

## STEERING COMMITTEE CONFERENCE CALL - MINUTES

**Date:** Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015 & Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2015

**Time:** 14:00-15:00 CET, 18:00 – 19:00 Dhaka & 13:00-14:00 CET, 17:00-18:00 Dhaka

### ATTENDEES:

**Chair:** Melanie Steiner (24<sup>th</sup>), Jenny Holdcroft (6<sup>th</sup>)

**Company signatories:** Roger Hubert (24<sup>th</sup> only), Jochen Overmeyer, Philip Chamberlain, Santiago Martinez-Lage Sobredo (6<sup>th</sup> only)

**Trade Union signatories:** Christy Hoffman, Jenny Holdcroft, Alke Boessiger (6<sup>th</sup> only)

**Witness signatories:** Scott Nova

**Accord Executive Team:** Rob Wayss, Brad Loewen (6<sup>th</sup> only)

**Accord staff:** Tatiana Delany, Joris Oldenziel

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July 2015

ITEM	AGENDA ITEMS	WHO	COMPLETION DATE
1	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SC agree for Melanie Steiner to act as chair</li> <li>- Christy Hoffman circulates a proposed statement over email regarding the dispute resolution cases.</li> </ul>	Chair	
2	<p><b>Dispute Resolution Process related to Cherry Pvt. and Mega Chois</b></p> <p>Melanie Steiner and Christy Hoffman sum up the status of the investigation related to the two disputes initiated by IndustriAll and UNI Global related to the violation of closure obligations. The aim of the investigation was to come to an agreement which the Steering Committee could endorse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Melanie Steiner and Christy Hoffman have met with all the brands involved in the cases to hear their side of the dispute.</li> <li>- IndustriAll and UNI Global argue that in both cases the company signatories should have offered more assistance for the remediation and furthermore gone further to ensure the remediation happened and the workers understood their rights to refuse unsafe work.</li> <li>- Melanie Steiner and Christy Hoffman agree that the obligations of Article 12 to 15 apply. They recommend that the SC agree on the circulated joint statement (without prejudice for either sides position on tier 3 obligations) to remind the company signatories that regardless of the 'quality of their business relationship' with the factory (i.e. whether working through an agent, importer or the company has had no orders in the factory for a long period of time) company signatories still have obligations under articles 12 to 15.</li> </ul>	Secretariat	31/7/15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jenny Holdcroft and Jochen Overmeyer thank Christy Hoffman and Melanie Steiner for the extensive work they have done to investigate the cases and reach a proposal to bring to the Steering Committee.</li> <li>- Scott Nova asks why there is no reference in the statement to Article 22 or in fact other articles which fall under the provisions of the Accord related to remediation and seeks clarification that their absence does not mean that the obligations do not apply. Christy Hoffman clarifies that there was no intention to exclude other Articles, noting that the incentives section of the Accord is where there is disagreement within the SC.</li> <li>- The SC re-confirm their agreement to the '30 day rule'; i.e. if a brand delists a factory within 30 days prior to an Accord safety inspection the company signatories are responsible for the remediation at the factory until the remediation is completed i.e. NOT for 30 days only from the date of delisting.</li> <li>- Secretariat clarify that the 30 day rule has been frequently communicated to all company signatories through the following: regional meetings, webinars, FFC logins &amp; prepared factory lists and the data management guide on the Accord website.</li> <li>- The SC agree on the language in the proposed statement with no changes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Secretariat to strengthen language in the data management guide to explicitly state that the 30 day rule does not mean that a company signatory is responsible for only 30 days of remediation.</b></li> <li>- <b>Joris Oldenziel to prepare the formal statement on behalf of the SC to send to the four companies involved in the cases.</b></li> </ul>		
3	<p><b>The role of the Accord in relation to the establishment of OSH committees</b></p> <p>The ED updates the SC on the latest information related to the BLA implementation rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The SC discuss the difference between 'exceeding the law' and doing something 'in contradiction to the law' and note that the Accord has never and will never violate the law.</li> <li>- Scott Nova reads out the previous SC minutes from the SC meeting in June relating to the start of the Accord OSH pilot program: <i>"In light of the recent announcement of the Government of Bangladesh to publish the rules in July, it is agreed to hold off on continuing with the pilot until the end of July, but to continue with the preparations in the meantime. On August 1st, the default position is that the Accord will proceed with the pilot, starting with the establishment of OSH Committees in unionised factories where there is a decent relationship between the employers and employees, unless agreed otherwise."</i></li> <li>- The SC labour reps reassert that there is no need to revisit this previously agreed decision</li> <li>- The SC company reps clarify that they understand the above minuted statement means that <i>unless otherwise agreed the Accord would move ahead with the pilot</i>. However, the SC company reps demand a meeting at the end of July to revisit this previous decision.</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>ED to circulate to the SC and/or provide in writing summary points of the changes in the latest iteration of the BLA rules.</b></li> </ul>	Rob Wayss Secretariat	4/8/15

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>ED to provide a recommendation of how the Accord moves forward with the OSH committee pilot program</b></li> <li>- <b>Secretariat to reconvene an SC meeting in a week to discuss the OSH committee pilot program</b></li> </ul>		
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Thursday 6th August 2015

ITEM	AGENDA ITEMS	WHO	COMPLETION DATE
1	<p><b>Introductions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SC agree for Jenny Holdcroft to act as chair</li> </ul>	Chair	
2	<p><b>The role of the Accord in relation to the establishment of OSH committees</b></p> <p>The ED updates the SC on the status of the OSH Committee pilot preparations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Accord has prepared a letter to send to factory owners/managing directors, unions and active brands to advise the factory that they have been selected for the Accord OSH committee pilot and to invite them to a meeting with the Accord. This letter has been approved by the Management Committee.</li> <li>- The active Accord brands in each pilot factory will be sent a letter in advance (of the letter to factories) advising them that their factory has been nominated and explaining the next steps.</li> <li>- The Accord's list of pilot factories initially included 8 nominated factories; 1 of these does not have any active Accord brands so will not be included in the pilot. This week the Accord confirmed that a different factory in this group does not have a registered union and therefore will also not be included in the pilot. The Accord will therefore proceed with the remaining six factories.</li> <li>- The Accord will continue to work to identify a further 3-6 factories which may be considered for a second pilot or included as part of the initial pilot at a later date.</li> <li>- The 31st July deadline for the BLA implementation rules has now passed and they have not yet been issued. There have been no further comments on the issuance of the rules from the ILO or the Bangladesh Government.</li> </ul> <p>The ED explains the role of the Accord through the OSH committee pilot:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize initial meeting with factory owner/management (ED will attend all initial meetings for the pilot)</li> <li>- Organize all employee meeting with formal presentation</li> <li>- Distribute brochures/booklets to all employees</li> <li>- Support the factory management and union in the formation of the committee</li> <li>- Labour and management on the OSH committee technical training in five core training subjects.</li> </ul> <p>The ED notes that Joris Oldenziel is integrating the changes to the preparatory documents as requested by the MC. The training materials and modules are being sent this week to the working group on worker participation for review and then will be sent to the MC for final sign-off.</p> <p>ED confirms that an assessment of the learning (so far) from the pilot will be shared with the SC at their next quarterly face to face meeting (13th and 14th October) in New York.</p>	Rob Wayss Secretariat	4/8/15

	<p>As previously agreed, the SC re-confirm that the Accord OSH committee pilot will begin with the selected 6 factories in August 2015. In the meantime the Accord will continue to discuss with the Bangladesh Government and the ILO how the Accord can play a constructive role in the set-up of OSH committees across all factories going forwards.</p>		
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