

The grounds of the judgement of the Court of Milan against Corriere della Sera confirm that BENETTON WAS LIBELLED

Ponzano, 22nd May 2003. On 21st May 2003, the Italian daily, Corriere della Sera, published an article on page 16 entitled "There were baby-workers in the Turkish factories", which presents only partially and in a misleading fashion, the grounds of the judgement pronounced on 16th April 2003 by the Milan Court – penal section VIII, in which the journalist of Corriere della Sera, Riccardo Orizio and the editor-in-chief of the newspaper, Ferruccio de Bortoli were found guilty of libel against Benetton Group.

UNITED COLORS
OF BENETTON.

In particular, contrary to what emerges from the article in question, the sentence of the Milan Court constitutes full confirmation of the seriously defamatory significance of the newspaper investigation published by Mr. Orizio in Corriere della Sera and of his subsequent interviews.

As can be read in the grounds of the judgement, Orizio, failing to fulfil his duty as a journalist, falsely represented Benetton Group as "an organization cynically willing to make profits on the backs of underpaid and exploited minors and to produce garments with false labels", having given "readers a totally false idea of the manufacturing system of the Italian brand, leading them to believe that the garments on sale in Italy, garments that can be bought in stores in any Italian city, are the fruit of illegal exploitation of under-age workers".

On the contrary, the Milan Court confirmed that:

- Benetton was in no way aware of the phenomenon denounced by Orizio;
- Benetton has in no way ever been involved in this exploitation;
- Under-age workers have never been used for the production of garments under the direct control of the Benetton Group, nor has Benetton ever had a policy of decentralizing production to Turkey for the manufacture of low-cost garments.

These are the grounds on which the journalist Orizio and the editor-in-chief de Bortoli were found guilty of libel against Benetton Group S.p.A., for all charges brought against them, with full recognition of the reasons which led the Benetton Group to undertake legal action.

For further information: +39 0422 519036