

Geneva, 08 April 2019

To the major business partners of Okan Group

Calling on business partners to conduct due diligence over trade union rights' violations by Okan Group

Dear Madam/Sir,

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of [IndustriALL Global Union](http://www.industrial-all-union.org) which represents more than 50 million workers in mining, energy and manufacturing sectors in 140 countries, including Turkey, to call on you, as major business partners, to conduct due diligence at Okan Group in Turkey, in light of the company's violations of fundamental workers' rights.

In spite of our repeated calls, Okan Group has failed to respect the rights of workers to join the union of their choice, and engage in collective bargaining negotiations with their representative trade union Kristal-İş, which is affiliated to IndustriALL Global Union. Kristal-İş has recruited, through an organizing campaign, the required number of the respective workforces in three of Okan Group's subsidiaries, namely at Okan Cam, Düzce Cam (both located in Düzce), and Çetaş Cam (located in Samsun). Kristal-İş recently gained legal recognition as the union representing workers at Düzce Cam, and is therefore authorised to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement. The same is expected to happen for the Okan Cam and Çetaş Cam.

Instead of entering into proper dialogue with Kristal-İş, the management unlawfully dismissed—for having joined the union—at least 60 workers, the majority of whom were at Düzce Cam. Furthermore, the Okan Group management is still intimidating union members and trying to force them to resign from their membership at Kristal-İş. Reportedly, the HR manager of Çetaş Cam gave workers a week to quit the union.

Okan Group's local management's behaviour constitutes a clear breach of national labour law, and international labour standards, including Convention 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, and Convention 98 on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

According to the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, a due diligence process is required for corporations to investigate third party partners for potential abuse of human rights, which includes workers' rights and freedoms.

As a fundamental element of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, due diligence for the companies is needed to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to their business operations, products or services by a business relationship.

In addition, the Okan Group management even failed to attend a mediation meeting facilitated by the Turkish Labour Ministry.

Consequently, we strongly urge you to act immediately by conducting due diligence at Okan Group, which would entail, inter alia, calling on the company to drop any legal actions, reinstate the unlawfully dismissed union members, and engage in collective bargaining with Kristal-İs.

I anticipate your prompt response and action.

Yours sincerely,



Valter Sanches
General Secretary

CC:

Mr. Bilal Çetintaş, General President, Kristal-İş