FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

China Labor Watch has obtained more information about the ongoing strikes in Shanghai and Shenzhen today. The Shanghai strikers -- who walked off the job at a Hi-P factory on November 30th over an ultimatum they were given by management to move to Nanhui or quit without compensation -- have now literally taken their complaint to the government’s doorstep. According to today’s Lianhe Zaobao, a Singaporean newspaper, two hundred workers from the factory gathered in front of the Shanghai City Hall’s main gate yesterday. They requested that the government intervene on their behalf to settle the dispute with the factory. The factory has refused to consider giving the workers any compensation for the factory’s relocation. Additionally, the factory has threatened that any worker who does not return to work in less than three days will be forced to leave. A few strikers have already found that their jobs have been filled by replacements. It is clear from this that the Hi-P factory has decided to use the traditional, high-handed approach that many Chinese factories use to deal with striking workers.

Meanwhile, in Shenzhen, a source at the Hailiang Memory Equipment Company factory sent an e-mail to CLW last night describing the current state of the strike, which started on December 4. The workers have been on strike to receive compensation for the loss of their seniority after the factory was sold to Western Digital. The loss of their seniority has left them to termination without severance pay. Our source also cited previously reduced overtime pay and lack of factory contribution to their social insurance payments. Currently, between seven and eight hundred strikers are still in front of factory staging a peaceful sit-in. The local ACFTU and the Nanshan government have been coordinating with each other and negotiating with factory management to resolve the situation. However, since both organizations are sympathetic to management’s position, our source says the workers find their proposed solutions unacceptable. They still don’t know whether the management is negotiating on behalf of Hitachi, the factory’s former owner, or Western Digital, its current owner.

CLW urges both factories to address their workers’ problems with their opaque and unfair management styles and bring their workers into the decision making process. We will provide further updates as they become available.