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[Home](#) [News](#) [Get involved](#) [Safety](#) [Living Wage](#) [Behind](#)
[The Scenes](#) [Issues](#) [Resources](#) [About us](#)

Urge KIK to identify buyers and pay compensation to Pakistan fire victims



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On Tuesday 11th September almost 300 workers were killed when a fire ripped through the Ali Enterprises factory in Karachi, Pakistan. At the time of the fire the factory was producing jeans for the German low cost retailer, KIK, which has more than 3000 stores in eight European countries.

This appeal is now closed

Although the cause of the fire is still under investigation, it is clear that the high death toll was caused by appalling health and safety conditions at the factory. At the time of the fire windows were closed with bars, fire exits were locked and there was no equipment available to fight the fire.

The factory had been regularly audited in recent years, yet the factory itself was not legally registered and had failed to provide employment contracts.

Although KIK was forced to acknowledge their role in the tragedy, they have since refused to engage in meaningful discussion and have taken no action to provide remedy in this case.

KIK has claimed that extensive auditing taking place in the years since 2006 lead to improvements in the fire safety regulations. The events of 11th

September prove that such improvements were clearly insufficient. The audits failed to show that the factory was running illegally, the lack of fire exits and the fact that all windows were barred, leaving no way for the smoke to escape. KIK needs to admit that its audit process is not reliable. The audit did not prevent the deaths of almost 300 workers and does not exempt KIK from responsibility in this case.

KIK also claims to be in the process of setting up a fund to continue paying wages to the surviving workers.



On the left, jeans in a Kik shop in Germany. On the right, labels found in the ashes in Pakistan

Workers and their families are in desperate need and continued payment of their wages would help relieve some of the financial burden they are carrying. Almost one month after the fire none of the workers contacted by the trade union have received any such payment. KIK's responsibility also extends to the families of the dead workers and to compensation payments, which will provide more long term security to those families devastated by these events.

Such an incredible loss of life should result in immediate and effective action. KIK's failure to provide any concrete support to the families affected, its insistence on hiding behind unreliable audits is an outrage.

Now is not the time for excuses: call on KIK now to demand they:

- ensure transparency: disclose audit reports of UL Responsible Sourcing (hired by KIK) and the names of other buyers at Ali Enterprises that KIK is aware of and claims to be negotiating with;
- ensure compensation, wages and employment to victims: negotiate directly with the Workers Right Movement to ensure all the injured workers receive full medical care without charge, that wages continue to be paid, that the families of the dead workers and the injured receive full compensation and a pension covering future loss of income, and that survivors will be provided employment in other suppliers;
- take all measures to prevent future disasters: immediately take all measures necessary to prevent such a terrible tragedy from ever happening again. This includes a full safety review of all suppliers involving worker representatives, providing health and safety training for all workers and that they can freely organize and express themselves, publicly disclose the supplier list and ensure all workplaces are registered and that all workers have a contract and pay prices that allow for all necessary remediation measures to be undertaken;
- support and participate in investigation: actively support and participate in a full, independent and transparent investigation into the cause of the fire that looks at the failure of government, owner and buyers to prevent, detect or remediate the violations of occupations health and safety rules and labour laws that have caused these horrific and senseless deaths. This investigation should also yield a complete list of those who died in the factory collapse.

Dear Mr. Arretz,

I want to express my outrage about the refusal of KIK to take responsibility for the fire at the Karachi jeans factory Ali Enterprises, that took place on September 11th and took the lives of nearly 300 workers.

I am informed by the Clean Clothes Campaign that KIK has failed to disclose its audit reports and the names of other buyers. In addition, I understand that KIK is refusing to negotiate directly with the Pakistani Workers Rights Movement who are representing the workers and their families, to ensure that all victims are fully compensated, wages continue to be paid and all medical costs will be covered.

Therefore, I urge you to immediately follow up on the demands from the Clean Clothes Campaign and the Pakistani Workers Rights Movement:

- ensure transparency: disclose audit reports of UL Responsible Sourcing (hired by KIK) and the names of other buyers at Ali Enterprises that KIK is aware of and claims to be negotiating with;
- ensure compensation, wages and employment to victims: negotiate directly with the Workers Right Movement to ensure all the injured workers receive full medical care without charge, that wages continue to be paid, that the families of the dead workers and the injured receive full compensation and a pension covering future loss of income, and that survivors will be provided employment in other suppliers;
- take all measures to prevent future disasters: immediately take all measures necessary to prevent such a

terrible tragedy from ever happening again. This includes a full safety review of all suppliers involving worker representatives, providing health and safety training for all workers and that they can freely organize and express themselves, publicly disclose the supplier list and ensure all workplaces are registered and that all workers have a contract and pay prices that allow for all necessary remediation measures to be undertaken;

- support and participate in investigation: actively support and participate in a full, independent and transparent investigation into the cause of the fire that looks at the failure of government, owner and buyers to prevent, detect or remediate the violations of occupations health and safety rules and labour laws that have caused these horrific and senseless deaths. This investigation should also yield a complete list of those who died in the factory collapse.

Sincerely,

Filed under: [KIK Ali Enterprises factory fire Pakistan](#)

About CCC

Mission
How We Work
Local CCC's



At a glance

The Issues
FAQ
Get Active
Stay Informed

Living Wage

Why a living wage?
Asia Floor Wage
Sign the Living Wage petition

Contact

Contact Information
For the Press
About this site