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Submission for the

**POSITIVE AWARD
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**Filed by: Thai Labor Campaign, Ladprao,
Thailand**

Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC)

Headquarters: CCC International is based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, with country offices in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and Great Britain
Established: 1989/1990
Web site: www.cleanclothes.org
Number of employees: 5 at CCC International and 9 country coordinators
Number of members: CCC is an NGO coalition consisting of over 200 member organizations
Area of activity: Textile industry
Main objectives: The improvement of working conditions through public relations, campaigns, research, support of workers in textile producing countries, and the CCC Model Code

Summary

With their Urgent Appeals, the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) supports workers affected by labor conflicts in the textile industry. An appeal is launched when seamstresses and tailors need the aid of public pressure to protect their rights. The successful implementation of the appeal system against the closure of the "Bed and Bath" textile factory in Thailand demonstrates the effectiveness of the campaign. The CCC also promotes consumer education and actively participates in the improvement of production standards based on the CCC Model Code.

Reasons for the submission

The international Clean Clothes Campaign is regularly called upon by workers and their unions when affected by labor conflicts. The international consumer pressure on the responsible firms, not least the firms in the North where the textiles are sold, can only be realized via an international network. This is where the Clean Clothes Campaign plays an important role as a fusion of various organizations. Its work includes letters of protest to firms, e-mail protest actions, letters of support for the textile workers, and public events such as demonstrations, conferences and speaking tours.

The "Bed and Bath" textile factory in Thailand is a good example of a successful CCC Urgent Appeal. When the factory suddenly closed, 850 employees were on the street, jobless, from one day to the next. The working conditions in the factory violated numerous standards as well as the internal codes of the companies buying the end products. Among these companies were Nike, Reebok, Adidas, Levi's, Fila and Umbro. Workers described long work hours, arbitrary salary cuts,

and even amphetamines secretly added to their drinking water to ensure performance during night shifts and overtime.

After the factory closed, the workers registered a protest with the Thai Ministry of Labor, demanding the payment of outstanding wages. The international CCC Urgent Appeal campaign provided support, directing its efforts at all firms that the factory had produced for, as well as the vital consumers.

Results of the campaign

The workers received wage compensation payments after three months of massive protests. International pressure also prompted the Thai justice system to detain the owner of the “Bed and Bath” factory for groundless dismissal without notice and other labor rights violations. The 850 workers banded together to purchase the factory, which now produces textiles as a supplier under better working conditions. It also produces T-shirts of the brand “Dignity Return” for unions and social organizations. All members of the Solidarity Group, as the owners have named themselves, now receive a living wage and have fair working hours.

What happens next?

On the basis of this and other cases, the Urgent Appeal System of the CCC was evaluated for its effectiveness to bring about improved working conditions. In addition, workshops on the results were held in Indonesia and Europe, together with textile workers, unions and NGOs from the South.

The CCC will continue to place pressure on textile companies in order to enforce equitable working conditions. It does so with research, public pressure and awareness training for consumers; it also works closely with workers in southern countries. The CCC Model Code, developed together with affected workers and then put into practice, helps to demonstrate that fair working conditions are also possible in the textile industry.

Detailed submission: www.publiceye.ch/nominierungen

Further information and links:

- www.cleanclothes.org
- www.thailabour.org/campaigns/bnb/index.html