

Dear [insert name IOC member],

We are contacting you in your capacity as a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to follow up on the issue of respect for workers' rights in Olympics merchandise supply chains. Our organizations are supporters of the PlayFair 2008 campaign and believe that you have a role to play in seeing that the IOC gives this pressing issue the attention it deserves.

As you may be aware, PlayFair 2008 contacted the IOC in May this year to share the findings of research into conditions in supply chains for Olympics-licensed merchandise. This followed a number of approaches to the IOC since the time of the Athens Games on this issue. Meetings between the IOC and the PlayFair partners did take place in 2004 and 2005, however no agreement on follow up to this issue was reached at that time and no concrete action was taken by the IOC.

The most recent research findings (see attached report) were disturbing, documenting a range of serious rights violations affecting several hundred workers in four Chinese companies making Olympics merchandise. These violations included adult wages at half the legal minimum, employment of workers as young as 12 years old, employees made to work 12-hour shifts seven days a week in unsafe and unhealthy conditions. These abuses, coupled with the lack of freedom of association in China, which means workers lack any effective means to defend their rights, represent a very serious set of problems. We understand that since May Play Fair 2008 has been in communication with the IOC to initiate concrete discussions on Play Fair's proposals to address these and other issues. To date such discussions have not taken place. We feel such discussions are a step forward, which the IOC should take.

It is important to note that the rights violations documented in PlayFair 2008's report reflect problems that are by no means limited to production in China. Indeed there is a global problem in this sector for which a global solution is needed. This research again made clear that the IOC must adopt and implement effective mechanisms throughout its Olympics licensing and supply contracts to ensure respect for fundamental labour standards. We hope that in light of the new revelations, the IOC will now take the necessary steps, and take the lead in setting an example and a standard for the world sports community.

We are contacting you now to request that you encourage IOC President Jacques Rogge and other relevant officers of the IOC to engage in a constructive dialogue with representatives of PlayFair 2008 about their proposals to jointly develop and implement methodology and mechanisms to ensure compliance with fundamental labour rights for supply chains for merchandise directly or indirectly licensed by the IOC. It is already widely acknowledged within the apparel and sports merchandise sector that concerted effort is needed to address labour rights violations in such supply chains, and we believe it is high time that the IOC joins in taking up their responsibility to end the exploitation and abuse of the workers who produce Olympic branded goods. A continued failure to act upon this responsibility runs the risk of continued damage to the name and reputation of the Olympic movement. Respect for human rights in the workplace has its place within the ideals of Olympism: as stated

in article one of the Olympic charter: “Olympism seeks to create a way of life based on ... respect for universal fundamental ethical principles”.

We urge you to contact the President without delay to stress to him the urgency of giving credibility to the IOC’s stated commitment to social responsibility and ethical sourcing by outlining significant and concrete follow up steps.

Sincerely,

[insert names]