

Rueil Malmaison, 28 March 2019

Publication of the first audit of workers' conditions at QDVC by the global union federation BWI

- The audit report mentions good practices and positive results, and suggests some additional areas for improvement.
- The QDVC Workers' Welfare Committee elections were recognized as fair and open.

The global union federation BWI (Building and Wood Workers' International) conducted the first on-site audit of the operations of QDVC (a Qatari company owned by Qatari Diar Real Estate Investments Company and VINCI Construction Grands Projets) in Qatar on 8 and 9 January 2019, accompanied by French trade union representatives (CGT, CFDT and CFE/CGC) from VINCI. This joint audit followed the agreement on workers' rights signed in 2017 between BWI, VINCI and QDVC at the International Labour Organisation (ILO) headquarters in Geneva.

The audit was conducted at QDVC's main project, the Lusail Light Railway Transit System (LRT), and at the workers' accommodation.

- It included interviews with workers on site, workers' representatives and safety champions without management supervision;
- On the second day, the ILO Project Office in Qatar and the Qatari Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs (ADLSA) took part in a presentation of the ongoing pilot project between QDVC, the ILO and ADLSA, which aims to ensure the fair recruitment of workers hired in Bangladesh for Qatar by QDVC's recruitment and placement agencies.

The audit covered recruitment and employment practices, health and safety, working conditions, accommodation and grievance mechanisms for all QDVC workers, including subcontractors and manpower providers.

The findings of the audit **emphasise QDVC's fair recruitment and employment practices, the good level of health and safety observed at its sites, the safeguarding of workers' rights and also proactive initiatives** such as:

- the Incident and Injury Free (IIF) safety programme;
- the "buddy peer-support program" to prevent psycho-social risks;
- the grievance mechanisms for employees and subcontractors.

The audit also noted that workers are paid above the minimum wage and are satisfied with their overall conditions. The main concern that they voice is the fear of unemployment due to the lack of commercial prospects matching QDVC's business model.

The auditors were able to attend **the election of QDVC's Workers' Welfare Committee (WWC) and noted that the ballot and the counting of votes were carried out properly.**

- A month before the audit, 31 candidates campaigned to be elected to the WWC. The level of participation in the election was 84% (and increase of 12 points compared to the previous election), with 879 out of a total workforce of 1,047 casting their votes.
- QDVC had previously organized elections for its WWC in 2016, but this was the first time that an independent third party was able to observe and assess the process.

BWI and the French unions participating in the audit suggested **areas for improvement** including:

- providing WWC representatives with more time off to consult with other workers;
- introducing better integration of the existing grievance mechanism and the WWC;
- encouraging more detailed analysis of non-work-related accidents.

Following the audit, QDVC undertook to follow up the BWI recommendations, to continue with the training of the newly elected workers' representatives and to increase collaboration in the area of fair recruitment of workers. The full audit report can be consulted at: <https://www.vinci.com/publi/vinci/2019-01-BWI-QDVC-VINCI-Joint-Audit-Report-En.pdf>.

Ambet Yuson, General Secretary of BWI, commented on the joint audit report, saying, *"BWI, including representatives of our members in France, was satisfied that the joint audit corresponded with the terms of our framework agreement. Company representatives were transparent, responded to our questions, and welcomed our recommendations. The election of the members of the Workers' Welfare Committee was fair and open. The WWC can make a major contribution to the welfare and working conditions of the workers. The BWI is hoping that orders will pick up so that QDVC workers can continue to work. It looks forward to continuing close cooperation with QDVC and VINCI and is ready to increase cooperation, for example in the key area of recruitment"*.

Philippe Tavernier, CEO of QDVC, said: *"A year ago, QDVC signed a tripartite agreement with BWI and VINCI to demonstrate QDVC's transparency regarding its CSR policy and to promote continuous improvement of its practices. QDVC's target was and remains to be a leading company in Qatar in terms of fair recruitment, employment rights, well-being and the health and safety of its workforce. We were pleased to welcome BWI and VINCI to Doha to jointly assess our current achievements and the progress made."*

Franck Mougín, VINCI's Vice-President, Human Resources & Sustainable Development, concluded: *"Signing the agreement was a significant first step, but its application and how it is implemented on the ground are even more important. The audit of our practices with BWI was therefore a major step. VINCI and BWI were able to see the robust mechanisms put in place by QDVC in the areas of workers' health and safety, rights and welfare. This audit demonstrates our willingness to engage with partners that share our goal of continuous improvement."*



About BWI

At its World Congress in Buenos Aires, on 9 December 2005, the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers (IFBWW) and the World Federation of Building and Wood Workers (WFBW) created a new global union federation, the Building and Wood Workers' International - BWI. The BWI is the Global Union Federation grouping free and democratic unions with members in the Building, Building Materials, Wood, Forestry and Allied sectors. The BWI groups together around 334 trade unions representing around 12 million members in 130 countries. The Headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland. Regional Offices and Project Offices are located in Panama and Malaysia, South Africa, India, Burkina Faso, Chile, Kenya, Russia, Peru and Brazil. Our mission is to promote the development of trade unions in our sectors throughout the world and to promote and enforce workers rights in the context of sustainable development.

About QDVC

QDVC is a Qatari shareholding design and build engineering & Construction Company of international expertise which undertakes large complex projects fostering innovation embracing new technologies and making a difference with clients, partners and employees. Having been incorporated under the Qatari law since April 2007, QDVC stems from the association of : Qatari Diar Real Estate Investments Company (51%) & VINCI Construction Grands Projets (49%). We aim at being a socially responsible leader, mindful of the economic, social, human and environmental objectives towards Qatar National Vision 2030.

About VINCI

VINCI is a global player in concessions and construction, employing more than 210,000 people in some 100 countries. We design, finance, build and operate infrastructure and facilities that help improve daily life and mobility for all. Because we believe in all-round performance, above and beyond economic and financial results, we are committed to operating in an environmentally and socially responsible manner. And because our projects are in the public interest, we consider that reaching out to all our stakeholders and engaging in dialogue with them is essential in the conduct of our business activities. www.vinci.com

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