



THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

July 3, 2013



Ms. Randi Weingarten
President
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO
555 New Jersey Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Ms. Weingarten:

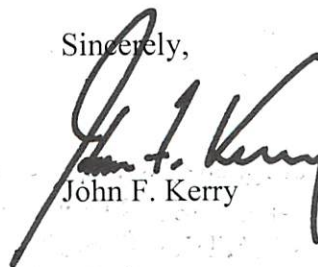
Thank you for your letter outlining your concerns about worker rights, health, and safety issues in Bangladesh. Tragedies such as the Rana Plaza building collapse in April and the Tazreen Fashions factory fire in November 2012 have heightened attention on labor issues in Bangladesh. My heart goes out to the victims and survivors, as well as their families.

On June 27, the President's annual proclamation on the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program announced the suspension of Bangladesh's benefits. The U.S. government also announced new discussions with the Government of Bangladesh regarding steps to improve the worker rights environment so that tragedies like the Rana Plaza building collapse and Tazreen Fashions factory fire can be prevented.

The U.S. government is working with the Government of Bangladesh and other stakeholders to improve the worker rights and safety environment. The United States maintains a close bilateral relationship with Bangladesh that includes cooperation across a variety of areas, including trade, investment, and worker rights. The United States funds a number of programs that address worker rights and building and fire safety concerns. We will continue to work with Bangladesh on these important issues. We regularly engage U.S. and Bangladeshi civil society, labor groups, and the private sector, which also have important roles to play in ensuring the rights and safety of workers in Bangladesh.

Thank you for your interest in securing safe workplaces and fundamental labor rights for the people of Bangladesh.

Sincerely,



John F. Kerry