



Support NYU's Ban on Coca-Cola

★ Don't Buy Coke ★ Keep Our Campus Coke-free ★

Dear NYU Students & Community Members,

As you may know, Coke products are not sold on campus at NYU. Three years ago students convinced NYU to join the nation-wide boycott of Coke for its role in assassinating Colombian union leaders and for other human rights and environmental abuses. Last semester students successfully organized to prevent the ban from being lifted prematurely when Coke sought to end the ban based on a pretext rather than a change of policy. Here is more information:

Coca-Cola is one of the worst corporate supporters of the paramilitary death squads in Colombia. Nine union activists who worked at Coke's bottling plants have been assassinated and hundreds of other Coke workers have been tortured, kidnapped and/or illegally detained by paramilitaries. A New York City fact finding mission that included City Council Member Hiram Monserrate concluded that, "The physical access that paramilitaries have had to Coca-Cola bottling plants is impossible without knowledge and/or tacit approval ... The conclusion that Coca-Cola bears responsibility for the campaign of terror leveled at its workers in unavoidable."¹ Coke refuses to change its practices or allow an independent investigation.

Coca-Cola also commits other human rights violations and environmental abuses. For example, organizations in India have criticized Coke for polluting neighborhoods with heavy metals, exacerbating drought by removing hundreds of thousands of liters of water each day from already dry areas, and rendering farmers' fields uncultivable. These practices have led the Kerala State Pollution Control Board to shut down a plant in 2004 that has remained closed due to pollution.

¹ <http://killercoke.org/report.htm>

How you can support the boycott:

- Refrain from buying Coke products. This includes Fanta, Fresca, Dasani, Minute Maid, Nestea, Odwalla, Powerade, Honest Tea, and Glaceau products such as Smart Water and Vitamin Water.
- Don't buy Coke products for NYU meetings and events.
- Help us organize to ensure that NYU keeps the ban until Coke changes their policies.

NYU banned the sale of Coke products on campus in 2005 but almost lifted the ban last spring after Coke requested that NYU do so. About 50 universities have joined the boycott. When some NYU administrators wanted to lift the ban LawSEJ, along with CoLR, LaLSA, LSHR, LSRJ, NLG, and OutLAW, issued a report concluding that: (1) Coke's alleged willingness to allow an investigation of its Colombian facilities by the ILO was a pretext to justify lifting the ban; (2) An ILO investigation ILO could not be independent; and (3) Coke had not changed its policies in Colombia.

Incredibly now that the ILO has actually issued a report, it does not even purport to investigate any allegations of human rights abuses, ties to paramilitaries, or assassinations of union leaders!

Working with other students and alumni we won a narrow vote in the University Senate maintaining the ban. As the largest private university in the U.S., NYU is a valuable purchaser and serves as an example for other universities. It is important that the university lend its institutional support to this campaign. Targeted boycotts are a proven tactic for pushing corporations and other actors to change their policies.

For a copy of LawSEJ's Report on NYU and the Coke ban go to <http://www.killercoke.org/nyu-cokelawsejrpt.pdf>

To subscribe to our list serve send a blank message to: join-law-sej@lists.nyu.edu

For more information contact Jeff Olshansky: jlo259@nyu.edu