

Sheikh Hasina, Honorable Prime Minister
Government of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh

Prime Minister's Office

Old Sangsad Bhaban

Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215 Bangladesh

Berlin, 6th of July, 2018

Dear Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina,

The garment industry is of crucial importance to your country as well as to the German brands, retailers and other stakeholders we represent. One of the most important issues in the industry is the minimum wage, which is still very far from a living wage. At present and after a five-year period without revisions, the Wage Board is meeting to discuss a new minimum wage for the industry in Bangladesh, and unions and others are actively campaigning for a positive outcome.

Our group of signatories represent major German brands and retailers, business associations, NGOs and trade unions. Many of those brands and retailers source garments, footwear, and travel goods from Bangladesh. Together, they buy billions of dollars of product from Bangladesh, and many of them have contributed significantly to the successful development and growth of the textile industry in your country. The continued success of the textile industry in Bangladesh and its significant contribution to the development of your country and its people is important to us.

We as representatives of various German brands and retailers, business associations, NGOs and trade unions thus urge your government to show leadership and ensure a substantial increase of the minimum wage for the industry and take the collective demand of the unions regarding the minimum wage into account. We also write to express our growing concern with recent developments that seem to undermine progress towards improving worker rights, and call upon your government to let activists and unions campaign for higher minimum wages in freedom and have their collective demands on the minimum wage be heard. Business members within the German Textiles Partnership fully support the payment of living wages in their supply chains. We would also like to emphasise that German brands and retailers are committed to working with their Bangladeshi suppliers to continue mutually beneficial business relationships that include full payment of new, significantly higher minimum wages.

Madam Prime Minister, German brands and retailers have enjoyed a long and mutually beneficial relationship with your country. As a result of this relationship and of the efforts of your government, your country has flourished into one of the leading suppliers of garments and one of the fastest-growing suppliers of textiles, footwear and travel goods to the world. At the same time, those brands and retailers are committed to adhere to international guidelines on workers' rights and take these very seriously in their selection of countries they source from. Freedom of association and fair compensation are crucial elements of their sourcing decisions. We are therefore very keen on seeing substantial progress on these issues in the near future and are looking forward

to working with your government and relevant stakeholders towards our common goal: the flourishing of the Bangladeshi RMG sector to the benefit of the millions of citizens of your country working in the industry.

Sincerely,



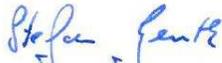
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