



British Columbia Teachers' Federation

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A Union of Professionals

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March 21, 2016

Sharmila Setaram, President
Amnesty International Canada
312 Laurier Ave East
Ottawa, ON K1N 1H9

Dear Ms. Setaram:

On behalf of the 41,000 members of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation (BCTF), I am writing to express our whole-hearted support for the Amnesty International campaign against the exploitation of child labour in the mining of cobalt in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

As teachers who are dedicated to ensuring the safety and well-being of our students, it alarms us to learn that Congolese children's health and lives are being put at such extreme risk through their work in cobalt mines. It is all the more appalling to learn that many of the technology and automobile companies—whose products teachers and their students' families purchase—are benefiting from the low cost of child labour by purchasing lithium-ion batteries using cobalt mined in the Congo. We are dismayed that companies such as Apple, Microsoft, Samsung, Sony, Daimler, and Volkswagen are not following through on their commitment to zero-tolerance for child labour by failing to investigate and disclose the source of the cobalt used by their battery suppliers.

We applaud Amnesty International's call for multinational companies using lithium-ion batteries to investigate and publicize whether the extraction of the cobalt used by their suppliers has been carried out using child labour or under hazardous conditions. We also support Amnesty International in its request that these companies not only put an end to their business relationship with suppliers that do not respect human rights, but that they also offer compensation to the people who have suffered under these abuses.

Through a variety of our publications and communications, the BCTF has begun to raise awareness of this Amnesty International campaign among our members and their students. We look forward to hearing from you regarding additional actions that we can take in collaboration with Amnesty International to support this very urgent campaign.

Sincerely,

Jim Iker
President

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