**Walmart response regarding Turkmen cotton**

*Business & Human Rights Resource Centre invited Walmart to respond to the following item:*

# *- «Are Amazon, Walmart, and eBay’s online 'marketplaces' providing a refuge for goods made with forced labor?»,  Charlotte Tate and Eric Gottwald, International Labor Rights Forum, 31 January 2019*

<http://news.trust.org/item/20190131140231-5r6g0>

*In response, Walmart sent the following statement:*

February 18, 2019

Dear Ella –

Thank you for your inquiry and a chance to respond to allegations that Walmart sells goods made with Turkmen cotton produced with forced labor.  When we were contacted by the Thomson Reuters Foundation, we let them know we take allegations of forced labor seriously, and we would look into their inquiry, which we did.  Walmart does not sell these items directly. Rather, there were some items sold by third party sellers on our online marketplace, and we removed these seller’s products that were made with Turkmen cotton from the site.

Walmart is recognized as a leader in programs and policies that support the dignity of workers in our supply chain, and a key tenet of that commitment is working in a focused and collaborative way to help reduce forced labor in the global supply chain.  Through Responsible Sourcing tools like our Standards for Suppliers, third-party audits, training programs and supplier engagement, we work to create a more responsible supply chain at Walmart.  Through collaborative efforts like the Seafood Task Force, Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment and the Responsible Business Alliance, we work with others to put sustainable programs in place that will make responsible recruitment the norm, eliminating a key driver of forced labor.  Through complementary philanthropic efforts that have widely shareable outputs, the Walmart Foundation has funded prevalence studies on forced labor, funded offices and programs to advance the fight against forced labor and funded awareness and training programs with NGOs like International Justice Mission, Issara Institute, Polaris Project and Pacific Links Foundation to understand the forced labor landscape and migration patterns in order to develop interventions for industry wide solutions.  We take a whole systems approach to worker dignity, not just at Walmart, but for the benefit of the entire global supply chain.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to your inquiry.

Sincerely,

Walmart