

“RANA PLAZA” REFERRAL FOR OPINION

24 October 2013

Interim Communiqué of the French NCP following the Rana Plaza factory building collapse :

The NCP is completing its interview process and will publish a report in November

In the wake of the collapse of the Rana Plaza factory building, the Minister for Foreign Trade asked the National Contact Point (NCP) on 17 May 2013 to outline recommendations to ensure that companies operating in the textile and clothing industry comply with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises along their entire supply chains. The referral focused on two key areas: 1) specifying the scope of what the Guidelines refer to as a multinational enterprise’s “business relationship” through its supply chain; 2) identifying the “due diligence measures” required to prevent and mitigate actual and potential adverse impacts resulting from business activities.

To successfully respond to the referral, the NCP has carried out an intensive series of interviews with stakeholders and specialists in these areas, including major general and specialised retail chains, well-known clothing brands, business federations, French and International trade union federations, non-governmental organisations, audit firms, experts and researchers specialised in Bangladesh, business law specialists, academics, experts in corporate social responsibility and consumer associations. The NCP also interviewed the ILO’s high level mission to Bangladesh led by Mr Gilbert Houngbo, ILO Deputy Director General for Field Operations and Partnerships. The NCP conducted almost forty interviews with more than 50 interviewees in order to obtain an overview of the situation and gather information about the challenges facing the textile and clothing industry.

The French Embassy in Bangladesh, particularly its Economic Department, has been asked to regularly monitor the initiatives taken by various stakeholders and keep monitoring developments occurring in this industry; unfortunately this included another fire in a garment factory which claimed more lives.

The NCP is coming to the end of its interview programme and is currently drafting a report that will be handed out to the Minister for Foreign Trade in November and published. The report will include a set of recommendations that will form the pillar of measures for ensuring a correct implementation of OECD’s Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. It will also outline a series of optional “best practices” for enterprises operating in the sector.

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