

**Question for written answer E-007451/2012
to the Commission (Vice-President / High Representative)**

Rule 117

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Subject: VP/HR - Child labour and shoe production

Recently a report entitled 'Where the Shoe Pinches – Child Labour in the Production of Leather Shoes', by the Centre for Research on Multinational Corporations (SOMO), provided evidence that child labour and violations of labour rights frequently occur in the production of leather shoes and other footwear in India for European companies and in the extended international supply chain of these EU-based companies¹.

The 'Stop Child Labour – School is the Best Place to Work' campaign recently carried out a survey on the production of shoes, but most companies did not respond to the questionnaire. Moreover, the survey results show that European shoe companies with an active corporate social responsibility (CSR) policy confine themselves mostly to environmental issues.

Is the High Representative willing to raise this CSR and human rights issue in the EU's relations with countries producing footwear for the European market – in particular China, India, Vietnam and Brazil – and to look for ways to involve the governments of those countries in working on solutions?

Is the High Representative willing to initiate additional research into (child) labour and other human rights issues in the worldwide footwear industry, which supplies leather footwear to the European market?

Will the High Representative combine this research with recommendations as to how all relevant stakeholders can work on solutions?

¹ For the report, please see: <http://www.stopchildlabour.org/Stop-Childlabour/News-Items/Shoe-companies-keep-silent-about-child-labour>