

29 March 2019

Dear Alysha and Bobbie

Thank you for your email of 19 March asking about the troubling recent events in parts of the Bangladesh garment industry.

We are absolutely committed to the rights of all workers to freedom of association, and freedom from intimidation, along with all other labour rights. We have not received any specific allegations regarding dismissed individuals at any of our supplier partners' factories in recent weeks. But five of the factories we work with did appear in a public list of those linked to dismissals. We have therefore looked carefully and seriously into these issues with each factory.

Each of these factories have denied that they have targeted or unfairly dismissed any workers. They have told us that all workers that have left in recent weeks (which has been a period of significant movement of workers across the garment industry) have done so voluntarily and been paid appropriately. One of our suppliers confirmed that they had recently had to make some lay-offs at their factory, but that this was done with the participation of the union and the industry body and that all workers received their legally due compensation.

We remain committed to looking into any specific allegations, however. We have been in touch separately with campaigning NGOs with links to Bangladeshi campaigners and unions and asked them to share any specific cases of workers within our suppliers' factories who claim they have been unfairly dismissed (using a trusted independent party for confidentiality, if needed). We will investigate any such cases and take action if any unfair or illegal practice has taken place.

Tesco remains firmly committed to ethical trade. We are a founder member of the Ethical Trading Initiative (www.ethicaltrade.org), an active member of the 'ACT' group of leading brands and global unions working towards living wages in the garment sector (www.actonlivingwages.com) and have a team of 40 local human rights experts working across our Asian non-food supply base to ensure decent conditions are maintained. We have reiterated the importance of fair treatment and transparency to our suppliers in the light of these concerns, and will continue to monitor conditions closely.

Yours sincerely

Giles Bolton
Responsible Sourcing Director, Tesco