Response to Wal-Mart’s Announcement to Toughen Standards in Supplier Factories
Friday October 21, 2005

United Students Against Sweatshops’ Response to Wal-Mart’s Announcement to Toughen Standards in Supplier Factories

Wal-Mart has received a considerable amount of press since its announcement yesterday to toughen its standards and uphold worker rights.

Unfortunately, Wal-Mart CEO Lee Scott appears to have made no reference to concrete measures the company will take to improve conditions for workers producing Wal-Mart’s goods.

In order for Wal-Mart to improve conditions in its supplier factories it must first fundamentally alter its business practice of demanding a continuously lower price from supplier factories – a price which renders those factories unable to pay workers a living wage. Further, Wal-Mart must commit to supplying from those factories in which workers have democratic representation and the right to bargain collectively with their employer. Additionally, Wal-Mart must open its supply chain to independent monitoring so that independent, unannounced, factory assessments may take place.

These three actions are just the beginning if Wal-Mart is to truly live up to yesterday’s statement that “you can do well by going good.” We will not be placated by vague statements that lack concrete action. We continue to demand that all retailers uphold the right of those workers to have a voice in their work and that they recognize the right of those workers to have a voice in their work.

Organizations that have endorsed the statement as of October 26, 2005:
Campaign for Labor Rights
International Labor Rights Fund
Jobs with Justice
Maquila Solidarity Network
National Labor Committee
STITCH
Sweatfree Communities
Sweatshop Watch
US/LEAP

http://www.sweatshopwatch.org/news/59