**Ahold re Fairfood report calling for living wage at European supermarkets' tomato suppliers in Morocco**

13 Oct 2014

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

* “The fruits of their labour: The low wages behind Moroccan tomatoes sold in European supermarkets”, Sep 2014, Fairfood International, <http://www.fairfood.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Moroccoreportweb2.pdf>

Ahold sent us the following response:

“We share Fairfood’s goal of improving working conditions in developing countries and have played an active role to improve working conditions in our supply chain including developing a range of standards that improve the conditions for workers over the years.

Our suppliers are carefully selected and monitored as we strive to create long-term relationships with them. We mandate that all our suppliers adhere to our Standards of Engagement which require that all suppliers treat their employees fairly, with dignity and respect and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.  We expect our suppliers to pay wages that meet or exceed the legal standards in the country in which they operate.

To ensure that our standards are met we have implemented an audit program in countries that we have identified as high risk.  In these countries we ask our suppliers to undergo a third party audit based on the BSCI “Business Social Compliance Initiative” standards or equivalent. In addition to the audit program we regularly visit our suppliers.

We have worked with our tomato supplier in Morocco for over six years. This supplier was audited in 2010 and then again in June 2014 according to the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI / SMETA), which is a BSCI equivalent standard.  The audit report confirmed that all workers received at least the SMAG (Salaire Minimum Agricole Garanti) which is the Moroccan minimum wage for agricultural workers. In addition higher rates are paid for overtime.”