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Rt Hon Harriet Harman QC MP
Chair, Joint Committee on Human Rights
Committee Office
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

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2nd November 2016

Dear Ms Harman,

Thank you for your letter of 27 October.

Please find attached a copy of our detailed response to the allegations BBC Panorama made to us before they aired their programme. We share Panorama's concerns about vulnerable people in our supply chain, particularly Syrian refugees. ASOS is totally opposed to the abuse of vulnerable workers throughout the garment industry in Turkey and elsewhere. I hope that the detail in our response to Panorama demonstrates this.

After the programme was broadcast, I put up a statement on our website (hard copy attached) which may also prove helpful, since it shows how we at ASOS feel about vulnerable people in our supply chain and their Human Rights. That statement includes a summary of initiatives that our ethical trading team are implementing in response to the issues highlighted by Panorama.

I have also attached a Memorandum of Understanding specifically regarding Turkey that we have entered into with the Ethical Trading Initiative ("ETI"), of which we are an active member. Here is what ETI said of us in the context of the Panorama programme:

"ASOS is a committed and active member of ETI. They have been at the forefront of many of our programmes and in Turkey were one of the original companies to raise concerns about worker exploitation in the supply chain. They have also focused on the three actions that we ask of all members sourcing from Turkey: to develop internal policies that address the exploitation of Syrian refugees, to scrutinise sourcing practices beyond the first tier of the supply chain and to put in place effective remediation where unregistered Syrian workers are found to be employed".

The issue we are struggling to deal with is not in our approved factories, who we audit and with most of whom we have longstanding relationships. It is with unapproved outsourcing to factories we do not know about. This will continue to be a problem until we have total visibility on the conditions in every factory that touches our product. However difficult to achieve, that complete transparency in our supply chain is what ultimately we and our industry have got to aim for. We are therefore stepping up our commitment to managing our supply chain in Turkey.

I regret that our supply chain in Turkey is not as transparent as it needs to be today, but we will continue to work there in the belief we can play a role in changing the system, supporting vulnerable people as we do so.

I am grateful for the opportunity to respond directly to the allegations made regarding our sourcing practices in Turkey. The responsible treatment of all those working in our supply chain is an incredibly important issue for us. There is work for us to do in Turkey, but also actions that the Turkish Government could take to improve the Human Rights of workers there, particularly Syrian refugees. Any pressure you could bring to bear in this regard would be of great assistance to us all.

Yours sincerely,



Nick Beighton

CEO, ASOS plc

Attachments:

- ASOS detailed response to Panorama allegations
- ASOS statement following Panorama programme
- ASOS MOU with ETI

CC Andrew Magowan, ASOS Legal Counsel and Company Secretary