

October 25th, 2012

## TO ALL FOOTWEAR COMPANIES ADDRESSED BY STOP CHILD LABOUR CAMPAIGN

Dear Madam, Sir,

On October 16th the Stop Child Labour Campaign has published a press release in The Netherlands about the findings of the research done by SOMO on child labour in the leather shoe industry as well as additional research of Hivos among 28 footwear companies.

The main message of the press release is that there are still shoes for sale on the European market which are produced by making use of child labour.

The findings of child labour in India have been linked with four companies: Marks & Spencer, Clarks, Bugatti and Bata. This news was made public in combination with a report containing a scorecard of 28 footwear companies on several CSR criteria plus descriptions per company based on our analysis of their CSR policy and practice. Additionally an article with a shorter overview and conclusions based on this assessment of policies and implementation of 28 footwear companies was published.

The Dutch media has given attention to these findings of Stop Child Labour as well. Our coordinator was invited to explain our campaign 'We want childfriendly shoes!' in the Dutch television programme 'Koffietijd' on Monday October 16<sup>th</sup>. On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> the national newspaper 'De Volkskrant' published an article on the issue based on our reports, as did the newspaper 'Nederlands Dagblad' on Wednesday the 18<sup>th</sup>.

In the past week we received responses of companies who had not reacted at all to earlier emails and messages; among them are Bugatti, Marks & Spencer, Van Lier and Cruyff Sports.

Hereby we would like to inform you that yesterday (Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup>) we have published a press release in English and have posted all the documents on our international website: <a href="http://www.stopchildlabour.org/Stop-Childlabour/News-Items/Shoe-companies-are-far-from-being-child-labour-free">http://www.stopchildlabour.org/Stop-Childlabour/News-Items/Shoe-companies-are-far-from-being-child-labour-free</a>.

The report has been adapted and now includes some postscripts on the companies who reacted after October 16<sup>th</sup>.

Prior to the publication we received feedback from 20 companies to our request to check the information on their company given in our report. We appreciate that so many companies responded despite the relatively short time to respond. We included this feedback in the report where appropriate.

While a number of you have already taken significant steps or started a process eradicating child labour and respecting labour rights in your supply chain, we would like to encourage you – in case this has not (sufficiently) been done yet - to actively take up the following issues:

- a policy with regard to child labour and labour rights in your full supply chain, including your sub-contractors in both shoe production as well the use of your main materials like leather;
- a survey and risk assessment of child labour and other violations of labour rights in your supply chain;
- a policy and plan of implementation on the remediation of child labour or labour rights violations found:
- a form of external assessment or verification of the results of your activities;
- co-operation with other companies and stakeholders like NGOs and trade unions whereever that is possible, including participation in dedicated multi-stakeholder initiatives;
- transparency to the general public about the process and results of the activities you are undertaking to combat child labour and tackle labour rights violations.

For a more detailed guidance on these matters you can make use of the *Action Plan for Companies to Combat Child Labour*, a publication of the Stop Child Labour Campaign.

As Stop Child Labour we will continue with our 'We want childfriendly shoes!' campaign and around mid-2013 we will ask you what progress you have achieved on the issues mentioned above.

For the short term we plan to come with an update around November 20<sup>th</sup> 2012 (International Day for the Rights of the Child). We will take new or additional information into account for the update of our scorecard, description and assessment of the companies. We still want to give companies that have provided little or no information the opportunity to provide this information. To be able to process the information in time we need to receive this information not later, but preferable earlier, than November 12.

It is also relevant to mention that we have been informed by BSCI (Business Social Compliance Initiative) that they were requested by a few members to take an active role in the follow-up process and to investigate the possibilities to have a meeting with several companies, suppliers and relevant stakeholders in India to discuss the issue of child labour in the production of shoes. Hopefully this will lead to the start of a process to combat the use of child labour in the full supply chain. Having a meeting in Europe with footwear companies and stakeholders has been discussed as well. We believe this can be useful prior to having a meeting in India.

We are happy with this initiative of BSCI and its members and we hope that all companies will be interested and motivated to join this initiative and/or start or join other initiatives that will lead to more effective measures against child labour and other labour rights violations.

Looking forward to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

Gerard Oonk and Leonie Blokhuis

On behalf of the campaign 'Stop Child Labour – School, the best place to work'.