

CCC statement - FIFA Tolerates Massive Violations of Labour Rights

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Statement by the Clean Clothes Campaign and the Global March Against Child Labour

FIFA Tolerates Massive Violations of Labour Rights

28 May 2002, The Clean Clothes Campaign and the Global March Against Child Labour call upon FIFA and the sporting goods industry to live up to their own promises and responsibilities to make football a fair game, by giving adult workers better working conditions and taking children out of work and into schools.

We are deeply concerned about the sub-standard working conditions of workers and the ongoing use of child labour in the sporting goods industry. Some products made by sponsors and licensees, using the FIFA and/or the 2002 World Cup logos, are violating fundamental and other rights of workers.

In the past months, new research has been done on working conditions in the sportswear and football production in China, India, Indonesia and Pakistan. The results are simply shocking. The newly published reports show clear evidence of inhumane working conditions. Such violations as the right to organise and practice collective bargaining being suspended, forced overtime work, discrimination against women, the use of child labour and paying wages below the legal minimum or wages which cannot meet the needs of the workers and their families.

For copies of the full reports, please see: <http://www.globalmarch.org/world-cup-campaign/>

Furthermore, the Clean Clothes Campaign and the Global March Against Child Labour were appalled when FIFA declared that they "cannot be held responsible for the labour conditions in factories," in a letter sent to the Clean Clothes Campaign, on April 16, 2002. This statement is in clear contradiction to the standards set by FIFA, regarding the labour rights for the production of its licensed goods. Furthermore it negates the dialogue that FIFA has been maintaining with civil society organisations and international agencies in the recent past, especially with the Global March since the launch of the World Cup Campaign 2002. FIFA should be reminded that they have drafted their own code of conduct in partnership with the international trade unions in 1996. FIFA has also agreed to licensing contracts with companies using FIFA and World Cup logos for their sportswear, footballs and other sporting goods, which include fundamental labour rights set by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Model Code established by the World Federation of the Sports Goods Industry (WFSGI).

The statement from FIFA and the lack of willingness to maintain an open dialogue with civil society groups on this matter have alarmingly increased our concerns about the implementation of FIFA's legal and social obligations to the workers who produce FIFA licensed products and other football related goods. FIFA, via FIFA Marketing AG, has commercial interest in its contracts with companies using the FIFA logo to generate billions in profit, it seems to leave out questioning corporate social

responsibility of such companies.

The violations of the legal and social obligations of both FIFA and the sporting goods industry towards the workers and children cannot go on any longer. Therefore, we demand that FIFA must:

Take full responsibility for the labour conditions in all the factories where FIFA licensed goods are manufactured;

Make sure that no child is employed in the production of FIFA-licensed sportswear and footballs, as well as making sure that all children removed from labour are rehabilitated and given the opportunity to receive an education;

Sign and implement the FIFA Code of Labour Practice that was agreed upon by FIFA, ICFTU, ITGLF and FIET (now UNI) in 1996 and declare that code to be binding in all contracts with FIFA licenses and sponsors; and,

Agree on a transparent, credible and independent system for the monitoring and the verification of production as it is outlined in the Clean Clothes Campaign code of labour practice.

FIFA, ILO, UNICEF, trade unions and civil society organisations have taken a step in the right direction by establishing social protection projects and monitoring systems to prevent and eliminate child labour in India and Pakistan. It has been proven that change is possible, but they must be implemented quicker and with a wider and more comprehensive scope.

The emphasis placed by FIFA on child labour in the implementation of its code of conduct undermines the labour rights of all their workers. We have yet to see a monitoring system, which addresses the labour standards set in the Model Code of WFSGI and/or in the FIFA licensing agreements. In a series of country reports, we have found that children are forced into work while their parents are not guaranteed to earn enough to provide for the whole family. The elimination of child labour is not possible simply by setting up non-formal schools or by offering families grants for sending children to schools. It will only be possible when all adult workers are given full access to their rights, including: the freedom of association and the exercise of their collective bargaining powers, living wages, and healthy and safe working environment.

It would be a grave offense against the principles of FAIR-P(L)AY if FIFA should keep giving business to sponsors and licensees who violate the rights of their workers, while denying its own responsibilities to "play fair". It is responsible to ensure that all parties involved in the production of football are treated with respect as human beings. How sporty does it feel for the consumers and sports(wo)men to wear a shirt or kick a ball with the FIFA logo that stands for exploitation?

Will the logos on the footballs and the licensed goods of the 2002 FIFA World Cup shine to reflect a victory for all the workers involved in the production of football?

The Clean Clothes Campaign and the Global March Against Child Labour will closely follow FIFA and the sporting goods industry over the coming weeks and months. We will report any progress, and any lapses or shortcomings to the public as they arise. We hope that the 2002 FIFA World Cup will be the turning point to fully realise the demands made by the World Cup Campaign 2002. We hope that FIFA, the ILO, UNICEF, the international trade union network and civil society groups will soon be able to come together in an open dialogue towards establishing a good code of conduct and a transparent and effective monitoring system to bring an end to child labour and to give fair working conditions for all adult workers.

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