

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

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November 19, 2013

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www.hrw.org

Mr. Mike Duke
President and CEO
Walmart Stores, Inc.
702 SW 8th Street
Bentonville, Arkansas 72716
Via email: ethics@wal-mart.com

Dear Mr. Mike Duke,

Re: Compensation for victims of Tazreen Fashions fire

Human Rights Watch is one of the leading independent organizations dedicated to defending and protecting human rights. For 30 years, we have worked in over 90 countries to bring greater justice and security to people around the world and are recognized as an independent and objective organization. We have worked on various issues linked to the protection of human rights in Bangladesh for over two decades.

We are currently doing research on the status of workers injured and the family members of workers who died due to the Nov 24, 2012 fire at the Tazreen Fashions factory in Bangladesh, which killed at least 112 people. It is our goal to undertake thorough and objective research. To that end, we are seeking the views of your company.

We understand that Walmart was one of Tazreen's customers. We are writing to request information about your business relationship with Tazreen Fashions of Bangladesh.

It is our understanding that the factory was making garments for Walmart at the time of the fire despite the fact that according to a Walmart spokesman, Tazreen was removed from the list of Walmart's authorized suppliers 'months' earlier (Wall Street Journal, December 10, 2012). Inspection reports found in the factory after the fire appear to show that the factory was in violation of many provisions of Walmart's Code of Business Ethics and Code of Conduct.

On that basis, we would welcome responses to the following questions:

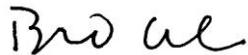
1. On what date did you remove Tazreen from your list of authorized factories?
2. On what grounds did you make this decision?
3. Following the inspection reports of May and December 2011, was anything done by Walmart or your suppliers to assist Tazreen in meeting your standards?
4. Did Walmart or any of its other suppliers conduct further inspections of Tazreen after December 2011? What was the result of these inspections?
5. How do you explain that Walmart suppliers continued to place orders with Tazreen after you removed it from your list? So far you have only stated that one of them (Success Apparel, via Simco) had wrongly subcontracted to Tazreen. What about the others? How do you ensure that your suppliers do not place orders with noncompliant factories?
6. The International Labor Organization and the IndustriALL Global Union have expressed their willingness to facilitate a system for compensating the Tazreen victims. Would you be willing to now take part in this process?

We understand that the following orders were sourced by Wal-Mart, can you confirm whether these orders are accurate:

1. International Intimates through IT Apparels, Feb 2012
2. Amerella through Limelight, Jan 2012
3. Topson Down through Bismillah Sourcing, December 2011
4. International Direct Group, January 2012
5. Another document dated October 5, 2012 shows that Tazreen was supplying 12,888 'Satin PJ sets' to George, but there is no supplier name listed.
6. Finally, Faisal Textile Resources placed an order for 200,000 shorts with Tazreen on Nov 1, 2012. The Wall Street Journal (December 10, 2012) said that this order was also for Walmart.

We would welcome your responses by November 26, 2013 so that we are able to include your comments in our findings.

Thanking you in advance.



Brad Adams
Asia director
Human Rights Watch

Cc: Jan Saumweber, Vice President of Ethical Standards
Walmart Stores, Inc.
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Bentonville, Arkansas 72716