

Karachi, Pakistan

13 September 2018

Participants in Consultation on 'Fire and Building Safety in Pakistan Garment and Textile Sector' Urge Brands to Support a Pakistan Accord

During 12-13 September 2018, we, the undersigned unions and labour organisations from Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad and other cities held a consultation on Fire and Building Safety in Pakistan Garment and Textile Sector at the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research offices in Karachi. The meeting was held during the sixth anniversary week of the Ali Enterprises factory fire, which had been audited under a failed confidential, voluntary auditing model lacking union participation.

The meeting was jointly organised by the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research, the National Trade Union Federation of Pakistan, and the Labour Education Foundation. It was attended by trade unions representing workers in the textile and garment sector and others- list attached.

The meeting has resulted in awareness and understanding among the participants about the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, which is a legally-binding agreement signed between garment brands and unions that was formed in May 2013 after the Rana Plaza building collapse. The meeting participants noted the many similarities between the lack of workplace safety in Bangladesh prior to the Bangladesh Accord and the current lack of implementation of fire and building safety standards in garment and textile factories and mills in Pakistan. They affirmed that the fire and building safety improvements accomplished by the Bangladesh Accord are improvements that should come to the industry in Pakistan. In major industrial zones of Pakistan, especially Karachi, Lahore, and Faisalabad, many factories are at risk of fire and other building safety challenges and workers do not have a safe escape route during a fire. A number of these factories are supplying to major international brands and retailers.

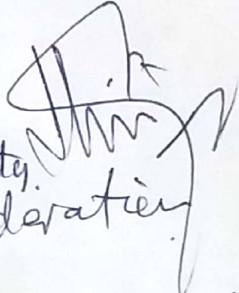
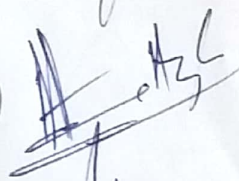

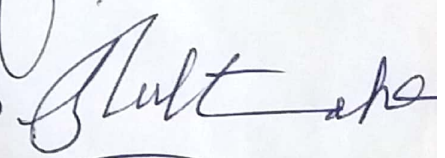
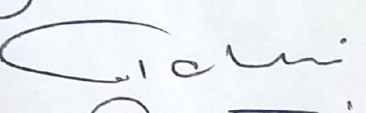
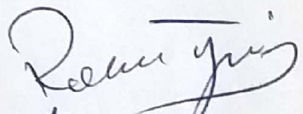
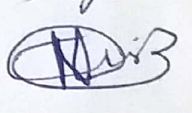
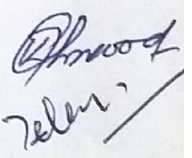
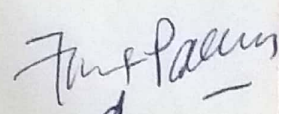
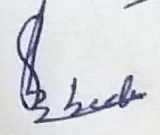
Participants concluded the meeting having reached mutual agreement that there should be an Accord for Pakistan along the lines of Bangladesh Accord with the following additional elements included:

1. Negotiated and signed directly by local unions, global unions and brands, with local and global NGOs as witness signatories, and equal or majority participation from local and global unions in program governance;
2. Statutory and legally binding, transparent and enforceable both globally and in Pakistan;
3. Cover all main aspects of factory building safety, including fire, electrical, structural, boiler, gas, and chemical safety, and potable drinking water and hygienic toilet facilities – all through a program of independent inspections by qualified engineers, with corrective action plans and follow-up inspections;
4. Establishment of safety committees, with genuine representative union participation, and trainings provided for the committee members;
5. Mandatory safety trainings for all employees in a factory;

6. Creation of a worker complaint mechanism covering all legally required wage standards, workers rights and women's rights, and that complaints be investigated, with option of judicial review.
7. Protections for workers' right to refuse dangerous work and to exercise the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining; and
8. Provide employment letters to all workers and register all employees with the Social Security institutions.

We agree to develop a proposal for the details for a Pakistan Accord that can be the basis for negotiation as a next step, and to share this with global partners, including the Clean Clothes Campaign Network, IndustriALL and UNI global unions

Signed by:

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 Pakistan Textile Workers Federation
- Nasir A Mansoor (NTWF) 
- Pirmada Imtiaz Syed (APPUTA) 
- Sultem Khan President (IPE) 
- RANA M-TAHIR (L.A.M) 
- Rehana Yasmeen Cr. Text. Union 
- Niaz Khan TPGWFTextile Power Loom Garment 
- Khelid Mahmood LER 
- Zehra Khan HRWWF
- Fahat Parum NOW Communities 
- Sher Zada MKLF KPK 
- Karamat Ali PILER 