

# **Stichting Schone Kleren Campagne / Clean Clothes Campaign**

**Annual report 2010**

## **I. Activities**

### **International Forum**

The most important event in 2010 was undoubtedly the International Forum. After months of preparation 240 participants of the CCC network from 47 countries gathered in November in Turkey for four days. The participants were garment workers and worker organisers from producing countries, labour rights and trade union activists, NGO workers and staff member of the European CCCs. The unique bottom-up organisational concept enabled the participants to develop their own programme. This resulted in 90 workshops, organised and moderated by participants themselves. The active participation of garment workers and worker-organisers ensured that the CCC campaigning is guided by the needs of the garments workers themselves. The workshops varied from in-depth discussions on living-wage strategies, to skill sharing on e-campaigning to priority setting on gender issues, etc etc. Apart from that the discussion on a restructuring of the complex international partner network was set off. In the coming years the International Secretariat will continue to coordinate this discussion. The evenings offered lighter entertainment in the form of workshops on belly-dancing, Chinese calligraphy as well as learning each other's protest songs and late night dancing to Bangladeshi hits.

Many participants noted that the workshops and discussions on skills, such as bargaining techniques, campaigning tactics, and the internet and new media were very beneficial. The forum also offered garment workers an opportunity to learn more about how their factories operate in the larger global context. Reinforcing solidarity within the movement was a significant underlying focus of the Forum. Numerous ideas were discussed on how to strengthen the network in the context of the current global economic crisis, and the resulting repression of trade unions and closing of factories in garment-producing countries. Participants discussed the best strategies for organising workers under the current economic conditions.

One of the significant outcomes of the Forum was the formation of a migrants working group. Migrant workers in the garment industry often find themselves in vulnerable positions when it comes to their rights and livelihoods. The migrants working group will ensure that their specific situation and challenges will be addressed and – eventually - mainstreamed into all aspects of CCC strategy and work.

The CCC International Forum website, originally set up for registration of participants and workshops, is still online and is now used for continued networking among the participants and others.

### **Living Wage**

#### **Round table meeting**

An important achievement of the Dutch CCC in 2010 was the organisation of a Round Table meeting. This meeting was the final event of the Dutch Living Wage Campaign that was held in 2009 and 2010. Representatives of 40 organisations sat down to discuss the importance of implementing a living wage. Among them large fashion brands and retailers such as C&A, WE, H&M, M&S Mode, J.C. Rags, de Bijenkorf, Prenatal, Miss Etam and HEMA, representatives of the Ministries of Economic and Foreign Affairs, branch organisations Modint, CBW-Mitex and the Raad Nederlandse Detailhandel (RND) as well as Trade Unions and NGO's such as the Fair Wear Foundation.

First, foreign retailers GAP and Next presented their work on living wage. Then the Fair Wear Foundation, the Institute for Human Rights and Business, and the Asia Floor Wage Campaign shared their expertise on the subject. Then the participants engaged in fruitful and inspiring discussions on the importance of implementing a living wage and were provided with concrete tools to start with. Afterwards the Dutch brands stressed how positive they were about the constructive meeting, that they recognised the importance of living wage and that

they needed to work on it. Of course the Dutch Secretariat will follow-up with these brands and retailers in the years to come.

### **Asian Floor Wage campaign (AFW)**

The Asian Floor Wage campaign has been an on-going dynamic regional initiative since 2005 in response to the poverty wages paid to garment workers all over Asia. The CCC International Secretariat is an active member of the AFW steering committee. The campaign is coordinated by an international network of unions and NGOs and offers a concrete opportunity to pursue a living wage for the mainly women workers in the sector through the concept of Purchasing Power Parity (for complete information visit: [www.asiafloorwage.org](http://www.asiafloorwage.org))

In recent years the AFW campaign has worked to develop consensus and build support for this wage proposal. Their approach of getting and staying in touch with local organisers and workers face to face proved essential to increase the pressure on companies. Materials to support awareness-raising efforts such as comic books on the right to a living wage provide an important tool for reaching out to workers. Thanks to combined pressure of local and global workers and campaigners companies felt urged to enter into dialogue with the Asian Floor Wage campaign in 2010.

### **Fair Fashion**

In the Netherlands, in 2010 the three-year Fair Fashion project that targeted teachers and students of fashion colleges was finalised. The aim of the project was to increase the consciousness of fashion students since they are the future decision makers in this sector. The project ended with a large National Conference attended by 75 students, tutors and professionals. In various presentations supply chain of garments, from cotton field to thrash heaps, was investigated by five different organisations: Max Havelaar, J.C. Rags, Fair Wear Foundation, Charlie + Mary (a fair concept store in Amsterdam), KICI Kledinginzameling.

During the event the glossy student magazine *Fair Fashion* was presented and distributed, Ms Beauty Zibula of SACTWU union from South Africa told the impressive story of her life as a garment worker and union official, and a student showed pictures of his visit to Bangladeshi garment factories.

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> time this year Fair Fashion was also involved in the 'Beyond Green' symposium at the World Fashion Centre. Beyond Green is an event where more than a thousand students, tutors and professionals in fashion could educate themselves about sustainability in the fashion industry. Fair Fashion organised a workshop on creating the perfect garment factory. This workshop was connected to a second activity: a 24-hour sweatshop in the sewing department of the Amsterdam Fashion Institute. Two groups of twenty students worked in six-hour shifts on the production of five hundred bags in sweatshop-like conditions. By participating in the sweatshop the students gained a better understanding of the conditions in the garment sector as they struggled to finish two hundred bags, well below their target. The sweatshop attracted a lot of media attention and the whole session was streamed live through internet and could be seen on local television.

The stakeholders that were consulted for the final evaluation of the Fair Fashion project indicate that they consider this to be a unique project and they appreciate the positive approach of the project. The evaluation shows the awareness about poor working conditions in the garment industry among students and tutors at fashion colleges has grown. A growing number of students and tutors from different colleges, courses and universities request information from SKC (materials, interviews) to be used in their projects or theses and contact Fair Fashion staff for assistance, input and questions. Both tutors and students show a high appreciation of the interactive tools such as workshops and speaker tours involving people from the south. Meeting (former) workers and factory floor organizers from the South face-to-face during speaker tours has a great impact. Hearing their stories makes the subject of fair fashion personal, tangible and inspires student and tutors. An unforeseen positive result of the speaker tours is that the guests from the south are inspired as well: they have indicated they would be interested in working with business- and fashion colleges in their countries as well.

The positive experience of fashion tutors expands to business schools as well: there's increasing interest for the

project coming from retail- and business courses. The project accelerated and supported the integration process of CSR in fashion curricula. On the program level of fashion colleges for example, sustainability is anchored in curricula of the Amsterdam Fashion Institute, TMO Doorn (now European Fashion Business School) will include sustainability issues on a structural basis in their curriculum and SAXION University now has a newly appointed a CSR-tutor. The successful engagement with these colleges also resulted in interest from business sectors, for instance, a retail course at Hogeschool van Amsterdam will be using material composed by Fair Fashion and there is an increase of students projects focussing on CSR. The educational material that has been developed for teachers as part of the project remains available for downloading from the Fair Fashion website and will be updated regularly in the coming years.

## **Sandblasting**

The day after the end of the International Forum, the CCC launched a campaign to convince jeans producers to stop the practice of sandblasting jeans. Sandblasting is often performed in small workshops in the informal sector in jeans-producing countries like Bangladesh, Egypt, China, Turkey, Brazil and Mexico. Almost all of the jeans sold in Europe are produced in these countries. Sandblasting can cause an acute form of the deadly lung disease silicosis. The number of casualties and potential future victims is estimated to be very high: in Turkey alone, 46 documented cases of sandblasters contracting silicosis and dying have been registered. This is likely to be only the tip of the iceberg.

At the CCC International Forum in November 2010 in Turkey sandblasting was a major action focus. The Turkish Solidarity Committee of Sandblasting Labourers presented their observations, detailing the problem of the under-reporting of former sandblasters dying from silicosis in many countries. The Sandblasting campaign appeal was officially launched in Istanbul with impressive media attention both nationally and internationally. Together with the Solidarity Committee of Sandblasting Labourers in Turkey, CCC demanded from jeans producers that they guarantee that sandblasting is not part of their supply chains. Participants from China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Mexico, and Argentina returned home with plans to investigate and launch campaigns to increase awareness of this issue in their countries as well.

The CCC has also called on consumers to stop buying sandblasted jeans. They call on governments of jeans-producing countries to outlaw denim sandblasting, to ensure that occupational health and safety rules are enforced, and to provide disability pensions to sandblasters who contracted silicosis. A number of fashion companies and retailers have already banned the sale of such jeans, or publicly announced that they would phase it out over the next months. Amongst them are Levi-Strauss & Co. and Hennes & Mauritz (H&M) and C&A. The campaign continues in 2011.

## **Urgent appeals**

In 2010 CCC coordinated twenty-five Urgent Appeal cases and participated in four others. Some of the more notable ones are mentioned below.

### **PT Mulia / Tommy Hilfiger – Indonesia**

On 11 February the Dutch CCC organised a public action in front of Tommy Hilfiger's international headquarters in Amsterdam with Emilia Yanti from the Indonesian trade union GSBI. CCC demanded a meeting with the CEO and the COO/CFO in order to receive their action-plan to end the suppression of the trade-union SBGTS-GSBI at their supplier PT Mulia Knitting Factory, Indonesia. In a meeting with COO/CFO Ludo Onnink that day he apologised for the brand's behaviour and promised that Tommy Hilfiger will do their best to end the suppression of trade unions, to re-hire the dismissed workers and work with CCC to try to resolve the problems in the factory. Eventually, after CCC launched an update of its public appeal on 15 April, an agreement was signed between GSBI and the PT Mulia management in May. The agreement clearly recognises that SBGTS-GSBI

represents their members in the factory and provides for compensation to five former employees who had continued their struggle for the right to Freedom of Association.

### **Spectrum factory collapse compensation fund, Bangladesh**

The collapse of the Spectrum factory in April 2005 was one of the worst garment factory disasters in Bangladesh. After 5 years of sustained pressure by CCC on the retailers to compensate the wounded workers and the families of the sixty-four deceased workers of the Spectrum factory the latter have finally received full financial compensation. The compensation fund was coordinated by retailer Inditex in collaboration with ITGLWF.

### **Canon Garments and Life Garments/Life Textile, Bangladesh**

On 20 May 2009 the management closed down the Canon garments and Life Garments/Life Textile factories and their entire workforce lost their jobs. Together with trade union NGWF, CCC protested against the lack of a proper negotiation process by informing the brands and the BGMEA of this labour right violation. At the end of February 2010 a settlement was reached after a negotiation process with NGWF, BGMEA and workers' representatives. All dismissed workers got proper compensation, which was paid on 3 March 2010.

### **Occupational Health & Safety (OHS) problems Bangladesh**

Following repeated serious accidents in various garment factories in Bangladesh elaborated demands for compensation and safety measures from a national and international coalition of labour rights organisations (initiated by CCC and Workers Rights Consortium) were presented to US and European buyers. These were accompanied by reports to the media. The Ethical Trading Initiative, a multi-stakeholder initiative that counts many progressive brands amongst its numbers was involved in this as well.

### **Repression and wage unrest, Bangladesh**

In the summer of 2010 there was a huge worker protest for better wages in Bangladesh in reaction to this several factory owners that supply to major garment retailers such as Walmart, H&M and Carrefour filed fabricated criminal charges against workers and labour leaders. Hundreds of workers and activists were arrested and face trial. Mushrefa Mishu from the Garment Workers Unity Forum was arrested on May 23 and detained for more than 4 months. She still suffers from serious health problems due to police maltreatment. Kalpona Akter, Babul Akhter and Aminul Islam of the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity's (BCWS) were arrested in August after the Bangladeshi government had cancelled BCWS's NGO registration on June 3, 2010, frozen its bank accounts and had ordered the confiscation of all of its property. Some of the charges are punishable by death. In September all three were released on bail after spending 30 days in custody. However they still face charges in 11 cases against them. **All cases consist of a range of charges with punishments ranging from three months to ten years to life in prison** CCC and others continue to urge the retailers to pressurise their suppliers to withdraw the criminal charges.

## **Expansion of the Clean Clothes Campaign network in Europe**

In 2010 two new Clean Clothes Campaign coalitions were launched:

The national CCC coalition in Finland was launched in Helsinki in March at a seminar attended by representatives of Finnish clothing brands, journalists and interested consumers. This coalition was initiated by the NGO SASK Fair Trade Finland and Changemaker and the Finnish textile- and retail unions are part of it.

In October the 15<sup>th</sup> coalition of the Clean Clothes Campaign network was launched in Ireland. Comhlámh, Global solidarity, ICTU, Mandate, Re-dress and Trocaire are part of this coalition.

There are now 16 European CCC secretariats in 15 countries (Belgium has two).

## **Impact Assessment Study**

In 2010 the CCC International Secretariat commissioned an independent impact assessment study of its corporate accountability work funded by the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The purpose of the study was to assess CCC impact on corporate behaviour between 1994 and 2010, to document and analyse that impact to increase understanding and to make recommendations for future CCC activity and strategy in this area.

CCC's Corporate accountability activities include the Urgent Appeals system, reports, national and international campaigns, ranking exercises, consumer and media activities and work to lobby and influence the wider debate.

The assessment's main findings were:

- Campaigning work has a positive impact on company behaviour in many cases, especially with regard to assumption of responsibility for working conditions within supply chains, raising awareness of working conditions and changing some practices;
- Wider work with other bodies has indirect positive impact on corporate accountability generally, including policy and practice;
- Impact varied with regard to how companies engage with stakeholders (both with CCC at international and national level, as well as with other civil society groups such as trade unions) and companies' monitoring and reporting activities;
- More than two-thirds of companies felt that reports, national campaigns and international campaigns were the campaigning activities which had the most impact. Urgent Appeals are taken seriously by most companies and have a particular role to play;

The assessment had three main recommendations for CCC's future work at national and international level:

- Continue to use existing campaign tools, but focus more on generic success factors;
- Develop greater consistency between the International Secretariat and different national CCCs;
- Develop a more consistent, pragmatic communications style indicating a solutions-oriented approach.

These recommendations will be evaluated by the International Secretariat. Where appropriate they will be incorporated in strategies and policies in future years.

## **II. Organisation**

### **New structure**

Two important issues featured at the organisational level this year. First of all, under the guidance of a change consultant the organisation revised the non-hierarchical organisation structure. Various sessions with all teams, the Board, and the organisation as a whole have led to the introduction of an 'Organisation Team'. This group, consisting of one member of both the Dutch and International Secretariat and the Organisation coordinator will take the most important organisational decisions in the future. In 2011 the new structure will be implemented and evaluated.

### **Finances**

At the financial level, the subsidy round for the co-financing system of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFS 2) had a big impact on the sector and on CCC/SKC. SKC/CCC was admitted to the second subsidy application round together with five other partners under the name 'Fair, Green and Global Alliance'. After months of hard work the application was submitted in June. In November the Ministry approved the subsidy for the Alliance, unfortunately only for 58 % of the amount applied for. This forces the CCC/SKC to cut its budget in a big way – not only with regard to the number of activities, but also with regard to the amount of staff. 2011 will be a transition year in which budget cuts will be implemented. Of course fundraising activities will be intensified at the same time in order to supplement the decreased income as soon as possible.

For details on the 2010 financial results and position please refer to the Annual Financial Report.