**Hugo Boss’ response is in red below:**

**Statement in response to Hugo Boss from Faruk Aksoy, President of the Izmir branch of Turkish union, Teksif**

Despite what Hugo Boss says, we haven’t seen any progress since the Fair Labor Organization (FLA) released its report in January. THE FLA ASSESSMENT HAD BEEN CONDUCTED AT THE REQUEST OF HUGO BOSS AND WE HAVE BEEN WORKING INTENSIVELY WITH THE FLA TO REMEDY THE FINDINGS. THAT PROCESS IS ALMOST COMPLETE AND HAS BEEN UPDATED ON THE FLA WEBSITE.

Bullying and harassment of union activists at the Hugo Boss factory in Izmir is as bad as it’s ever been.

Far from being neutral in its attitude towards unions, Hugo Boss is trying to decapitate my union Teksif, which is the only union trying to organize workers at the factory. HUGO BOSS MAINTAINS STRICT NEUTRALITY WITH REGARD TO WORKERS FREEDOM TO ASSOCIATE AND WE WILL NOT TRY TO INFLUENCE WORKERS IN ANY WAY.

In contrast to Germany and other countries where we have our own sites, there are several trade unions operating in the Turkish textile industry. For this reason HUGO BOSS prefers not to favor any one union in Izmir. Our employees are free to decide which body they want to join. Given this, we have adopted a neutral position. In our view, employees should have the right to choose for themselves.

Of the 36 violations listed in the report, 17 were related to workers’ rights. The FLA identified issues concerning anti-union violence, anti-union discrimination, employer interference and dismissals, amongst others. THE CASES REFERRED TO IN THE REPORT WERE MOSTLY OLD CASES BUT NEEDLESS TO SAY HUGO BOSS IS LOOKING INTO ALL THE FINDINGS AND MAKING IMPROVEMENTS TO MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS TO PREVENT ANY SUCH INCIDENTS IN FUTURE.

Since the investigation was carried out, two workers at Hugo Boss have been fired for union activities and the FLA is carrying out a further inquiry into their dismissals. WE PREFER NOT TO COMMENT ON THESE CASES AT THIS STAGE SINCE WE ARE WORKING WITH THE FLA TO DETERMINE EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED.

How can Hugo Boss claim it ‘supports and set the floor for freedom of association within its entire global supply chain’, when union activists at its own factory face such discrimination? THERE IS NO QUESTION ABOUT OUR COMMITMENT TO FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND WE ARE STRENGTHENING OUR SYSTEMS TO ENSURE THAT IT IS SCRUPULOUSLY OBSERVED IN PRACTICE.

Why do the headquarters of Hugo Boss in Germany continue to turn a blind eye to serious abuse at its biggest factory? Why don’t they care? THERE IS NO QUESTION OF HUGO BOSS TURNING A BLIND EYE TO ISSUES OF WORKERS RIGHTS AND WE ARE IN DIALOGUE WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS TO PROMOTE LABOUR STANDARDS IN THE SUPPLY CHAIN.

We hope that as Hugo Boss is set to have a new CEO, it will pave the way for a new leader who will be serious about working with us to resolve the problems in Izmir.