

Geneva, 12 September 2012

Mr Raja Pervaiz Ashraf
Prime Minister of Pakistan
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Non-compliance with fire security kills hundreds of workers.

Dear Mr Pervaiz Ashraf,

I am writing on behalf of IndustriALL Global Union representing more than fifty million workers throughout mining, energy and manufacturing, including textile, garment, shoes and leather industries in some 140 countries throughout the world.

We are saddened and outraged by the death of hundreds workers in a garment factory in Karachi including a child and 21 workers in a shoe-making factory in Lahore. The number of victims discovered by fire rescuers in Karachi continues to rise and reached 246 at the time we are writing this letter. The atrocious death that they had to face could have been prevented with simple measures of safety that unfortunately most of the factories in Pakistan do not bother to follow. It has been reported that some factories are set-up in residencies and therefore severely lack the basic safety that each worker has the right to expect.

Although nothing can tame the horror and the loss that the victims and their family are experiencing at the moment, we are calling on your office to take strong measures to:

- 1) Give all medical support to injured workers;
- 2) Give moral and financial support to the families of the deceased;
- 3) Ensure that the owner of the factory is liable for this accident and will provide substantial compensation to the victims and the family of the victims;
- 4) That the workers continue to receive their salary until the relocation of the factory to a safer place or to receive decent compensation if the factory closes completely and they lose their work;
- 5) Ensure that from now on, national laws on safety issues are in place and that their implementation or failure to do so is closely monitored and sanctioned by the government so that such tragic accidents will no longer occur.

The 2010 Pakistan Labour policy has among its objectives the following: Just and humane conditions of work be guaranteed to all workers. We very much would like to see this be finally applied to the garment and shoe-making workers in Pakistan who constitutes 30% of the workers in the country and who have some of the most inhumane working conditions.

Yours sincerely,



Jyrki Raina
General Secretary