

- Invitation to respond to the Business & Human Rights resource Centre re.:
“German Companies must take Responsibility for Working Conditions of Suppliers”

May 22, 2013

Dear Eniko Horvath and Christopher Avery,

we thank you very much for the email you sent us today giving us the opportunity to react on the OECD complaint against us.

First of all we want to point out that we are a small family- guided Textile Importer- not comparable with multinational companies as there are C&A and KIK. On the one hand we are just treated in the same way as these two big companies, on the other hand we have not been informed about this complaint or even been contacted by Mr. Kekeritz (Alliance '90/ The Greens) to give us the chance to deliver our opinion as he did with the 2 others. We are totally surprised about the whole situation and only have been informed about the complaint via German Press (Spiegel Online) 2 weeks ago. So the more grateful we are, that you are interested in our comments.

We had not much time now to reclaim this case- but what we can tell you in this stage is that we have- since the beginning of our business- a high interest to improve social standards in Bangladesh, we have our own Code of Conduct to be followed strictly and we are well aware about the responsibility we have for our producers and their workers. As a member of the BSCI (Business Social Compliance Initiative) since 2008 we are doing not only audits conducted by private institutes, but also accompanying our producers in all social themes very closely by our own well trained local people.

To the background of the complaint: we did not place any order to Tazreen Fashions but one single order to the Holding (Tuba)- not knowing, that parts of it have been produced at Tazreen. Due to this unauthorized subcontracting amongst some additional quality problems, we finished business directly and with immediate effect in may 2012. These facts we have already given to SOMO/CCC who published this in their report “Fatal Fashion” mid of March 2013 and which is stated incorrectly in the actual complaint.

We are deeply sorry about the death of several hundred people, but the actual very serious situation in Bangladesh makes it very clear to all of us, that each company on its own cannot achieve far- reaching changes. We can only improve anything in close collaboration together with all the other companies who are engaged in this country. We see this as the only chance to put enough pressure on Bangladesh´s government to allow workers associations and to assure human rights for all of them finally. Due to this reason we are in close contact with the executives of the new “Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh” of May 12, 2013 clearing the full terms to be able to join this convention. We see this as a real chance to achieve TOGETHER the long term needed sustainable changes in Bangladesh.

We thank you again for having given us the possibility to respond,

Regards,

Karl Rieker GmbH & Co. KG
Höfelstr. 5- 72411 Bodelshausen-Germany