



DATE  
23 April, 2014

OUR REFERENCE

YOUR DATE

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Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
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Swedish Ministry of Employment  
E-mail: [elisabeth.svantesson@gov.se](mailto:elisabeth.svantesson@gov.se)

Dear Carl Bildt and Elisabeth Svantesson,

On behalf of The Swedish Trade Union Confederation (LO), I write to you on the anniversary of one of the worst industrial tragedies – the Rana Plaza building collapse, which claimed the lives of over 1,200 people, mostly garment workers for major international brands. If anything positive came out of that tragedy, there has been a renewed focus on building and fire safety. Indeed, the Bangladesh Accord on Building and Fire Safety, a binding agreement between over 150 apparel companies and global unions, was created. Factory inspections by competent international and domestic inspectors are now well underway, and the results of those inspections are now available for all to see. The actions taken by the EU, the US and the ILO have also created opportunities for progress.

Much remains to be done. It remains, as it has been for many years, extremely difficult for workers to exercise their fundamental rights in Bangladesh. Without the ability of workers to organise and bargain collectively over the terms and conditions of work, any gains made now in building and fire safety will not be sustainable. This will lead to certain future tragedies. The government of Bangladesh has a long way to go to guarantee fundamental workers' rights in law and in practice. Most companies have done little to ensure that workers' rights are respected in their supply chains in Bangladesh.

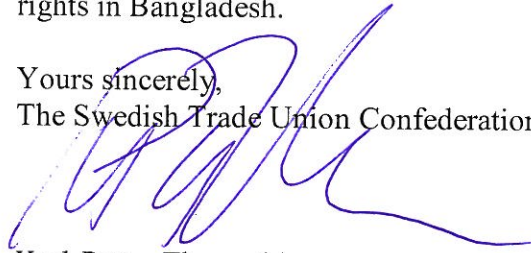
We have enclosed a 2-page fact sheet that outlines our numerous, serious concerns. We urge that your government press the government of Bangladesh on these areas. This is no time for the international community to become complacent, as workers in Bangladesh continue to labour under extremely exploitative conditions.

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**The Swedish Trade Union Confederation**

We urge your immediate action on this matter, including at the upcoming International Labour Conference, and look forward to hearing from you what actions you have taken to improve respect for fundamental workers' rights in Bangladesh.

Yours sincerely,  
The Swedish Trade Union Confederation



Karl-Petter Thorwaldsson  
President

Encl:

ITUC Fact Sheet on Bangladesh

cc:

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