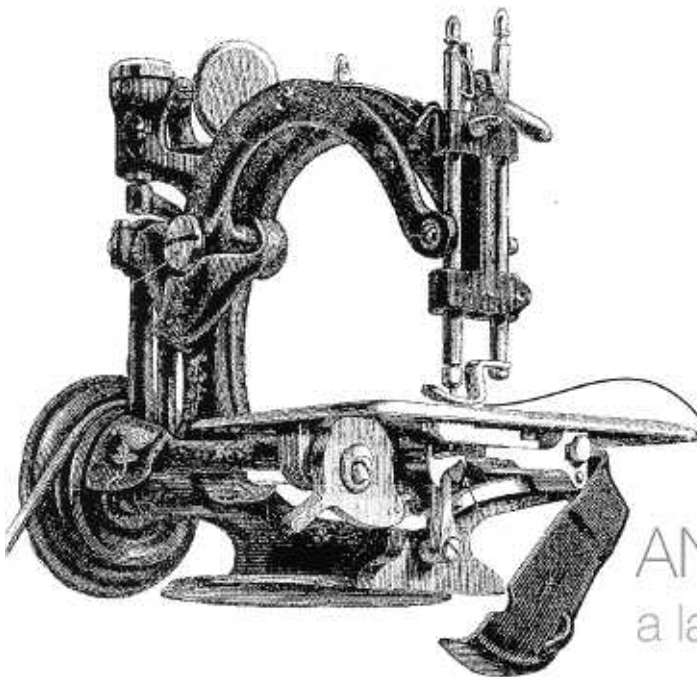
### In the UK

The UK CCC's project is called "Fashioning an Ethical Industry" (FEI). In the two years since it started, FEI has been running student workshops and training events for educators involved in fashion-related courses. They have been providing teachers with resources to help integrate ethical issues related to garment manufacture into their teaching. The UK CCC ultimately hopes to embed ethical issues into the curriculum of all fashion courses across the UK.

A one-day FEI conference called "Creating an Ethical Future for the Fashion Industry", held in March 2007 at the Fashion and Textile Museum in London, successfully attracted students, teachers, and course development teams from twenty universities and colleges across the UK. Speakers included Noemi Flores Rivas of the Maria Elena Cuadra Women's Movement in Nicaragua, Lakshmi Bhatia, director of Global Partnerships for Gap, and Arabella Preston, PR manager for People Tree, as well as other clothing industry stakeholders.

One teacher commented, "The information received from you and the conference has already been of great benefit to our students as I have been able to direct queries to the literature and bring the subject into teaching and discussions I have had with the students".

A previous training event for educators, in December 2006, looked at "fast fashion" and the impact of buying decisions on working conditions within the garment industry. Their next conference, planned for Manchester in March 2008, will be on the theme of the rise and impact of ethical consumerism.



*Fashioning*  
AN ETHICAL INDUSTRY  
a labour behind the label project

# FAIR FASHION

According to FEI's co-coordinator Hannah Higginson, fashion students and teachers are interested in all areas of sustainable fashion, from fair trade to recycling. FEI is supported by a steering group made up of teachers and students of fashion-related courses from across the country. Students are encouraged to become FEI "student reps" to help shape the project and to stimulate awareness among fellow students.

*For more information see [fashioninganethicalindustry.org](http://fashioninganethicalindustry.org) or [www.myspace.com/ethicalindustry](http://www.myspace.com/ethicalindustry).  
Contact the project at: [info@fashioninganethicalindustry.org](mailto:info@fashioninganethicalindustry.org)*

## In the Netherlands

Since the Dutch CCC (Schone Kleren Kampagne) started working on the Fashion Colleges project (called Fair Fashion) in June 2007, they have been collecting information resources, setting up a website, raising more funds, and developing their contacts among fashion colleges and courses.

The project coordinator, Geert-Jan Davelaar, says they are planning to set up a pilot group of students enrolled at the Amsterdam Fashion Institute (AMFI) and the Rietveld Academy, both based in Amsterdam. In the case of AMFI, they are building on existing links; in the past AMFI students have had internships with the CCC, and some have done their own projects on "clean clothes". Workers' rights issues seem to be new for students at the Academy, however.

Once that work is established, the project intends to broaden out to other fashion courses and colleges across the Netherlands, and indeed to others being trained for the fashion industry there, including production and retail workers.

*For more information (in Dutch) see [www.fairfashion.org](http://www.fairfashion.org) or contact project coordinator Geert-Jan Davelaar at: [geertjan@schonekleren.nl](mailto:geertjan@schonekleren.nl)*

## In Poland

The "fashioning" project has also been getting underway in Poland, coordinated by the Polish Humanitarian Organization (PHO) which has offices in three cities: Warsaw, Kraków and Toruń. The PHO's mission is to help shape humanitarian attitudes among the Polish public and create a culture of mutual help.

They are currently compiling a list of schools and colleges where fashion courses are run in the country and preparing their website and workshop materials. The first student workshops will be held in October 2007. Also, an exhibition of photographs on the garment industry and sweatshops will tour most of Poland's big cities, accompanied by a presentation and opportunities for discussion.

*For more information (in Polish) see [www.pah.org.pl](http://www.pah.org.pl) or contact project coordinator Anna Paluszek at: [anna.paluszek@pah.org.pl](mailto:anna.paluszek@pah.org.pl)*

## In Austria

As elsewhere, the project in Austria focuses on students doing fashion courses, but also on younger students, from age 15 to 18. The project is reaching out to more than 850 college lecturers and secondary school teachers.

In October a fashion show and panel discussion was organised by the Hallein Fashion College in Salzburg. In November, another one will take place in Linz.

The CCC Austria slogan "My Style - My Responsibility" is being used in this project too. Materials developed for teachers and pupils in the UK are being adapted, and a steering group of teachers is being set up to ensure that what is produced is useful. The materials will eventually go up on a special sub-site of the CCC Austria website.

In each project year, there will be a training event and conference for teachers. However, the main focus will be on activities with individual fashion colleges and schools.

*For more information (in German) see [www.suedwind.at](http://www.suedwind.at) or contact Stefan Kerl at: [Stefan.kerl@suedwind.at](mailto:Stefan.kerl@suedwind.at)*



## Resources for Fashion Students and Teachers

"Fashioning an Ethical Industry" has developed a website ([fashioninganethicalindustry.org/resources](http://fashioninganethicalindustry.org/resources)) containing a wide range of educational resources, including:

- Fact sheets for students and teachers
- "Buying Power" role-play, on the impact of fashion industry decision-making on conditions in the clothing industry
- Film recommendations
- Reports
- Images
- Posters
- Downloadable film clips
- Links to other resources



# Urgent Appeals

## Union-busting in Cambodia: River Rich Workers Win Victory

Just days after C.CAWDU established an independent union in the River Rich factory on October 29, 2006, management laid off 117 workers, most of whom had participated in the union election. Two months later, C.CAWDU held a second election, in which over 500 workers took part. Once again, 30 union members, including the elected leaders, were terminated.

C.CAWDU called on the support of its Global Union Federation, the ITGLWF, and on February 3, 2007, they managed to get the company to agree to a number of demands, including the reinstatement of the 30 fired union leaders. Both parties later signed the agreement in front of the Cambodian Arbitration Council.

But River Rich Textile Ltd. failed to implement it, and refused any more negotiations. So C.CAWDU called for a strike, which began on May 9, 2007. Striking workers were attacked by police several times, using tear gas, electric batons and rifles to disperse the crowd. One worker was hospitalised. Three were charged with incitement to an illegal strike. 1500 workers turned up at the court to support them.

Pressure on the company continued to build through an international campaign, involving the CCC, and on June 7, 2007 an agreement was signed between the company's main buyer **Inditex**, River Rich management and C.CAWDU. Thirty of the dismissed workers were offered reinstatement on permanent contracts, all charges against C.CAWDU members were dropped, and River Rich managers made a commitment to ongoing negotiations with C.CAWDU.

*For more on C.CAWDU and on labour rights issues in the Cambodian garment sector, see page 10.*

## Sued for Telling the Truth

The CCC and the India Committee of the Netherlands (ICN), and seven individual campaigners connected to the two organisations have been summoned to appear in court in Bangalore, India. The organisations and individuals are accused of "cyber crime", "acts of racist and xenophobic nature" and "criminal defamation" under the Indian penal code. What the CCC and ICN have actually been doing is speaking out against labour rights violations at an Indian garment producer. For this, the campaigners face two years' imprisonment.

The summons is part of the ongoing legal harassment of both local and international labour rights advocates by Bangalore jeans producer Fibre & Fabrics International (FFI) and its 100% subsidiary Jeans Knits Pvt. Ltd (JKPL). Labour rights organisations have been highlighting labour rights violations at FFI/JKPL since the end of 2005. But the company refused dialogue and instead filed complaints of slander in the local court. Local labour rights organisations have been under a gag order since July 2006.

In late June 2007, FFI/JKPL issued a statement in which they called upon "all organisations involved to stop with their false accusations and engage in a constructive dialogue with FFI/JKPL to jointly build on the social and sustainable development of the textile and garment industry in India".

The CCC and ICN welcomed the invitation but pointed out that the gag order would need to be lifted first; otherwise local groups reacting to the invitation could be accused of violating it. We also requested that should a dialogue begin that an independent observer be allowed to monitor the proceedings.

FFI replied that they have no faith in dialogue unless CCC and ICN first quit their "false and baseless campaign". They clearly had no intention of withdrawing the lawsuits they have filed. The case against CCC and ICN was postponed until September 24, 2007 when the court issued an arrest order against the

*Dutch CCC activists leafleting to share information about conditions at FFI/JKPL at G-star's headquarters in Amsterdam, June 2007.*



## Urgent Appeals



seven individuals connected to the two organisations. CCC and ICN are appealing this judgement.

### SAI also Threatened?

In 2006, five FFI/JKPL sites obtained SA8000 certification, despite CCC reports of labour rights violations. After a formal complaint was filed by the CCC with Social Accountability International (SAI), a further SAI investigation confirmed that SA8000 certification of FFI/JKPL was not justified. SAI has also confirmed that SA8000 certification must be suspended when a company obtains a legal injunction prohibiting discussion of its operations by stakeholders.

Various sources confirm that the SA8000 certification of the FFI/JKPL units has been suspended. However, the terms of suspension, including the timeframe, remain unclear. Despite multiple requests for additional information, SAI has not shared any information about the details of the suspension procedures with CCC and ICN, reportedly because FFI/JKPL has issued

legal threats against SAI. The CCC believes that once SAI starts giving in to companies' threats, SAI makes its own position as an independent certification institution impossible.

### Brands Ducking and Diving

After meeting with the CCC and ICN in June, FFI/JKPL's biggest buyer **G-Star** reported setting a September 2007 deadline for FFI/JKPL to comply with the right to freedom of association (FOA). However, FFI/JKPL managers seem to be choosing the unions they will allow into the factory and this is not compliance with FOA.

**Gap** has stated that given the impasse between FFI/JKPL and various national and international organisations, they feel obliged to review their sourcing relationship in order to uphold the freedom of association provisions in their code of conduct.

**Mexx** apparently will no longer place orders at FFI/JKPL, but have not said why. Nor have they said how they will ensure that



FFI/JKPL workers will not lose their jobs as a result of their withdrawal, nor if they will reconsider doing business with FFI/JKPL once the labour issues are resolved.

As for **Armani**, **RaRe** and **Guess**, there have been no responses at all.

A CCC public campaign urging supporters to contact FFI/JKPL to urge them to withdraw the court cases against labour rights organisations and to start engaging with their local stakeholders including GATWU, NTUI, Cividep and the Women Garment Workers' Front "Munnade" is ongoing. The CCC is also urging the public to contact Armani, RaRe and Guess to protest their refusal to deal with the labour rights violations at their supplier.

*To find out how you can support the struggle for labour rights and freedom of expression in connection with the FFI case, see [www.cleanclothes.org/urgent/ffi.htm](http://www.cleanclothes.org/urgent/ffi.htm).*

## Union Victory at Bangladesh Garment Factory

In August 2007, management at a Bangladesh garment factory gave in to demands to reinstate illegally-dismissed union officials. Pressure from the factory's main buyer was a key factor in forcing the company to implement a December 2006 agreement between the union and management that pledged that the workers would be reinstated and that anti-union harassment would be stopped.

The union was formed in mid-August 2006 and registered with 110 members. However, factory managers soon dismissed all the union officers and five members.

At that time the dismissed unionists were told by a factory manager: "If I see you at the factory premises after today, you will be killed". The union general secretary was visited at home by hired thugs who was told that, "...he will be disabled; he will lose his life. If he does not leave Dhaka, we will kill him".

Other workers' rights violations at this factory consisted of unpaid overtime, verbal harassment of female workers (including referring to the women as prostitutes), and reassigning union members.

The factory's main buyer is the French brand **Mim**. Mim is owned by the company **New Look**, which is a member of the UK-based Ethical Trading Initiative and has a code of conduct which says that freedom of association should be respected at all its suppliers.

Mim put pressure on the factory's management to reinstate the illegally dismissed unionists. A memorandum of understanding was reached in December 2006, when the union, the factory and the BGMEA (Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association) met. However, it was not implemented, and the dismissed workers were never taken back.

After more pressure on Mim and the factory's management, a new agreement was reached in August 2007. This includes the reinstatement of the union officers and payment of compensation to the dismissed union members who have found other jobs. The CCC continues to monitor the implementation of this agreement.



# In Brief

## CCC Input to the United Nations

The Clean Clothes Campaign International Secretariat has been in correspondence with John Ruggie, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative on Business and Human Rights. In our five-page letter dated 23 March 2007, the CCC offers Ruggie suggestions on how multinational companies could improve labour conditions in supply chains and takes a critical look at the general impact of corporate social responsibility initiatives, voluntary supply chain initiatives, stakeholder involvement, and so on. The CCC letter can be found at:  
[www.cleanclothes.org/ftp/070323\\_CCC\\_to\\_Ruggie.pdf](http://www.cleanclothes.org/ftp/070323_CCC_to_Ruggie.pdf)

In his response, Ruggie agrees with much that we say. For example, "I think it is a well-established fact by now that supply chain monitoring by itself has a limited impact on inducing behavioral changes" and he agrees with the need to involve state actors. However, he warns that, while his mandate is broad, his time is limited. He is going to concentrate on "overall system architecture". Find Ruggie's letter at:  
[www.cleanclothes.org/ftp/070417-Ruggie\\_to\\_ccc.pdf](http://www.cleanclothes.org/ftp/070417-Ruggie_to_ccc.pdf).

The CCC International Secretariat is helping Ruggie to organise an expert workshop on improving human rights performance of business through multi-stakeholder initiatives. The workshop, hosted by the Netherlands Ministry of Development Cooperation, will be held November 6 and 7th.

## GSCP: By Business, For Business

The Global Social Compliance Programme (GSCP), launched in 2006, represents business' latest proposal to address sweatshop conditions in the global supply chains of

multinational corporations. Behind the initiative are the giant retailers Carrefour, Metro, Migros, Tesco and Wal-Mart, in collaboration with CIES - The Food Business Forum. CIES is a network of CEOs and senior managers of nearly 400 food companies in over 150 countries, headquartered in Paris.

The GSCP aims to promote the "harmonization of existing codes and implementation systems". It wants "to build consensus on best practices and develop a harmonized message for suppliers globally in order to reduce duplication of effort and accelerate progress in monitoring of working conditions."

In recent months, the GSCP has been inviting labour rights organisations to take part in the GSCP Advisory Board and to give comments on their draft code.

The CCC has rejected the GSCP's invitation. The problem is that GSCP membership is only open to companies. Their engagement with stakeholders — whom they name as the ILO, NGOs and trade unions — is in an advisory capacity only, and after key decisions have already been taken.

We told the GSCP: "We do not believe that companies... either acting alone or together, possess the credibility to address these issues by themselves... Only the multi-stakeholder organizations that involve others in the design, implementation and governance of their operations can lay claim to any measure of credibility."

In addition, the letter expresses a concern that the GSCP could become a vehicle for companies that are hostile toward trade unions and help them gain a façade of credibility without changing their practices. Particularly the role of Wal-Mart in this initiative seriously raises questions concerning the character and purpose of the GSCP.

*Read the June 8, 2007 CCC letter to the GSCP at [www.cleanclothes.org/codes/07-06-11.htm](http://www.cleanclothes.org/codes/07-06-11.htm). To visit the GSCP website: [www.ciesnet.com/2-wwedo/index.asp](http://www.ciesnet.com/2-wwedo/index.asp).*

## Wal-Mart: "Top-down monitoring built to fail"

US-based Wal-Mart is the largest retailer in the world, with 3,800 stores in the US, and 2,800 in some 13 other countries. Its new slogan for customers is "Save Money Live Better" but it also has a "Wal-Mart Ethical Standards" program that is, in the words of Vice President of Ethical Standards Rajan Kamalanathan, "in place to do what is right for factory workers and the environment".

In August 2007, Wal-Mart released its "Ethical Sourcing Report" for 2006. Wal-Mart says it was based on over 16,000 audits at 8,873 factories producing goods for its stores, more audits than ever. It also claims other improvements such as better environmental criteria.



*Makeshift tent housing workers striking for union rights at Wal-Mart supplier Chong Won in the Philippines.*

The response of Wal-Mart Watch and Students and Scholars against Corporate Misbehavior (SACOM) was to issue another report, this one on the conditions in toy factories in China that supply Wal-Mart. China is Wal-Mart's largest sourcing country.

The SACOM report shows serious and wide-ranging labour violations there, from wage and hour violations, to unsafe working conditions, illegal firings, unsanitary housing, and coerced audit responses from workers. It is based on off-site interviews with 82 workers at five Wal-Mart toy supplier factories in the cities of Shenzhen and Zhuhai.

SACOM describes why Wal-Mart auditors fail to grasp the reality at their Chinese suppliers. At the Tai Hsing factory in Shenzhen, managers conducted "training sessions" with workers on how to answer questions from Wal-Mart's auditors in preparation for pre-announced inspections. Managers warned workers, "If you answer auditors' questions incorrectly, we get to lose orders and you get to lose your job".

SACOM also reports, "When Tai Qiang workers petitioned the Wal-Mart corporate responsibility department in April 2005 to set up a worker-run union in accordance with the Chinese law, they received no reply."

Highlighting the recent recall of unsafe toys produced in China, Wal-Mart Watch's David Nassar adds, "It is not a stretch to draw a connection between the pressure Wal-Mart puts on its suppliers for low cost merchandise, the problems at these factories, and the safety issues of the products". He calls Wal-Mart's own report "an attempt to avoid responsibility for the problems the company itself has created".

#### **Wal-Mart's "Ethical Sourcing Report for 2006"**

Available at [walmartstores.com/Files/2006ReportonEthicalSourcing.pdf](http://walmartstores.com/Files/2006ReportonEthicalSourcing.pdf)

#### **"The Story of Toys Made in China for Wal-Mart"**

SACOM, Hong Kong, June 2007

Available in English at [www.sacom.hk/html/uploads/WalMart%20Report\(SACOM\)Jun2007.pdf](http://www.sacom.hk/html/uploads/WalMart%20Report(SACOM)Jun2007.pdf), and in Chinese at [www.sacom.hk/html/uploads/WalMartCHINESE2007.pdf](http://www.sacom.hk/html/uploads/WalMartCHINESE2007.pdf)

Wal-Mart Watch: [www.walmartwatch.com](http://www.walmartwatch.com)

"Discounting Rights: Wal-Mart's Violation of US Workers' Right to Freedom of Association", Human Rights Watch, US, May 2007 (for more information see page 23)

## **GoodElectronics Network Launched**

Inspired by global networks such as the Clean Clothes Campaign, a new network has been launched to take up labour rights and environmental concerns in the context of the global electronics industry.

The new initiative, known as the GoodElectronics network, already links 150 NGOs and trade unions. The main focus of the network is to strengthen grassroots organisations and workers in their local and global struggle for human rights and a sustainable environment.

The network was formally launched in May 2007 at a meeting in Bangkok attended by 50 representatives from all over the world. Its coordination is hosted by the Netherlands-based Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO).

The network's founding announcement notes that: "... the electronics industry has evolved into the fastest growing global industry. With that it has created a wide variety of worker and environmental challenges. Many of these challenges are comparable to those of the garment industry, including the undermining of international rights such as freedom of association, a living wage, and responsible health and safety measures..."

The CCC looks forward to working together with GoodElectronics on relevant cases and campaigns and wishes the network success with their important work.

For more information on the network and its activities, see [www.godelectronics.org](http://www.godelectronics.org)





# New Resources

## Corporate Responsibility and Factory Closures

Long neglected as an issue by brands and retailers, the relationship between corporate responsibility, sourcing policies, and factory closures is finally being discussed. This CCC electronic bulletin looks into the issues at stake when garment factories close or significantly reduce their production causing widescale layoffs, with an emphasis on the responsibilities of the brand name companies and retailers at the top of the supply chain. It provides an overview of the existing regulations and agreements regarding closure and workers' rights in the international labour rights context.

*"Expectations in relation to Factory Closures and Mass-Dismissals" by Ineke Zeldenrust and Tessel Pauli, CCC E-Bulletin, September 2007. Available at: [www.cleanclothes.org/publications/07-09-e\\_bulletin\\_ccc.htm](http://www.cleanclothes.org/publications/07-09-e_bulletin_ccc.htm)*

## Hermosa: Did the FLA Emergency Fund Actually Help?

The closure of the Hermosa Manufacturing facility in El Salvador in May 2005 left workers without jobs, back wages,

severance pay, health insurance or pensions. Some lost their homes. Many – in particular those who had organised a union at the factory – remain unemployed to this day (see Newsletter No. 23, May 2007 for more information).

This report analyses the support the Hermosa workers received at the time, especially the emergency fund set up by the Fair Labor Association (FLA). This report, prepared by the Maquila Solidarity Network (MSN) for the FLA, provides good insight into the debates around the role of the state vs. the role of brands, and the different positions of unions and NGOs. MSN interviewed many of those involved, in El Salvador and elsewhere, including the organised former Hermosa workers, companies sourcing at Hermosa, unions and NGOs.

*"Emergency Assistance, Redress and Prevention in the Hermosa Manufacturing Case", Maquila Solidarity Network, June 2007 Available at: [en.maquilasolidarity.org/sites/maquilasolidarity.org/files/HermosaReportFinal\\_1.pdf](http://en.maquilasolidarity.org/sites/maquilasolidarity.org/files/HermosaReportFinal_1.pdf)*

## Lessons from Cambodia's Garment Industry

This 13-page paper investigates labour monitoring in Cambodia. Based on field research, it identifies lessons for the garment industry in Africa and elsewhere. Broader development paradigms that undermine workers' rights are also discussed, as well as recent attempts to use improved labour standards as a competitive advantage in international trade. The author highlights the need for greater international collaboration in this area.

*"Labor Monitoring In Cambodia's Garment Industry: Lessons for Africa", by Ama Marston, Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative, May 1, 2007 Available at: [www.realizingrights.org/pdf/Labor\\_Monitoring\\_in\\_the\\_Garment\\_Industry\\_May2007\\_A\\_Marston.pdf](http://www.realizingrights.org/pdf/Labor_Monitoring_in_the_Garment_Industry_May2007_A_Marston.pdf)*

## Wal-Mart "Discounting" US Workers' Rights

This 210-page Human Rights Watch (HRW) report reveals how Wal-Mart – the world's largest company – employs a sophisticated strategy to prevent unionisation at its US stores. Quashing union activity wherever it starts, Wal-Mart aggressively interferes with US workers' fundamental right to organise. HRW says, "Wal-Mart asserts that 'respect for the individual is one of the core values that have made us into the company we are

today.' Wal-Mart's systematic interference with individual workers' right to freedom of association flies in the face of this professed core value". HRW continues to urge the United States to bring US labour law into conformity with international law on the crucial issue of workers' right to organise.

*"Discounting Rights: Wal-Mart's Violation of US Workers' Right to Freedom of Association", Human Rights Watch, US, May 2007*  
Available at: [hrw.org/reports/2007/us0507](http://hrw.org/reports/2007/us0507)

## What's Behind Aldi's Clothing Bargains?

In this new study, the SÜDWIND Institute, a part of the German CCC, provides evidence of widespread violations of labour laws in Chinese and Indonesian factories which supply Aldi, the largest German and European discounter. Discounters have become Germany's top textile and clothing retailers in recent years. A fundamental basis for their discount sales is the drastic savings in labour costs – both in German retail branches and in supplier factories throughout the world. The 96-page study ends with suggestions for consumer and trade union action.

*"Aldi's clothing bargains – discount buys discounting standards? Working conditions in Aldi's suppliers in China and Indonesia: Suggestions for consumer and trade union action", SÜDWIND Institute, Germany, August 2007. Available at: [www.suedwind-institut.de/downloads/ALDI-publ\\_engl\\_2007-08.pdf](http://www.suedwind-institut.de/downloads/ALDI-publ_engl_2007-08.pdf)*

## Women Migrant Workers under "Apartheid" in China

This report by the Committee for Asian Women (CAW) looks at how deeply the combination of a one-party state and capitalist reforms in China since the 1990s has affected women rural migrant workers and how they have responded.

It identifies seven elements of the repressive regime at national, municipal and local levels, and argues that together they have given rise to a kind of spatial and social apartheid that systematically discriminates against the rural population, with women being the most oppressed.

One case study discussed is that of the mass strikes and protests at two Taiwanese-owned Stella shoe factories in 2004, then producing for brands such as Nike and Reebok. (For more on the international campaign to support the Stella workers, which the CCC participated in, see <http://www.cleanclothes.org/legal/05-01-01.htm>).

*"Women Migrant Workers under the Chinese Social Apartheid", Committee for Asian Women, May 2007*  
Available at: [www.cawinfo.org/pdf/final\\_10.pdf](http://www.cawinfo.org/pdf/final_10.pdf)

## ITUC Report Catalogues Increasing Violence Against Unionists

In 2006, 144 trade unionists were murdered for defending workers' rights, while more than 800 suffered beatings or torture, according to the Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights Violations, published by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). The 379-page report details nearly 5,000 arrests and more than 8,000 dismissals of workers due to their union activities. The report also documents 484 new cases of unionists held in detention by governments. According to the ITUC, women workers in particular continued to face repression, particularly given the exploitation of the mainly female workforce in export processing zones in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

"Workers seeking to better their lives through trade union activities are facing rising levels of repression and intimidation in an increasing number of countries," said ITUC General Secretary Guy Ryder. "Most shocking of all is the increase of some 25% in the number killed compared to the previous year." Sadly, in many of the countries highlighted in the report, repression continued during 2007.

*Annual Survey of Trade Union Rights Violations, 2007 edition, ITUC September 2007. Available in English, Spanish, German and French at <http://survey07.ituc-csi.org/>*

## Lobbying for Sweatshops

A battle has been taking place over reforms to China's labour law. Global corporations have been aggressively lobbying the Chinese government to weaken or abandon significant pro-worker reforms proposed in March 2006. In opposition are pro-worker rights forces in China, backed by labour, human rights, and political forces around the world.

Corporate lobbying has already resulted in a weakening of the proposed new law. However, according to this 44-page report, US corporate groups have launched an unpublicised new attack demanding more amendments. The authors argue that increasingly the globalisation debate is not about free trade vs. protectionism, but about the activities of a global "sweatshop lobby" that is deliberately shaping labour law and labour markets worldwide.

*"Undue Influence: Corporations Gain Ground in Battle over China's New Labor Law - But Human Rights and Labor Advocates are Pushing Back", Global Labour Strategies, March 2007. Available at: [www.eldis.org/cf/rdr/rdr.cfm?doc=DOC24154&em=260407&sub=csl](http://www.eldis.org/cf/rdr/rdr.cfm?doc=DOC24154&em=260407&sub=csl)*





Beijing 2008



Beijing 2008



LIPO