

Press Release

Hamburg, 31 August 2021

Otto Group welcomes successful agreement on the International Accord for Health and Safety in the textile and apparel industry

Great success for the occupational health & safety of workers in Bangladesh and worldwide: After intensive negotiations, global trade unions and several international companies have agreed on a new agreement (International Accord) for health and safety in the global textile and apparel industry. As an active partner in this process, the Otto Group has signed the new International Accord.

Building on the progress of the original Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, garment brands and global unions have reached a new, expanded agreement on worker safety. The Otto Group was part of the negotiating team and signed the new treaty for a safe and sustainable textile and apparel industry. The new agreement, called the International Accord for Health and Safety in the Textile and Garment Industry, takes effect on 1 September 2021.

By signing the agreement, the companies commit to continue the progress already made in Bangladeshi factories in collaboration with trade unions and the national garment industry through the local organisation RMG Sustainability Council (RSC), and to improve worker safety across the garment sector now and in the future.

"The new agreement is not only an important step towards further strengthening employees rights, but also towards preserving progress already achieved in the area of building and fire safety," explains Prof Dr Tobias Wollermann, Group Vice President Corporate Responsibility at the Otto Group. "In this respect, we are pleased that all stakeholders involved have agreed on this goal and encourage other companies to join us and sign the new International Accord."

Since 2013, the Otto Group has been continuously active in the Accord as part of its decades-long commitment to safe and responsible production conditions, which began in the 1990s, and explicitly endorses the fact that the new agreement not only includes all relevant stakeholders - companies, trade unions and national actors - but also opens up the perspective of extending the successful concept to other countries in the future.

About the Otto Group

Founded in Germany in 1949, today the Otto Group is a globally active retail and services group with around 50,000 employees in 30 major company groups, operating in over 30 countries in Europe, North and South America, and Asia. Its business activities are grouped into three segments: Multichannel Retail, Financial Services, and Service. In the 2020/21 financial year (to 28 February), the Otto Group generated revenues of 15.6 billion euros. With online revenues of around 9.9 billion euros, it is one of the world's largest online retailers. The Group's particular strength is its broad market presence and differentiated product and service offers to diverse customer target groups in almost all of the world's relevant economic regions. Numerous strategic partnerships and joint ventures provide the Otto Group with excellent opportunities to transfer know-how and leverage areas of synergy potential. Group companies demonstrate a high degree of corporate responsibility and willingness to collaborate with one another; at the same time this guarantees flexibility, customer proximity and optimum target-group appeal in their respective national markets.

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