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Releases

International Review Rebukes IKEA for Unfair Labour Practices

Vancouver, BC – An international panel has issued a damning report on IKEA Canada's approach to labour relations at its Richmond, BC store. Workers at the Richmond location have been on the picket line since they were locked out more than six months ago. At issue in the dispute are major concessions on benefits and cuts to the wage scale.

"IKEA's corporate culture is assumed to be built on the Swedish model of cooperation and fair treatment in the workplace," said B.C. Federation of Labour President Jim Sinclair. "For whatever reason, management at IKEA in Richmond are out of step with this model."

"A key finding of the panel was a disturbing undercurrent of union-busting and aggressive anti-worker behaviour, including firing at least one worker on the picket line," said Sinclair. "This union-busting approach is clearly counter to IKEA's own code of conduct."

The panel, which consisted of international labour experts, visited Vancouver in early November of this year, interviewing workers and holding a public hearing. Store management declined the opportunity to meet with the panel. Sinclair supported the report's key recommendations, and called on IKEA to end the lockout and return to the negotiating table in good faith with no preconditions.

He also gave his support to the recommendation that IKEA Richmond break off its relations with union busting organizations and law firms. Sinclair noted that in a recent survey of more than 1,200 British Columbians conducted for the B.C. Federation of Labour, 54 percent of regular IKEA customers said they would shop somewhere else during the dispute.

The report is available for download at bcfed.ca/ikeareport (click here).

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