



13 October 2022

KNVB response to invitation to respond the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre

On Thursday 6 October 2022 the KNVB received an invitation from the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre to respond to allegations made in an online article by the Swedish platform Blankspot. The article includes the testimony of a waitress who alleges she paid a \$700 recruitment fee for a job in Qatar. The report describes her experiences with poor living conditions and being stranded in Qatar for 17 months without pay once the Covid-19 pandemic hit. The waitress worked six shifts at the St. Regis. These shifts took place in 2019/2020 as per the article, prior to the KNVB's agreement with the St. Regis.

KNVB due diligence

As a qualified football association, the KNVB has engaged with its service providers in Doha. This engagement is part of the organization's ambition to participate in the World Cup in a socially responsible manner. The KNVB and the hotel have had extensive conversations on many topics including the welfare of its workers.

As part of the due diligence process the International Labour Organisation, Supreme Committee, employees in the hotel represented by its Welfare Committee and the Embassy of the Netherlands in Doha were included in a meeting to go through the hotel's practices. Furthermore, the hotel has been asked to respond to a comprehensive checklist, which included questions established as per the recommendations of the International Labour Organisation. Part of the due diligence procedure included a visit to the staff accommodation in Qatar.

These conversations as well as the information gathered through different stakeholders have demonstrated to us that the St. Regis in Doha is an hotel that implements the necessary standards.

Action after the invitation to respond

After receiving the BHRRC's invitation to respond the KNVB immediately reached out to the hotel. The St. Regis has shown transparency and commitment. An immediate investigation was started, and continuous communication was maintained. The St. Regis has confirmed to the KNVB that it has stopped working with the subcontractor who employed the waitress in the article in 2020.

According to the St. Regis the waitress worked six shifts for the hotel.

Taking responsibility

The KNVB calls upon all companies to take responsibility for their workers. The subcontractor in this case should be held accountable and any worker in Qatar or beyond should be duly compensated for their work. In any case of grievance, the complaint must be taken seriously, processed and remedy should be sought.

KNVB thanks the BHRRC and the Swedish platform

The KNVB would like to take this opportunity to thank the journalists for both monitoring and reporting on the situation of workers. The same appreciation goes out to the BHRRC for reaching out and asking for a response.