

Catrina Fraser – Researcher  
Natalie Swan – Labour Rights Programme Manager  
Business & Human Rights Resource Centre  
The Foundry, 17 Oval Way  
London SE11 5RR  
United Kingdom

Dubai, 5 December 2023

Subject: Response to Business & Human Rights Resource Centre email of 28 November 2023

Dear Mrs. Fraser and Mrs Swan,

Firstly, we want to express our appreciation for all the work done by the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre to promote transparency, creating an online resource tool on corporate track records with regards to human rights. Because, once you know, you cannot unknow.

Also, thank you for giving us the time and opportunity to respond to the recent Equidem report prior to publication.

We are taking this opportunity to provide a response to clarify our position and views on the Equidem report whilst we chose not to respond to Equidem directly after having reviewed the Equidem report and considering the organisation's approach towards us as a respectable organisation. Let us explain why.

Whilst we do not want to downplay any claims made by Equidem and we recognise the extensive efforts that were made by Equidem to conduct this investigation and write up the report (nine months of research!), we have more questions than answers: No extensive efforts were made – at any point – to validate these claims, remedy any outlier situations and/or to improve the situation overall for workers mentioned in the report with relevant stakeholders, including talabat. Why?

Equidem contacted talabat, other renowned food delivery companies and logistics provider companies, only a couple of days prior to publication of the report for comment. At no point did they raise any concerns or expressed a desire to collaborate in a constructive way with relevant stakeholders. Why?

Also, Equidem chose to only explicitly mention talabat (81 times to be precise), and not the subcontractors (logistics provider companies) it had also approached, and to whom most claims were directed. Equidem also chose to not mention any other industry players even though it had sent letters raising similar concerns. Why?

Equidem also did not raise any of these concerns directly with the UAE government, which is recognized for its serious and proactive approach to such matters. Why?

With regards to the merit of the claims: whenever made aware we will always look into and address any concerns raised regarding logistic provider companies, as we are committed to upholding contractual standards and legal compliance. Where breaches are identified, appropriate action will be taken. We are also proactively evaluating ways to further enhance our ecosystem, ensuring alignment with regulatory requirements and improving the industry standards.

In short, we welcome any constructive and collaborative effort that strives to uphold the rights and welfare of workers. We emphasise our commitment to responsible and sustainable business practices and we remain dedicated to transparency and improvement, mindful of our responsibility to all stakeholders in our ecosystem.

Yours sincerely,

Susanne Stulemeijer  
Vice President, Communications, Public Affairs & Sustainability  
talabat