Open letter to brands sourcing from Bangladesh

Support garment workers' demand for a Tk 32,000 minimum wage

To all brands sourcing from Bangladesh,

Garment workers in Bangladesh are demanding a minimum wage of Tk32,000 per month. Their current minimum wage of Tk 12,500 is not enough to cover basic needs and is far from a living wage. Workers are rightly demanding higher wages because they cannot make ends meet.

As buyer from Bangladesh, you have both a responsibility and the power to help ensure that higher wages become a reality. Employers and policymakers need to know that increasing wages will not lead brands to move their orders elsewhere. Brands must make these commitments now, while wage negotiations and protests are ongoing.

Clean Clothes Campaign therefore calls on all brands sourcing from Bangladesh to act immediately by:

1. Publicly support workers' demand for a minimum wage of Tk 32,000 per month.
2. Publicly commit to continuing to source from Bangladesh after the minimum wage increase.
3. Call on your suppliers, the BGMEA and the BKMEA to support and fully implement the Tk 32,000 minimum wage.
4. Increase your purchasing prices to fully absorb the additional labour costs.
5. Take effective measures to prevent violations of workers' rights during the wage negotiations and protests.

The last minimum wage negotiations showed how serious these risks are. In 2016, 2018 and 2023, workers demanding higher wages faced violence, dismissals, blacklisting and bogus criminal cases. Fundamental rights, including freedom of association, freedom of expression and the right to peaceful protest, were violated.

These are foreseeable human rights risks in the current wage negotiations. Brands have a responsibility to prevent and mitigate them. Clean Clothes Campaign urges you to make clear to suppliers that violence, threats, dismissals, blacklisting and criminalisation of workers will not be tolerated. Likewise, we call on you to monitor the situation and take immediate action when risks or violations are identified.

The time to act is now. Brands must make these commitments immediately. Decent wages are not negotiable. Workers cannot afford any further delay.

We will track brands' responses and ask you to share with us the public actions and commitments your company has made. The more buyers stand with workers and publicly support their demands, the stronger the chances of securing a decent wage for Bangladesh's garment workers.

Sincerely,

Akota Garment Workers Federation (AGWF)
Bangladesh Independent Garment Worker Union Federation (BIGUF)
Bangladesh Garment & Industrial Worker Federation (BGIWF)
Bangladesh Revolutionary Garment Worers Federation (BRGWF)
Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC)