



## Press Release

### **Thousands of consumers call for fair mobile phones**

makeITfair hands over signatures to mobile phone companies

**Amsterdam, 15.05.09:** On the occasion of World Telecommunication and Information Society Day on May 17, thousands of signatories will put pressure on mobile phone companies across Europe to pay greater attention to fair labour standards. "This campaign, organised by makeITfair, collected more than 8,000 signatures calling for fair pay and better labour rights in supplier countries such as China. It shows that consumers are beginning to be more aware about the source of their mobile phones and that there is a demand for fair phones," says Esther de Haan from makeITfair coordinator SOMO. More than half of all mobile phones in use worldwide are produced in China. Migrant workers work up to 12 hours a day, earning only around 40 Euro cents an hour, which is not enough to cover their basic living expenses.

"Mobile phone companies refuse to discuss the low wages in the industry. Furthermore, most Chinese workers have no voice. That is why it is so important that consumers worldwide fight for fair wages, a regular workload and paid overtime", explains Annika Torstenson of the Fair Trade Center, one of the authors of a study on mobile phone production. This makeITfair report on Chinese and Philippino workers, published last year, looked at working conditions down the supply chain of mobile phone companies. A major concern of the workers who were interviewed was their low wage.

The signatures are being sent to the Chief Executive Officers and Corporate Social Responsibility departments of all major brands. The majority of signatures will be delivered to Nokia, which is the biggest producer of mobile phones, with an almost 40 percent share of the worldwide market. Despite this, Nokia did not attend a dialogue conference where 18 of the largest electronics companies including three large mobile phone companies, trade unions and NGOs discussed how conditions along the supply chain could be improved. The meeting took place in Amsterdam last week and was organised by makeITfair and GoodElectronics. Like Nokia, Samsung, Motorola and Sony Ericsson will also receive a huge pile of postcards. "If consumers 'vote' with their buying decision their power will become feasible. We hope that in the long run this will change managers' thinking about their responsibility towards suppliers in China", says Cornelia Heydenreich of Germanwatch.

The above-mentioned makeITfair study "Silenced to Deliver: Mobile phone manufacturing in China and the Philippines", September 2008, laid the groundwork for the campaign. It is available at [http://makeitfair.org/the-facts/reports/silenced-to-deliver/at\\_download/file](http://makeitfair.org/the-facts/reports/silenced-to-deliver/at_download/file)

#### **For further questions and interview requests:**

Germany: Cornelia Heydenreich, Germanwatch, +49 (0)179 783 5551, heydenreich@germanwatch.org

Netherlands: Esther de Haan, SOMO, +31 (0)20 639 1291, e.de.haan@somo.nl

Sweden: Annika Torstenson, Fair Trade Center, +46 (0) 8 6434364, annika@fairtradecenter.se

**makeITfair** is a project that aims to raise awareness about labour and human rights issues and environmental problems in the production chain of consumer electronic goods, including mobile phones, MP3 players, game consoles and laptops. It is co-funded by the EU and led by nine organisations from across Europe: SOMO, Germanwatch, Verbraucher Initiative, FinnWatch/Finnish Association for Nature Conservation, Karat, SwedWatch, Church of Sweden and Fair Trade Center. The campaign on mobile phone companies is both a postcard and e-mail campaign. More information: [www.makeitfair.org](http://www.makeitfair.org)