



14 March 2013

Item-6
UPR Ghana

Mr. President,

Ghana has made significant progress in the health-related Millennium Development Goals, as noted by the Special Rapporteur on the right to health on his last visit to this country.

However, Südwind is deeply concerned about the high number of child labor, some as young as 5 years at E-Waste dumps. There, they are engaged in work which is dangerous and threatening to their health.

At these e-waste dumps children can be seen daily breaking and dismantling the e-waste –computers and TV sets generated worldwide. They wear no protective gear and are exposed daily to the toxic elements in the e-waste. The children and others who work at the dumpsites complain of headaches, breathing problems and chest pains. They also suffer from brain and kidney damages, developmental and behavior disorders, and eventually cancer.

E-waste also pollutes the environment, causing further damage to communities and children who live near and at the e-waste dumpsites. Heavy metals leach from waste sites and contaminate local water supplies. The children are chronically exposed to these toxic elements directly through dermal contact and inhalation and indirectly through contaminated food and water.

Südwind encourages Ghana to give special attention to protect these children of labor and their families from violations of their right to health and to reinforce its efforts to provide health care and medical assistance for these children and their families. We also urge the government to pay closer attention to prevent illegal import of e-waste and to consider it an offensive crime in line with the Basel Convention.

We recommend ratifying the optional Protocols to the convention on the rights of the child and a national action plan to prevent child labor.