

Statement

A decade of workplace health and safety under the Accord

May 15, 2023, Amsterdam:

Ten years ago, on 15 May 2013, the Accord on Fire Building and Safety in Bangladesh (Bangladesh Accord) was signed by global clothing companies, UNI and IndustriALL global trade unions, and NGO witness signatories, just three weeks after the Rana Plaza building collapse. This landmark agreement was born out of an urgent need to address the prevalence of serious factory accidents in the textile and garment industry. Ten years on, the Accord Secretariat reflects on the progress on worker safety in the past decade and our vision for the future.

Efforts under the Accord have focused on improving fire and building safety standards and strengthening the capacity of workers and factories in Bangladesh to identify, raise and address a broad range of occupational health and safety issues. Suppliers in Bangladesh have made significant safety improvements at their factories, with support from more than 220 brand signatories who have invested over 70 million USD to finance the Accord programs and operations in Bangladesh.

The Accord, and the [RMG Sustainability Council \(RSC\)](#) since 2020, have conducted nearly 56,000 inspections across over 2,400 garment factories in Bangladesh. Out of the 170,000 health and safety issues identified during these inspections, 140,000 have been corrected through measures such as installation of fire doors, fire alarms, sprinkler systems, fixing faulty electrical systems, and strengthening building structures.

Recognising that safe workplaces cannot be ensured without worker participation, more than 1,200 joint [labour-management Safety Committees](#) at Accord-covered factories are now trained and equipped to address and monitor factory safety on a day-to-day basis.

Workers have filed over 6,000 complaints with the [independent complaints mechanism which Accord signatories provide](#). The resolution of these complaints has involved improvements in health and safety at the factory, disciplinary actions against perpetrators, payment of full severance benefits, provision of maternity benefits, reduction of excessive working hours and reinstatements of workers.

“Since the Accord's inception, its signatories and partners have contributed to the continuous and sustained remediation of health and safety risks at garment and textile factories in Bangladesh. Recognising that more remains to be done and against the backdrop of increasing human rights due diligence legislation, we look forward to a

decade of greater collaboration with all relevant stakeholders to strengthen safety standards, support capacity building, and foster an environment of accountability and transparency in the textile and garment industry,” Joris Oldenziel, Executive Director, International Accord

Looking ahead, the Accord has a mission to encourage greater collaboration between different stakeholders, including brands, unions, manufacturers, governments, and civil society organisations for a safe and healthy garment and textile industry. We remain committed to building a safe and sustainable future for all workers in the garment and textile industry in [Bangladesh](#) and implementing the [Pakistan Accord](#) in close collaboration with the signatories and their local counterparts, the Pakistan government authorities and the garment and textile manufacturing industry.

On behalf of the Accord signatories,
The International Accord Secretariat

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Additional resources:

- [Accord agreements over the years](#)
- [Key milestones 2013-2023](#)
- [Progress made under the Accord](#)
- [Status of factories in Bangladesh](#)