

Major fashion brands called out for not signing Pakistan Safety Accord

Friday 28 July 2023, by [NDURE Isatou](#) (Date first published: 14 July 2023).

As the Pakistan Safety Accord reaches its six-month mark, labour unions and non-governmental organisation, the Clean Clothes Campaign, is urging major fashion brands and retailers sourcing from Pakistan to commit to the binding safety agreement.

The Clean Clothes Campaign says over 30 brands joined the [Pakistan Accord when the sign-on process began on 16 January 2023](#), including major fashion brands such as [H&M](#), [PVH](#), and [ASOS](#), however it argues the pace of the roll-out has stalled quickly.

It states that six months on and 63 brands have signed the agreement, covering hundreds of factories, but several major buyers are still missing.

The Pakistan Accord was modelled on the International Safety Accord renowned for its work in transforming the workplace for millions of garment workers in Bangladesh.

The organisation explains the International Accord has successfully improved factory safety for 2.5 million workers in Bangladesh. But, it claims garment workers in Pakistan are “still being made to wait for similar improvements to take place as brands take their time to commit to the agreement”.

The brands it is calling out for not signing the Pakistan Accord include [Levi's](#), [Kontoor Brands](#) (Lee, [Wrangler](#)), [Amazon](#), and [Decathlon](#), all of which it claims still need to sign the International Accord in Bangladesh, despite it being the 10th anniversary of the Rana Plaza garment factory collapse, which led to its introduction.

The Clean Clothes Campaign also names several brands that have previously shown commitment to safety in Bangladesh and which it says are major buyers in Pakistan. These include [Boohoo](#), [The Very Group](#), [Lidl](#), [Missguided](#), [Target Australia](#), [Esprit](#), [Matalan](#), and Fruit of the Loom.

None of the brands had responded to Just Style's request for comment at the time of going to press, however it should be noted that Target Australia is part of the Kmart Group which is one of the signatories to the Accord and was the first retailer in Australia to sign up to the Bangladesh Accord.

Clean Clothes Campaign's international coordinator Ineke Zeldenrust says: “By signing the Pakistan Accord, brands and retailers commit to ensuring the factories in their Pakistan supply chain are made safe. This requires active support for the programme and suppliers, including living up to the obligation to ensure remediations are financially feasible for factories to carry out. Brands will have to reflect their commitment to factory safety in the prices they pay to factories to make actual improvements possible.”

Zehra Khan, general secretary of the home-based Women Workers' Federation adds: “Workers in Pakistan have waited for long enough. The solutions exist, but some brands still risk workers' lives and are escaping their responsibility. We call on brands and retailers to start putting speed behind

the operation and make participation in the Pakistan Accord a top priority.”

Meanwhile Nasir Mansoor, general secretary general of the National Trade Union Federation in Pakistan points out: “We need all brands with production in Pakistan to sign the Accord as soon as possible. And, once brands sign, they must not sit back and relax. Only after inspections begin and workers can hand in complaints, will the risk of the next factory fire or collapse actually start to lower.”

The Clean Clothes Campaign says a fire and collapse at the Usman & Sons factory in April highlights the consequences of delayed action and claims labels of French supermarket chain Auchan were found in the rubble.

The Clean Clothes Campaign says this company signed the 2013 and 2018 Accord agreements but has failed to sign the 2021 International Accord and the Pakistan Accord.

Auchan had not responded to Just Style’s request for comment at the time of going to press.

Isatou Ndure

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