



PRESS RELEASE

makeITfair

Suicides at Foxconn in China: an appalling showcase for the electronics sector

Consumers call for a fair and green mobile phone

Amsterdam, June 8th 2010

While Apple launches its 4th generation iPhones, labour activists worldwide are protesting today and calling for the commemoration of the 10 workers who committed suicide at the Foxconn factory in Shenzhen producing iPhones and other electronic products. At the same time, the European campaign makeITfair is launching a postcard action to urge mobile phone operators like T-Mobile and Vodafone to offer fair and green phones to their customers. They currently offer phones that are manufactured under exploitative working conditions. The only choice available to consumers is a phone made by workers who are exploited by companies such as Foxconn.

MakeITfair has repeatedly pointed out labour rights issues within the mobile phone supply chain, such as high production quotas, long working days, forced overtime, wages that are too low to provide workers with a decent living and the denial of the right to organize, so that workers cannot defend themselves. Most workers interviewed about the suicides by China Labour Watch are critical of their intensive workload: "We are extremely tired, and we face tremendous pressure." Another Foxconn worker died last week after working a 34-hour shift.

'Fair phones' do not exist. Mobile network operators such as T-Mobile and Vodafone, who offer customers a 'free' new mobile phone when they sign up for a new subscription, claim that consumer demand for fair and green phones is low. MakeITfair coordinator Irene Schipper explains: "That's why we want to mobilize consumers with this action card to ask their network operators to offer a phone made under decent working conditions. We believe that consumers want that choice."

In several European countries including Sweden, Germany, Hungary and the Netherlands, makeITfair partner organizations are launching the postcard campaign today. "They want to collect 10,000 signatures from consumers to show that consumers actually do care and want the choice of buying fair and green phones."

For more information:

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Click [here](#) to see or fill in the **postcard** "I want a fair & green phone"

Worldwide actions: In Hong Kong the activist group SACOM and other Hong Kong organisations will stage a protest on 8 June at Studio A, an Apple retail shop owned by Gou Tai-chiang, the younger brother of Terry Gou (Foxconn's founder and chairman). Worldwide, NGOs, trade unions and individuals are encouraged to protest at Apple's stores by delivering white flowers in memory of the victims. In Taiwan, unions and NGOs will protest at the Annual General Shareholder meeting of Foxconn on 8 June.

Read the makeITfair [statement regarding Foxconn](#)

Research by makeITfair describes the severe environmental and social problems in the mobile phone supply chain, stressing the need for increased responsibility and accountability within the chain:

- [*Silenced to deliver Mobile Phone manufacturing in China and the Philippines*](#)
 - [*Mobile Phone production in China: a follow-up report on two suppliers in Guangdong*](#)
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- [*Fair Phones: it's your call*](#)
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The makeITfair project aims to raise awareness about labour and human rights abuses and environmental problems in the production chain of consumer electronics goods, including mobile phones, MP3 players, games consoles and laptops. It is co-funded by the EU and participating organisations are: SOMO, Germanwatch, FinnWatch, SwedWatch, Fair Trade Center, DanWatch, Repu (Finland), Association of Conscious Consumers (Hungary), CSRSC (South Africa), WAC (Philippines), ACIDH (Congo) and Cividep (India).