

**\*\*\* EMBARGO: 24 MARCH 2015, 13:00 CET TIME \*\*\***

## **JOINT STATEMENT**

### **BSCI, ETI and SAI Urge Bangladeshi Partners for Final Contribution to Rana Plaza Arrangement**

24 March 2015 – Ahead of the second anniversary of the Rana Plaza building collapse, the Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI), the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) and Social Accountability International (SAI) urge Bangladeshi public and private partners to urgently make a contribution under the Rana Plaza Arrangement in order to complete the existing funding gap and fully compensate the victims of this tragedy.

The financial contribution of the Bangladeshi government and the local employers' organisations will be essential for the Arrangement –agreed on November 2013 and [highly praised by the above organisations](#)– to fulfil its goal of providing financial support to victims, their families and dependants.

#### **Brands' contributions key to breakthrough**

We commend those companies sourcing from Rana Plaza that have already contributed to the Trust Fund. However, we urgently call on those brands and retailers sourcing from Rana Plaza that haven't done so yet to step up. Given the scale of this tragedy and the human need, the Trust Fund also offers a complementary mechanism to help ensure those in need receive support. For this reason, we encourage any brand or retailer sourcing from Bangladesh to make as well a voluntary donation to the families affected as an expression of support for the victims.

ETI Director, Peter McAllister, said: *"It is unacceptable that nearly two years after the Rana Plaza disaster, some victims and their families are still waiting for the compensation they are due. We hope this joint call with BSCI and SAI sends a strong signal to companies that sourced from Rana Plaza and have not yet made payments. We also hope this spurs donations from others that source from Bangladesh, so that victims and their families can get on with living their lives."*

SAI President, Alice Tepper Marlin, said: *"Nearly two years since the Rana Plaza disaster there is a dire need for the families of the victims to receive compensation. SAI would like to offer words of commendation for those organisations and companies that have already made a contribution and would like to prompt Bangladeshi partners to take decisive action and contribute to make the final Trust Fund disbursement possible"*.

#### **Investing in reliable protection for RMG workers**

The crucial engagement of Bangladeshi partners in the Rana Plaza Arrangement would as well demonstrate their commitment to the protection of their workers and would bring credibility to the discussions initiated by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) for the establishment of an Employment Injury Insurance (EII) in the country. This scheme, based on ILO convention 121 on employment injury benefits and a key component of the National Tripartite Plan of Action on Fire

Safety, would ensure protection for all ready-made garment (RMG) workers and compensation should they suffer an accident at work.

Lorenz Berzau, BSCI Managing Director, said: *“We highly welcome the efforts of ILO in bringing forward this proposal. The country needs to invest in a mechanism that protects workers and avoids having to set up exceptional measures for compensating victims. In addition, it will have a very positive impact on the competitiveness and reputation of the garment sector in the country and send a strong message to the international community that lessons have been learned after Rana Plaza”.*

We are truly convinced that a final joint effort can raise the necessary funds to proceed with the final disbursements. We believe this can be achieved by 24 April 2015, two years since the tragic incident and making this date a symbol of the shared accomplishment and international commitment to the country.

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The **Business Social Compliance Initiative (BSCI)** is a leading business-driven initiative for companies committed to improving working conditions in factories and farms worldwide. We unite more than 1,500 companies around a development-oriented system applicable to all sectors and sourcing countries. BSCI was launched by the Foreign Trade Association (FTA) in 2003. FTA is the leading business association of European and international commerce that promotes free trade and sustainable supply chains. <http://www.bsci-intl.org/>

The **Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI)** is a leading alliance of companies, trade unions and NGOs that promotes respect for workers' rights around the globe. Its vision is a world where all workers are free from exploitation and discrimination, and enjoy conditions of freedom, security and equity. <http://www.ethicaltrade.org/>

**Social Accountability International (SAI)** is a non-governmental, international, multi-stakeholder organization dedicated to improving workplaces and communities by developing and implementing socially responsible standards. In 1997, SAI launched the SA8000 standard, which is currently used by businesses and governments around the world and is recognized as one of the strongest workplace standards. <http://www.sa-intl.org/>