FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW YORK- China Labor Watch (CLW) has discovered child labor in a factory called HTNS Shenzhen Co., Ltd., a partner factory of Samsung that assembles Samsung cell phones. This comes just two weeks after Samsung stated that it did not find any child workers while auditing this factory in September.

HTNS, with 1100 workers, has violated a number of labor laws and ethical standards, including monthly overtime hours four times in excess of the legal limit, forced labor, sub-minimum overtime wages, crude personnel management, hiring discrimination, safety training that does not satisfy legal standards, the inability of workers to resign, heavy use of dispatch labor, and more.

But perhaps the most alarming violation is the use of child workers at HTNS. CLW’s investigator met at least three girls who were under the age of 16, which is the legal definition of child labor in China. Our investigator confirmed, through personal IDs and discussion with the girls, that they were underage. CLW has recordings of these discussions and images of their IDs. Read the full investigative report.

Treated the same as adult workers, these three girls work overtime hours in excess of 13 hours per day and are paid overtime wages below the legal standard. The monthly overtime hours of Liu Tiantian surpassed 150 hours.

Furthermore, the discovery of these child workers also provides evidence for the ineffectiveness of Samsung’s audit system. HTNS was one of the factory’s that Samsung audited during September in response to an earlier report by CLW that found labor abuses throughout Samsung’s supply chain. On November 26 of this year, Samsung stated that Samsung did not identify any instance of child labor during the audits after reviewing HR records of all workers aged below 18 and conducting face-to-face ID checks. However, one of the child workers at HTNS entered the factory before the Samsung audit, suggesting that these audits are not really able to rule out some labor violations.

CLW has already provided information on these three girls to the factory and to Samsung. Samsung sent personnel to speak with the girls, but as of this morning, two of the girls, Lei Xiaomin and Wu Xiaolan, are apparently no longer working at HTNS, preventing Samsung from contacting them. According to a CLW source, they are being followed by people from the dispatch company that sent them to the factory.

Investigators of CLW have discovered child labor in other factories that produce for Samsung as well. Samsung must not allow such labor violations in its supply chain. It should put measures in place immediately to ensure that no more child workers will be involved in any part of the production or assembly process of Samsung products.

CLW’s Executive Director Li Qiang said, “This incident shows the ineffectiveness of Samsung’s audits in protecting its workers’ labor rights. These audits are really intended to be effective PR tools, but in reality, Samsung’s audits are false advertisements.”