



Improving working conditions in the global garment industry

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Labels Bershka and Lefties (Inditex), KIK, New Look found on Smart Export site



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The Clean Clothes Campaign, along with labour rights organisations in Bangladesh and around the world, calls for immediate action from international brands following yesterday's fire in Dhaka Bangladesh, which cost the lives of seven more women garment workers. Four of them were only seventeen years old.

Activists today managed to enter the ruins of "Smart Exports" and found labels linking major European retailers to this latest tragedy: Bershka and Lefties, both of which belong to Inditex, owner of the well-known Zara brand and the world's largest clothing retailer; KIK Okay, belonging to the German price fighter KIK, and New Look, Scott and Fox, and Solo Invest, all French brands.

The refusal of these brands to address the safety issues that caused previous factory fires leaves them directly responsible for yet another tragic loss of life. The Clean Clothes Campaign, together with other international labour rights groups, yesterday asked brands again to sign the Bangladesh Fire and Building Safety Agreement, and work with local and global unions to ensure that buildings are upgraded and workers can freely report safety hazards and other violations.

KIK was sourcing from Tazreen fashions where 112 workers died in a fire just over 2 months ago, and the same KIK label was also found at at the Ali Enterprises factory (Pakistan), where nearly 300 workers burned to death last September. Inditex and Solo Invest also both sourced from the notorious Spectrum factory where 64 workers were killed in 2005.



Label from KIK, found at the Smart Exports factory.

"Workers continue to die, and brands continue to waste time and make up excuses instead of taking action. KIK still has not paid the Tazreen Fashions victims their compensation, and they lack medical care. Inditex was asked to sign the Bangladesh Fire and Building Safety Agreement over a year ago. Meanwhile they all continue to expand their production in Bangladesh, knowing full well that the buildings are unsafe" says Ineke Zeldenrust from the Clean Clothes Campaign.

Together with our partners in Bangladesh and internationally, the CCC continues to fight for an independent and transparent investigation into the causes of the fires, for full and fair compensation to be paid to the victims and their families and importantly concrete action from all parties involved to end this sad and pointless loss of life.

These deaths could and should have been avoided.

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