



12 February, 2019

Sheikh Hasina, Honourable Prime Minister  
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Prime Minister's Office  
Old Sangsad Bhaban  
Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215 Bangladesh

Honorable Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina,

The Bangladesh Investor Initiative, a group of institutional investors from twelve countries around the world and coordinated by the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility are shareowners in many of the global companies sourcing product from Bangladesh's garment sector. We have supported the mission and model of the Accord on Fire and Building Safety (Accord) in Bangladesh since May of 2013 and have witnessed its success in mitigating risks to workers in the Bangladeshi garment sector. The 190 investors who signed the attached statement are concerned that a premature closure of Accord operations in Bangladesh would be detrimental to the health and safety of garment workers and to brands that depend upon a secure, safe workforce. We therefore urge you to:

1. Send a strong signal of support for allowing the Accord to continue to operate in Bangladesh without placing restrictions that would hinder its ability to implement its program independently, to identify safety hazards, publicly disclose them and compel factories to remediate.
2. Provide sufficient time for a transition period to enable the development of your government's Remediation and Coordination Cell (RCC) in order to build capacity to regulate workplace safety.

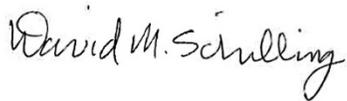
Representatives of the Government of Bangladesh have on several occasions indicated that the RCC already has the capacity to take over the inspections and remediation functions from the Accord. We have yet to see evidence of this. We are concerned, for example, about the 120 factories declared unsafe and ineligible to produce for Accord brands because they have repeatedly failed to remediate major safety violations. These factories were referred to the government along with detailed information about unsafe factory conditions, yet the government has not acted to require the necessary changes, for example, by ordering the closure of the factories or the withdrawal of their export licenses.

Global brands and their investors have relied on the Accord to ensure safe working conditions in Bangladeshi garment factories. Without the Accord or adequate regulatory systems to provide these assurances, brands are put in a difficult position. The presence of the Accord with its record of identifying and remediating safety issues provides assurance to brands and their investors that risks to workers and brand reputation are being mitigated.

We urge you, Honorable Prime Minister, and your government to advocate for the continued operation of the 2018 Transition Accord until such time as a Remediation Coordination Cell is fully prepared to assume its tasks. Through this effective process the Government of Bangladesh can demonstrate its commitment to a safer, stronger and more sustainable garment industry, now and in the future.

Please contact us if you have any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David M. Schilling". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D' and a long, trailing 'g'.

David M. Schilling  
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Cc: Honourable Minister Tipu Munshi, Ministry of Commerce  
Honourable State Minister Begum Munnujan Sufiyan Ministry of Labor