

Nike reveals names, locations of more than 700 factories

BY RUKMINI CALLIMACHI
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BEAVERTON — After years of criticism over its labor practices abroad, Nike Inc. is disclosing for the first time the names and locations of more than 700 factories that produce its sneakers, apparel and other products.

Industry experts said the disclosure, included as part of the company's corporate responsibility report, makes the sneaker giant the first major apparel manufacturer to voluntarily disclose its entire supply chain.

In the report released today, Nike also acknowledges that factories with which it contracts to produce goods have harassed workers and forced some to work overtime.

For years, activists have demanded that Nike and other major companies reveal where factories are located so independent observers could assess the labor conditions.

Corporations have been reluctant to do so, arguing that the plants are where the company's trade secrets are laid bare and that advanced products could be leaked to rivals.

Some Nike critics welcomed the disclosure of the supplier locations because it challenges others to do the same.

"This is a revolution," said long-standing Nike critic Neil Kearney, general secretary of the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Federation, which represents 10 million workers. "Now the world can see if the policies Nike claims to be implementing are actually being implemented."

While Nike might improve its public image, some critics contend the company has a long path to fully meet its corporate responsibilities.

Labor activist Jeff Ballinger viewed the report with cynicism. "It's good information to have," he said. "But I've always viewed their corporate responsibility work as trying to put the best face on the situation and not necessarily dealing with the issues workers have raised."

In its 108-page corporate responsibility report, Nike discloses the names of 124 plants in China contracted to make its products, 73 in Thailand, 35 in South Korea, 34 in Vietnam and others elsewhere in Asia, as well as in South

America, Australia, Canada, Italy, Mexico, Turkey and the United States.

While the competitive risk still exists, Nike spokesman Lee Weinstein said it's "something we're willing to take on if this disclosure will in fact move the industry forward in addressing some of these endemic issues."

The "endemic issues" are past allegations of sweatshop conditions.

Nike's report acknowledges that those issues still exist in some overseas operations.

According to the report, Nike audited 569 factories in 2003 and 2004 and found abuses it has previously

identified. Monitors found cases of "abusive treatment" — either physical or verbal — in more than a quarter of its South Asian factories, and between 25 percent and 50 percent of the contract factories in the region restrict access to toilets and drinking water during the work day.

The monitors found that in more than half the South Asian factories and in more than 25 percent of factories overall, the normal course of business led to work hours in excess of 60 hours per week. In more than one-tenth of all the plants surveyed, refusal to work overtime led to a penalty of some kind, the report said.

Nike footprints on six continents

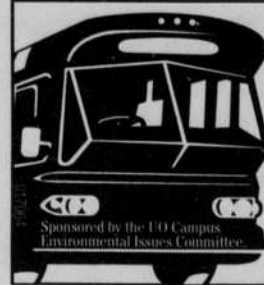
Nike Inc. revealed the names and addresses of its 705 factories. China has the highest number with 124 plants. Forty-nine factories are in the United States.



Albania	1	Greece	1	Pakistan	3
Argentina	7	Guatemala	1	Peru	1
Australia	9	Honduras	8	Philippines	4
Bangladesh	5	Hong Kong	9	Portugal	20
Belgium	1	India	20	Singapore	2
Brazil	18	Indonesia	39	South Africa	7
Bulgaria	8	Israel	6	South Korea	35
Cambodia	1	Italy	13	Spain	5
Canada	10	Japan	22	Sri Lanka	25
Chile	2	Jordan	3	Switzerland	1
China	124	Lithuania	1	Taiwan	19
Colombia	2	Macau	3	Thailand	73
Dominican Republic	1	Macedonia	1	Tunisia	9
Ecuador	1	Malaysia	33	Turkey	26
Egypt	4	Mexico	20	United Kingdom	5
El Salvador	6	Moldova	1	United States	49
Fiji	1	Morocco	4	Vietnam	34
		New Zealand	1		

SOURCE: Nike Inc.

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