

Petition to U-M Administrators: Stop Covering Up & Cheerleading for Coke

Whereas, students brought issues to the attention of the University of Michigan community regarding complicity by The Coca-Cola Co. in widespread labor, human rights and environmental abuses in Colombia, India and elsewhere.

Whereas, in December 2005, University of Michigan suspended sales of all Coke products on campus.

Whereas, in April 2006, University of Michigan Executive Vice President & CFO Timothy Slottow announced that Coca-Cola products would be allowed back on campus after The Coca-Cola Company falsely claimed that the United Nations' International Labor Organisation (ILO) had agreed to do an "independent investigation of past and present labor relations and workers' rights practices of the Coca-Cola bottling operations in Colombia."

Whereas, *The Michigan Daily* reported on April 10, 2007 **that The Coca-Cola Company missed all deadlines set by the University of Michigan for March 2007**. Those deadlines pertained to assessment of conditions for Coke workers in Colombia and environmental issues in India. On April 30, 2007, investigation results were to be reported to the university. This could not be done, since no investigation had occurred.

Whereas, the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on June 6, 2007: "**Employers led by Coca-Cola executive [Ed Potter] stopped the International Labour Organisation examining violations of workplace rights in Colombia...**"

Whereas, The Coca-Cola Company was dropped from the Broad Market Social Index (BMSI) list of socially responsible companies prepared by KLD Research & Analytics, Inc., an independent investment research firm that is considered a world leader in defining corporate responsibility standards.

Whereas, it was reported in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (7/19/06) that "KLD based its decision on a number of issues—labor and human rights in Colombia, environmental issues in India..."

Whereas, in July 2006, the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association-College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF) divested 1.25 million shares of Coca-Cola Co. stock and has banned further investments in its \$9 billion CREF Social Choice Account, the nation's largest socially screened fund for individual investors, **because The Coca-Cola Co. does not meet TIAA-CREF's standards as a socially responsible company**.

Whereas, Coca-Cola's largest bottler, **Coca-Cola Enterprises (CCE), which provides Coca-Cola beverages to our university, shares directors with Coca-Cola FEMSA, Colombia's largest bottler and a defendant in human rights abuse lawsuits** charging that Coke bottlers "contracted with or otherwise directed paramilitary security forces that utilized extreme violence and murdered, tortured, unlawfully detained or otherwise silenced trade union leaders."

Whereas, In July 2007, **CCE was also dropped**, along with The Coca-Cola Co., from the TIAA-CREF Social Choice Account because neither meets TIAA-CREF's standards as a socially responsible company.

Whereas, **some 45 colleges and universities** and many labor organizations representing millions of members, including some of the nation's largest teachers' unions, **have removed Coke machines and Coke products from their campuses** and offices and banned the sale and distribution of all Coke products from their facilities and functions.

Whereas, campaigns against the company are growing worldwide for alleged labor, human rights and environmental abuses in Chile, Colombia, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Turkey, the United States and other countries.

Whereas, it has been reported that The Coca-Cola Co. has been accused of benefiting from prison labor in China (*BBC News*, 5/21/07).

Whereas, the Environmental Law Research Center in Geneva issued a report in May 2007 concluding that "the availability of good quality water for drinking purposes and agriculture [in India] has been affected dangerously due to the activity of the Company [The Coca-Cola Co.]. Apart from that, the Company had also polluted the agricultural lands by depositing the hazardous wastes. **All these point to the gross violation of the basic human rights, that is, the right to life, right to livelihood and the violation of the pollution control laws.**"

Resolved, that the University of Michigan must hold The Coca-Cola Company accountable by reversing the undemocratic April 2006 decision of VP & CFO Timothy Slottow and again banning the sale of Coke products on campus.

Resolved, that until The Coca-Cola Company can prove that it has taken genuine remedial actions to become a responsible corporate citizen, this ban will remain in effect.

Signature: _____ (✓): Student: ___ Faculty: ___ Staff: ___ Other: ___ Email: _____

Please stand up for human rights and the environment. Return petitions to the Coke Coalition at the following locations:

Graduate Employees Organization, 330 E. Liberty - Suite 3F, Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Students Organizing For Labor & Economic Equality Office, 3909 Michigan Union, 530 S. State St., Ann Arbor, MI 48109