

Response from G4S

1 February 2021

Business & Human Rights Resource Centre invited G4S to respond to the following blog piece:

- [“Authority unchecked - Why private security firms also need to be scrutinized during the Defund the Police movement,”](#) From Allies to Abolitionists – Denver

G4S sent the following response:

“Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the article by Cassie Cowan.

G4S is committed to the respect of human rights and the continued development of an ethical and sustainable business model. We encourage the improvement of industry standards, the provision of decent employment opportunities and create secure and stable communities around the world.

Everyone at G4S, whether a director or frontline supervisor has a responsibility to respect and protect the human rights of the company’s employees, the people in our care, those that supply G4S, and those that live and work in the communities in which we operate.

Any human rights abuse is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

In relation to the two reports on G4S:

1) Norwegian Council on Ethics.

Further to our [CEO's statement of 27th November 2019, which was shared previously.](#)

At G4S, we invest in substantial resources to ensure that our employment policies and practices are consistent with international conventions, including the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the ILO core labour conventions. We recognise that migrant workers are far from home and potentially vulnerable and it is critical that we all follow the Group’s policies to safeguard their wellbeing.

It is essential that we proactively engage with employees, suppliers and other stakeholders to ensure that our migrant worker policies and practices remain relevant and effective. The Board and Executive are committed to the ongoing investment in our assurance programme to ensure that our migrant worker policies are implemented in all the businesses we manage and by the suppliers we use.

The announcement made by the Council on Ethics for the Norwegian Government Pension Fund Global (“Council”) on 14 November 2019 referred to a number of potential risks relating to migrant workers in parts of the Middle East. G4S takes these matters extremely seriously and has engaged with the Council closely and co-operatively. We are determined to fully address their concerns.

During the past two years, we have [taken significant steps to strengthen our migrant worker practices across all of our operations including:](#)

- Continuing to improve our migrant worker policy and code of conduct for migrant workers in the Middle East and Asia.
 - Among the standards set by this policy and code is the prohibition of withholding an employee's passport or placing other restrictions on their freedom of movement that may prevent them from moving to another employer or returning home.
 - The policy and code also set out G4S's requirements that all employees be provided with clear terms and conditions, in a language they understand, prior to employment.
- We have committed to the principle of 'Employer Pays' as set out in the Principles of the Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment Implementation of this principles began in 2020, with the aim that all G4S companies will be compliant by 2026.
- Created a new team of migrant worker coordinators to conduct a range of checks in both candidates' home and destination countries. By June 2020, they had completed around 1,900 direct surveys with staff in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, to confirm their experience during the recruitment process was consistent with our standards.
- Appointed new health and safety officers and welfare officers.
- Launched modern slavery training for senior management and key functional roles, such as HR and Procurement departments.
- Continued our engagement with the Council on Ethics for the Norwegian Government Pension Fund and other interested stakeholders, such as UNI, the global union federation, under our Ethical Employment Partnership to improve collective representation in the Middle East.

Consistent with our Group values, we are resolutely committed to ensuring that our high standards are applied in all our business. To that end, we will continue to invest in proactive partner engagement, and robust assurance and audit processes and the Group executive team and the Board will continue to maintain close oversight of this important work.

G4S has, over many years, built a reputation as a leading employer of choice in the security industry. We are committed to working with employees, industry participants, suppliers and other stakeholders to develop and implement employment best practices in the security industry and maintain our leadership position.

2) USA Today

G4S has noted the article published by USA Today and published a [response](#) in December 2019."