



June 20, 2014

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We write today to applaud the U.S. Department of State's decision to maintain Uzbekistan in Tier 3 in the *2014 Global Trafficking in Persons Report*. We would also like to thank the Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights, the Ambassador at Large and Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons, the Bureaus of Human Rights and South and Central Asian Affairs, and the U.S. embassy in Tashkent for their ongoing efforts to persuade Uzbekistan's government to eliminate the scourge of forced and child labor in the cotton sector.

The State Department's decision to maintain Uzbekistan in Tier 3 is well-justified and an important step in international efforts to persuade the government in Tashkent to change its practices. Uzbekistan does not meet the minimum standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, nor is the Uzbek government yet taking real steps to meet those standards. The Tier 3 ranking also informs international institutions, companies and investors to continue to press the Uzbek authorities to move beyond their current phase of promises.

Moving forward, we believe that the United States should insist that Tashkent, at a minimum, provide the ILO unfettered access to conduct a survey of forced labor and monitor for forced labor and child labor during this fall's harvest. In light of increased participation of the private sector in the state-sponsored forced labor system in recent years, we also urge U.S. officials to stress to American companies operating in Uzbekistan the importance of fulfilling their human rights due diligence responsibilities.

If Tashkent fails to take concrete steps to eliminate forced labor of children and adults in the cotton sector this year, the State Department should examine options for applying sanctions available under the TVPA for Tier 3 countries, including travel restrictions for Uzbek officials involved in the forced labor system. The US government should also use its voice and votes at the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and other international financial institutions to ensure that they do not finance activities that contribute to the forced labor system, directly or indirectly.

For our part, the unions, industry associations, investors, trade unions and NGOs that form the Cotton Campaign will continue efforts to raise corporate, public, governmental and international awareness of the problem and press the Uzbek authorities to implement their human rights commitments.

Sincerely,

The Cotton Campaign:

Advocates for Public Interest Law



American Apparel and Footwear Association



American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



American Federation of Teachers



Anti-Slavery International



Association for Human Rights in Central Asia



Calvert Investments



Catholic Health East Trinity Health



Child Labor Coalition



Dignity Health



Eileen Fisher

EILEEN
FISHER

Environmental Justice Foundation



The Eurasian Transition Group



European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights



EUROPEAN CENTER FOR
CONSTITUTIONAL AND
HUMAN RIGHTS

Human Rights Watch



Inditex Group

INDITEX

Inkota netzwerk



International Labor Rights Forum



Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Office,
Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate



Korean Teachers and Education Workers Union
Jeon Gyo Jo



JEON GYOJO

National Consumers League



National Retail Federation



Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment



Open Society Foundations



Pax World Mutual Funds



Responsible Sourcing Network



Retail Council of Canada



Retail Industry Leaders Association



Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth



Solidarity Center



Stop the Traffik



Uniting Church in Australia,
Synod of Victoria and Tasmania



United States Fashion Industry Association



Uzbek-German Forum for Human Rights



Walden Asset Management



Walk Free



cc: Thomas E. Perez, Secretary of Labor
William J. Burns, Deputy Secretary of State
Nisha Desai Biswal, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs
Tom Malinowski, Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
George Krol, United States Ambassador to the Republic of Uzbekistan
Luis CdeBaca, Ambassador-at-Large, Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons
Sarah B. Sewall, Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights