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Labour Inspection Request

Your Excellency,

On the occasion of our last meeting in November 2012, we discussed the ITUC's concerns regarding labour inspection in Qatar. I had explained that we had met with several workers living and working under very difficult conditions, many of which are in fact illegal under the laws of Qatar. However, to date, labour inspectors do not appear to be making the regular, preventative inspections necessary to ensure that the country's laws are properly enforced. Further, largely due to language barriers, the complaints mechanisms are largely unavailable to most migrant workers. I had mentioned that we would be submitting a list of companies to you for inspection. Below are six companies that we would like the government to inspect as soon as possible.

1. [REDACTED]: This company crams 350 Nepali workers in a building with only 17 rooms. The sanitation and other facilities in these quarters are inadequate for the large size of the population. Article 2 (2) of Resolution of the Minister of Civil Service and Housing Affairs No. (17) of 2005 on Conditions and Descriptions of the Expedient Workers Residences determines that one room shall not lodge more than four workers in residential complexes.
2. [REDACTED]: This company fails to provide adequate accommodation to its workers. Six persons have to share the same room and 18 persons share the same cooking space. Even though Article 82 Law No (14) Labour Law of 2004 guarantees that "every worker shall be paid his full wage if the sick leave does not exceed two weeks," the company makes salary deductions for the days workers are unable to perform their work because of sickness. Workers have been also unable to claim gratuity payments guaranteed by the Labour Law of 2004 (Article 54) after having worked for the company for two years. In addition, management confiscates passports of migrant workers on arrival. According to Articles 9 and 52 of Law No. 4 of 2009 Regulating the Entry and Exit of Expatriates in Qatar and their Residence and Sponsorship, sponsors are obliged to return passports to sponsored persons after the procedures for issuing a residence permit are completed.
3. [REDACTED] Article 65 of Law No. 14 of 2004 entitles workers to the wages specified in their employment contract. However, we understand that the employer has unilaterally reduced the salaries of all workers without justification and in contravention of the employment contracts.
4. [REDACTED]: This company employs about 5,000 migrant workers. Even though it signs a contract with workers in their country of origin and with recruitment agencies, it forces workers to sign a second contract when they arrive at a much lower salary (1,370

QR instead of 1,800 QR). The company pays drivers only for the hours they actually drive and not for other work-related tasks such as cleaning and maintaining the buses. Management also illegally confiscates passports and the drivers' licences of workers. Workers who have complained about these violations in this company have been penalized by being blacklisted, physically threatened or immediately deported.

5. [REDACTED]: This company does not provide adequate accommodation and sanitary facilities to workers. Indeed, up to 12 persons share a single room and up to 24 people share a cooking space and bathroom. Workers have to pay for gas and water even though Article 12 of the Resolution of the Minister of Civil Service and Housing Affairs No. (17) of 2005 says that "it is prohibited for the employer to subtract any amount from the workers against providing the dwelling, its equipment and maintenance." Migrant workers are also forced to sign a second contract on arrival which gives them a lower salary and different terms of reference which do not correspond to their qualifications. After their first year of employment the company threatens workers with not renewing their contracts if they do not agree to an even lower salary. The company also refuses to comply with Article 68 of Law No (14) Labour Law of 2004 which gives workers the right to annual leave with pay.
6. [REDACTED]: This company employs about 3,000 workers. They live in inadequate accommodation without access to electricity. Indeed, workers are forced to use generators that often break down. Article 6 (2) of Resolution of the Minister of Civil Service and Housing Affairs No. (17) of 2005 on Conditions and Descriptions of the Expedient Workers Residences obliges employers to comply with the periodic maintenance of electrical conductions. Additionally, workers are not given health cards and have to pay for their medical services themselves. Articles 102 and 102 Law No (14) Labour Law of 2004 as well as Ministerial Decision 16 of 2005 stipulate that work places with more than 500 workers are obliged to provide at least a doctor and a nurse to workers. Medical care for workers shall include medical examination, necessary medication etc. Management also illegally confiscates passports of workers.

We urge your office to carry out a comprehensive inspection into these companies, observing the international standards for labour inspection found in ILO Labour Inspection Convention No. 81, which Qatar ratified in 1976. The issues raised herein are merely a guide. Proper interviews with the workers in their native languages may reveal violations beyond those described here.

We look forward to working with you on this matter and hope to see these inspections carried out soon, any violations corrected promptly and offenders appropriately fined and otherwise sanctioned. The success of these inspections will be an indication of the seriousness with which the government will approach labour issues more generally. The lives and welfare of over a million workers depend on a robust labour inspection program.

Yours sincerely,



Sharan Burrow
General Secretary