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Noted government, labor and international development leaders join Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety Board of Advisors

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety is proud to announce the appointment of 12 Bangladeshi and international leaders to its Board of Advisors. Hailing from key positions within labor, government and academia, the Advisors will provide expertise and leadership to aid Alliance efforts to improve safety for Bangladeshi workers.

“We are honored to welcome these esteemed global leaders to our Board of Advisors,” said Independent Chair of the Alliance and former U.S. Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher. “The combination of their individual perspectives and breadth of expertise across government, women’s issues, labor and global development will help us implement our comprehensive commitment to a safer ready-made garment industry in Bangladesh.”

The Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety Board of Advisors is comprised of the following:

- **Avedis Seferian**, President & CEO, WRAP
- **Dan Glickman**, Senior Fellow, Bipartisan Policy Center
- **Heather Cruden**, Canadian High Commissioner to Bangladesh
- **Helene Gayle**, President & CEO, CARE USA
- **Melanne Verveer**, Executive Director, Institute for Women, Peace and Security Georgetown University
- **Mohammad Hatem**, Vice President, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association
- **Mujibur Rahman**, Professor, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology
- **Nancy Nord**, Former Commissioner, US Consumer Product Safety Commission
- **Rick Darling**, Executive Director, Government & Public Affairs, Li & Fung (Trading) Ltd.
- **Sirajul Islam Rony**, President of Bangladesh National Garment Workers Employees League (BNGWEL)
- **Sukkur Mahmud**, President, Executive Committee of the National Labour League (Jatiya Smaik League)
- **Wajedul Islam Khan**, General Secretary, Bangladesh Trade Union Kendra

The Board of Advisors will help guide the Alliance as it tracks implementation and progress against its aggressive goals, which include inspecting 100 percent of Alliance garment factories by July 2014, implementing a comprehensive worker training program and helpline, and providing remedial support for factories to address safety issues.

To-date, the Alliance is making good progress towards these goals. More than 40% of factory inspections have been completed, training programs are underway, the worker helpline will roll out to 50 factories this month, and the foundation has been built to provide important technical support and oversight of the remediation process so that factories can be upgraded and improved.

"We recognize the significance of Bangladesh's garment industry to the country's economic growth, and the jobs it provides its people," said advisory board member Dan Glickman of the Bipartisan Policy Center. "While the challenges in Bangladesh are many, the Alliance is making significant progress towards strengthening the working conditions in the ready-made garment industry and the well-being of its workers."

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About The Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety

The Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety was founded by a group of North American apparel companies, retailers and brands who joined together to develop and launch the Bangladesh Worker Safety Initiative, a binding, five-year undertaking that will be transparent, results-oriented, measurable and verifiable with the intent of improving safety in Bangladeshi ready-made garment (RMG) factories.

The Alliance provides global apparel companies and retailers the unprecedented opportunity to come together and put forward concrete solutions to issues that impact apparel and retail industries worldwide.

The current group of 26 includes the following companies: Ariela Alpha International, LLC, Canadian Tire Corporation, Limited; Carter's Inc.; The Children's Place Retail Stores Inc.; Costco Wholesale Corporation; Fruit of the Loom, Gap Inc.; Giant Tiger Stores Limited; Hudson's Bay Company; IFG Corp.; Intradeco Apparel; J.C. Penney Company Inc.; The Jones Group Inc.; Jordache Enterprises, Inc.; The Just Group; Kohl's Department Stores; L. L. Bean Inc.; M. Hidayat & Company, Inc., Macy's; Nordstrom Inc.; Public Clothing Company; Sears Holdings Corporation; Target Corporation; VF Corporation; Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.; and YM Inc.

Supporting associations include: American Apparel & Footwear Association, BRAC, Canadian Apparel Federation, National Retail Federation, Retail Council of Canada, Retail Industry Leaders Association, and United States Association of Importers of Textiles & Apparel. In addition, Li & Fung, a major Hong Kong-based sourcing company which does business with many members of the Alliance, will serve in an advisory capacity. More information about the Alliance can be found at www.bangladeshworkersafety.org.

Additional quotes for attribution:

Ambassador Melanne Verveer, Executive Director, Institute for Women, Peace and Security Georgetown University

“The work of the Alliance has the potential to further women’s rights, social advancement and economic improvement through safe employment in the garment industry.”

Dr. Helene Gayle, President & CEO, CARE USA

“For more than a decade, CARE has been working to improve the lives of thousands of female garment workers in Bangladesh, through better health care, literacy, and leadership capacity in the workplace and home. Our engagement with the Board of Advisors is an opportunity to improve workplace conditions for women in factories and advocate for change that will lead to improvements for all workers and their families.”

Sirajul Islam Rony, President of Bangladesh National Garment Workers Employees League (BNGWEL)

“We are happy to work with the Alliance. And we expect the Alliance inspection process will integrate worker representatives, and share the findings with workers, as well, following the inspection.”

Sukkur Mahmud, President, Executive Committee of the National Labour League (Jatiya Srmaik League)

“We are happy to join Alliance Board of Advisors and welcome the Alliance initiative. We believe the Alliance will make positive contributions in improving worker safety conditions in the Bangladesh ready-made garment sector. We are looking forward to working with them.”