



Letter to the Government of Bangladesh

His Excellency
Lt. Col Muhammad Faruk Khan, psc (Rtd.)
Minister
Ministry of Commerce
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
Bangladesh Secretariat, Building 3
Ramna, Dhaka 1000
Bangladesh

February 26th 2009

Your Excellency Mr. Khan,

The MFA Forum would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your appointment of Minister of Commerce of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. We also would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the MFA Forum, the MFB, and how we hope to benefit the RMG Industry in Bangladesh.

The MFA (Multi-Fibre Arrangement) Forum is an open network of stakeholders in the international textile and garment industry that came together in early 2004 in an attempt to mitigate the negative impacts on workers and communities anticipated from the end of the MFA quota system. The MFA Forum includes international brands and retailers, trade unions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international institutions and donors that are working with national governments, local industry and civil society representatives. Collaboratively they seek to manage the transition of the global garments industry by promoting "Responsible Competitiveness". We recognise that each of these organisations have a role to play in finding solutions to long term problems, supporting and supported by the role of Government.

The MFB (Multi-stakeholder Forum Bangladesh) is the national-led counterpart to the MFA Forum that works collaboratively on a sustainable strategy to stabilize and grow Bangladesh's textile and garment industries. This group is currently chaired by Mr. Faisal Samad (BGMEA), and is also comprised of buyers, NGOs and Trade Union representatives based in Bangladesh. Until recently, Mr. Mustafa Mohiuddin, Joint Secretary (Export) of the Ministry of Commerce, was also a member of the Steering Committee. We hope that the Ministry of Commerce will soon appoint an official to continue direct participation within the group.



The most recent MFA Forum - MFB conference in Dhaka took place in June 2008. The meeting was an opportunity to review progress made since 2005 and plan for the future, bringing together the local and international participants. During the meeting, participants reached consensus over the outstanding key requirements for a sustainable industry, including: workers' skill enhancement, mature industrial relations and respect for Freedom of Association, review of the minimum wage level, appropriate purchasing practices by buyers, etc. The conference report is attached summarising the outcomes of the meetings.

We hope that you agree that supporting and developing a productive, competitive and responsible textile and garment industry requires a collaborative approach involving all major stakeholders, and in particular, strong leadership and support by the Government of Bangladesh. The local and international participants of the MFA Forum remain committed to the Bangladesh RMG industry and its workers, and we have identified activities for 2009/10 that will help to address the challenges. We would very much welcome the opportunity to share our future plans with you and would appreciate your thoughts in this regard. We look forward to our continued collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh to further the Government's goal of having a competitive and responsible industry.

Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the MFA Forum Secretariat (contact information is below).

Yours sincerely,

Paul Dearman
Tesco Stores Ltd.
Co-Chair MFA Forum
Bangladesh Working Group

Maritha Lorentzon
H&M
Co-Chair MFA Forum
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