

June 2016

Hey Apple/Samsung, Does child labour power my phone?

Do you have a cell phone, a laptop or a tablet? Or maybe your parents do?

Many electronic devices contain batteries. And the batteries contain cobalt. Cobalt is found under the earth's surface so it has to be mined. Amnesty International is very concerned that cobalt in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is being mined by children.

At least half of the world's cobalt comes from the DRC. Amnesty International researchers travelled there to talk to children and adults who work in the cobalt mines.

The researchers learned that children and adult miners dig out rocks from tunnels deep underground using basic tools. They have no equipment to protect them, such as gloves or facemasks, even though breathing cobalt dust for a long time can cause lung disease.

The children said that they work for up to 12 hours a day in the mines. They carry heavy loads and earn between \$1 and \$2 a day. Even children who go to school work more than 10 hours after school, during the weekend and on their holidays.

Paul is 14. He started working in the tunnels when he was 12. He told

researchers he would often "spend 24 hours down in the tunnels. I arrived in the morning and left the following morning." He didn't even have anywhere to pee.



The work that children do in DRC's cobalt mines is dangerous and likely to affect their health and safety. In this photo, children are sorting cobalt.

Another concern is that child miners are not always safe. Many accidents happen, for example when tunnels collapse.

Children are sometimes beaten, or have seen other children beaten. This happens when guards find them too close to the mines. Security guards also demand money from them.

The detective work by Amnesty International's researchers shows that the cobalt mined in the DRC is being used by people all around the world for rechargeable batteries in products like cell phones, tablets and electric cars.

Amnesty International contacted some of the biggest electronics companies, including Apple and Samsung, to ask whether the batteries in their products contain cobalt from the DRC. None of the companies could say for certain whether they do or not. This is a problem because companies should be doing all they can to make sure that their products are not made using child labour.



WHAT CAN I DO?

Please write a letter to Apple and/or Samsung.

- Start your letter “Dear Apple” or “Dear Samsung”.
- In your first sentence, tell them something about yourself – for example whether you use a cell phone, tablet or laptop.
- Ask the company to make sure that the batteries in their products are not made using any child labour. Ask the company how they will fix the problem if they discover that their batteries are made using child labour.

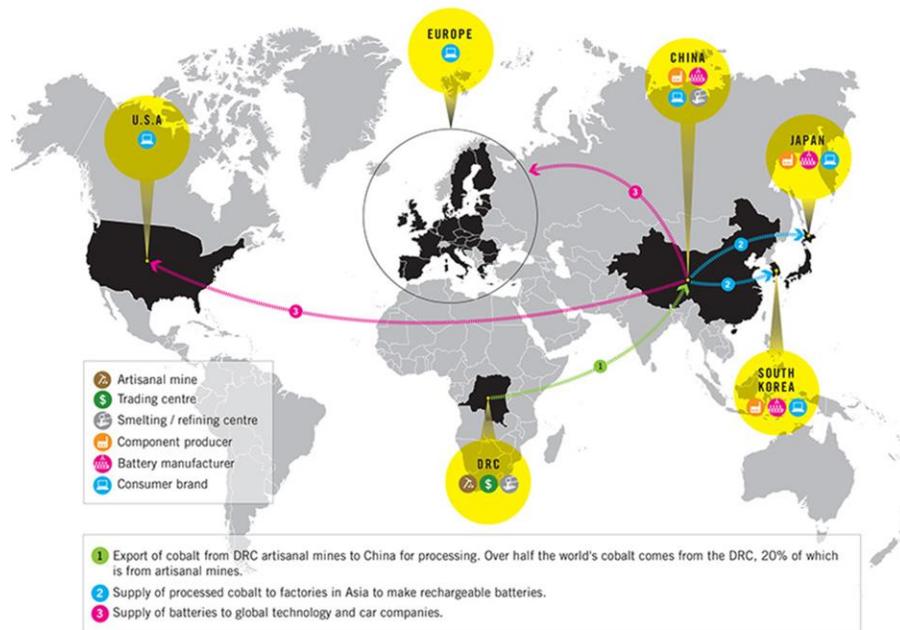
WHERE DO I SEND MY MESSAGE?

Please send your letter to Amnesty International. We will collect all the letters to mail together in one huge package to Samsung and Apple.

By mail: **Amnesty International Canada**
430-319 West Pender Street
Vancouver, BC V5N 1M3

By email: bhr@amnesty.ca

Movement of cobalt from artisanal mines in the DRC to the global market



WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

- Take a photo of yourself holding a sign to Samsung and/or Apple saying “Samsung/Apple, Does child labour power my phone?”. Email the photo to us at bhr@amnesty.ca. If you use Facebook or Twitter, post the photo using the hashtag #notinmyphone.
- Gather signatures from your family and friends on a petition to Samsung. Download it from <http://bit.ly/23XenTO>

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

You can find more information and campaign updates at www.amnesty.ca/cobalt