



January 27, 2014

Mr. Takehiko Nakao
President and Chairperson of the Board of Directors
Asian Development Bank
Headquarters: 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City 1550
Metro Manila
Philippines

Dear Mr. Nakao,

We write to call your attention to recent reports of the International Labour Organization and World Bank that highlight the ongoing use of forced labour in the agricultural sector by the government of Uzbekistan and to urge the Asian Development Bank to take urgent action to ensure that the Modernization and Improved Performance of the Amu Bukhara Irrigation System (ABIS) project does not contribute to the perpetuation of this human rights violation.

During the 2013 cotton harvest, the ILO for the first time monitored the application of ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour in Uzbekistan. The ILO mission found continued use of child labour and, while its mandate was restricted to Convention No. 182, the ILO emphasized concerns about the use of forced labour for the cotton harvest. The ILO monitors observed and reported concerns about forced labour despite the participation of the Uzbek government on all monitoring teams and efforts by the Uzbek government to undermine monitoring, including moving people around to avoid inspections and instructing people to lie to monitors.

Uzbek citizens monitoring independently gathered and documented continued state-orchestrated forced labour throughout the 2013 cotton production cycle, despite the government's exclusion of independent civil society from the ILO monitoring mission and continued detention and intimidation of citizens seeking to document and report on forced labour. As the attached [report](#) details, the government systematically mobilized children aged 15 to 17 and adults throughout the country, and authorities mobilized even younger children in some locations. Forced child labour was organized through the state education system, under threat of expulsion from school. Public- and private-sector workers were forced to pick cotton under threat of losing their jobs. Authorities transported students from the schools to the fields in public buses, and students and adults who were deployed to pick cotton far from their homes were housed in schools and other public buildings, often at their own expense.

In December, the World Bank Inspection Panel issued their report on the Request for Inspection of the World Bank's Second Rural Enterprise Support Project (RESP II). The Panel visited with civil society

activists and victims of forced labour in Uzbekistan and concluded that the plausible link between bank financing for the agricultural sector and the perpetuation of forced labour raises serious policy compliance issues. Further action by the Inspection Panel depends on progress in the World Bank's discussion with the Uzbek government about ending the use of forced labour in cotton production and the Bank establishing third-party labour rights monitoring of its project activities.

Cotton is the agricultural sector that stands to benefit most from this ADB ABIS Project, and cotton production in Uzbekistan continues to be a state orchestrated forced-labour system. Thus, we call on the ADB to conduct appropriate due diligence by:

1. Halting the ABIS project in Uzbekistan until human rights concerns, including forced labour and forced child labour are addressed and an independent human rights monitoring program of ADB projects in Uzbekistan, with the participation of Uzbek civil society and public reporting, is functioning;
2. Urging the government of Uzbekistan to invite an ILO high-level tripartite mission to monitor compliance with ILO Conventions No. 105 and No. 182 during the 2014 cotton harvest, with the selection of monitors and oversight by the International Organization of Employees (IOE) and International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), participation of Uzbek civil society, and public reporting; and
3. Urging the government of Uzbekistan to amend its restrictive NGO laws and practices to align them with international human rights standards on freedoms of association, expression, speech, and assembly.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and would be pleased to meet with you and your colleagues to discuss these issues in further detail, at your earliest convenience. For questions, you may contact Matthew Fischer-Daly at 347-266-1351 or cottoncampaigncoordinator@gmail.com.

Sincerely,
Cotton Campaign

Advocates for Public Interest Law



American Federation of Labor and
Congress of Industrial Organizations



American Federation of Teachers



Anti-Slavery International



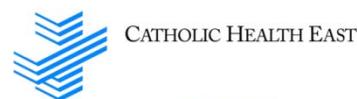
Association for Human Rights in Central Asia



Calvert Investments



Catholic Health East



Child Labor Coalition



CREA: Center for Reflection, Education and Action



Dignity Health



Dominican Sisters of Hope



Environmental Justice Foundation



The Eurasian Transition Group, e.V.



European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights



Hagar Australia



Inditex



INKOTA-netzwerk e.V.



International Labor Rights Forum



Korean Teachers and Education Workers Union (KTU)



Mercy Investment Services, Inc.



National Consumers League



National Council of Jewish Women of Australia



No Slavery Australia



Northwest Coalition for Responsible Investment



Open Society Foundations



Pax World Mutual Funds



Responsible Sourcing Network



Sisters of St. Francis of Philadelphia



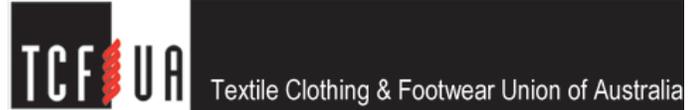
Solidarity Center



The Sunshine Coalition



Textile Clothing & Footwear Union of Australia



Uniting Church in Australia, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania



Uniting Church in Australia, Western Australia



Uniting World:
An Agency of the National Assembly of the Uniting Church in Australia



Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk, U.S. Province



Uzbek-German Forum for Human Rights



Walk Free



Enclosure (1)