April 17, 2012

Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina
Prime Minister’s Office
Old Sangsad Bhaban
Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215
Bangladesh

Dear Prime Minister of Bangladesh,

Social Accountability International (SAI) expresses deep concern regarding the murder of Aminul Islam, a prominent worker rights advocate from the Bangladesh Center for Worker Solidarity (BCWS). We join with other human rights and labor rights organizations in urging the Bangladeshi government to immediately launch a comprehensive and impartial investigation of the disappearance, torture, and murder of Mr. Islam, and to publicly report the findings.

The New York Times, ABC News, The Daily Star, and many other international news sources have reported on this tragedy. Mr. Islam was found dead on April 5, a day after his family and colleagues say he went missing. In August 2010, SAI, along with many others, sent two public letters raising concerns about two detained representatives from BCWS, Kalpona Akter and Babul Akhter, who were subsequently released from custody.

SAI and its associated/partnering organizations promote responsible suppliers and encourage global brands to source in countries, and from companies, that respect the labor rights set forth in their codes of conduct, and that take positive steps towards continuous improvement in this regard. Civil society organizations like BCWS play a vital role in decent working conditions in the garment industry by identifying issues that may otherwise go undetected. Their input can help customer companies to constructively address issues with factory management, and factory management to constructively engage with employees. Mr. Islam’s murder is a tragic example of the extreme challenges that civil society faces to enable decent working conditions.

Sincerely,

Alice Tepper Marlin
President

Eileen Kaufman
Executive Director