

Complaint – Bierbaum Proenen– Tunisia

Status: New complaint

FWF is responsible for setting up a complaints procedure in production countries where FWF is active. The complaints procedure allows third parties to make complaints about the working conditions or the way the Code of Labour Practices is implemented in factories which supply FWF members.

The responsibility of FWF includes investigating the complaint, verifying whether the agreed corrective action plan is implemented and public reporting. This complaint report gives an overview of a complaint filed to FWF, the investigation and agreed corrective action plan as well as how the outcome is verified. For more information on the complaints procedure see the FWF website. FWF also publishes an overview of complaints received in its annual reports.

1. Member company involved

Bierbaum Proenen

2. Accused party

A factory located in Tunisia supplying Bierbaum Proenen.

3. Date of receiving complaint

July 21, 2017

4. Filing party

A worker that is currently employed by the factory.

5. The complaint

The complainant claimed the following:

- On July, 18 the Tunisian government announced to raise the wages for garment workers. According to the worker, management declared on the 21st that the wages would not be increased accordingly.
- During production, 50 pieces were stolen and discovered. Management responded by starting an investigation. Management requested workers to be searched. According to the worker, management had threatened workers to deduct 30 Tunisian Dinars from their salaries if they would refuse.

- One of the workers discussed both issues with management on behalf of the workers. According to the complainant, it was a fierce discussion leading to a one day suspension for that worker.

Management immediately contacted the local FWF team after the discussions and suspension. They informed the local FWF team, including the complaints handler that:

- the wage increase will be paid;
- the factory has systems in place to find stolen goods and management was only speeding up the controls. Not all workers would be searched and if workers would refuse, they would not be searched.
- One of the workers threw herself into the crowd that came complaining to the administration and that this person did not show any respect for the director. Therefore, she was suspended for one day. The worker refused to sign her suspension. Furthermore, she would have incited other workers to stop working and leave their workstations if she would not be allowed to return to her workstation.
- After this event, the manager was phoned anonymously on behalf of the union control that they were planning an unannounced visit based on allegations made known to them.

The authenticity of the accusation is under investigation.

6. Admissibility

FWF decided that the case is admissible on August 1, 2017.

The factory is an active supplier of Bierbaum Proenen, a member of FWF.

The case is relevant to the following labour standards of FWF's Code of Labour Practices:

- There is no discrimination in employment
- Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining
- Payment of a living wage

7. Investigation

FWF informs Bierbaum Proenen about the case. The brand is expected to contact the supplier and ask for a reply within one week on the following issues:

- Payment of the wage increase
- Procedure in case of stolen goods, whether the stolen goods and the responsible person were found, and what other actions factory management has undertaken to find the stolen goods and the responsible person.
- Whether actions against the worker were taken in accordance with the disciplinary procedure.

8. Findings and conclusions

The case is under investigation.



9. Remediation

The case is under investigation.

10. Verification

The case is under investigation.

11. Evaluation by the complainant

The case is under investigation.