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Honorable Hilda L. Solis
Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20210

Hanoi, October 29, 2012

REC. SECRETARIAT
OSEC-DOL
DEPT. OF LABOR
WASH. D. C. 20210

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Ref. Opposition to the inclusion of "Garments" from "Vietnam" in DOL's 2012 report "List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor"

Dear Madam Secretary,

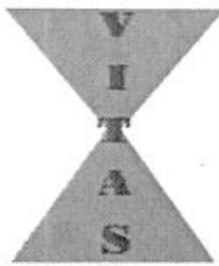
The Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association (VITAS) would like to draw your attention to our member companies' social accountability compliance which has been mischaracterized by the recent US Department of Labor's 2012 report "List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor".

VITAS is an organization of over 800 member companies, employing over 1 million workers and accounting for some 75 percent of the total exports of Vietnam textile and apparel industry.

Since its establishment in 1999, VITAS and our member companies have always attached great importance to labor relations and labor policies, considering them a vital issue to the existence and success of our member companies. Within the structure of VITAS, labor policy divisions are organized at both national and regional level to do research, outreach, education and training projects to help our member companies implement social accountability.

Since 2002-2003, VITAS has been encouraging member companies to study, adopt and implement social accountability standards under SA8000. As a result, several of our member companies have been certified to SA8000 while others have been adopting SA8000 standards in their policies for global integration and sustainable development. Many of our member companies have been honored with Corporate Social Responsibility Awards by ActionAid and Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) over recent years.

International buyers from the US, EU, Japan, etc., before and during the course of sourcing textiles and apparel from Vietnam, have directly or indirectly, via third party service providers, assessed the social accountability compliance of our companies. Only complying companies get the orders. The billions-of-dollars export revenues to the US, EU and Japan markets every year speak volumes of the social accountability compliance of our companies.



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In 2010, VITAS and the Vietnam Textile and Apparel Trade Union (representing workers) signed Vietnam's first-ever industry-wide Collective Labor Agreement (CLA). This historic Agreement incorporates labor standards higher than those required by the Labor Code of Vietnam.

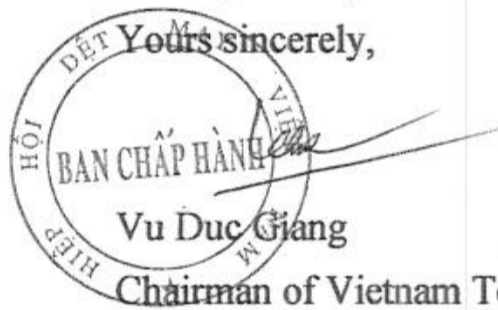
VITAS hereby confirms that VITAS member companies comply with VITAS Charter, the industry-wide Collective Labor Agreement, and Vietnam's labor laws and regulations. None of our member companies involves in the use of forced labor and/or child labor.

This letter represents VITAS official opposition to the US Department of Labor's inclusion of "Garments" from "Vietnam" in the 2012 report "List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor". This is an unfair and misleading characterization of the entire Vietnam textile and apparel industry based on particular, outdated individual cases of non-compliance.

In the interest of legitimate bilateral US-Vietnam textile and apparel trade, we respectfully request that this letter and VITAS perspectives be referred and reserved in connection with the Department of Labor's report, and that VITAS, as an affected party representing the majority of Vietnam textile and apparel industry, be consulted in preparing similar reports in the future.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this important matter.

Yours sincerely,



Chairman of Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association (VITAS)

CC:

- Honorable Senator Tom Harkin – Chairman of U.S. Senate's Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.
- Honorable Gayle Smith – Special Assistant to the U.S. President.
- Honorable Ian Solomon – U.S. Executive Director of the World Bank Group.
- Honorable Ron Kirk – United States Trade Representative.
- Honorable Vu Huy Hoang – Minister of Industry and Trade of Vietnam.
- Honorable Barbara Weisel – U.S. TPP Chief Negotiator.
- Honorable Tran Quoc Khanh – Vietnam's TPP Chief Negotiator.
- Honorable David Shear – U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam.
- Honorable Nguyen Quoc Cuong – Vietnam's Ambassador to the U.S.
- U.S. Department of State.
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security.