

Parliamentary Questions by members Gesthuizen (Socialist Party), Van Laar (Labour Party), Thieme (Party for the Animals) and Voordewind (ChristianUnion) to the Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation on major abuses in the handmade carpet industry in India (submitted February 13, 2014).

1.

What is your response to the article "*Bezoedelde tapijten: Slavernij en kinderarbeid in India's handgemaakte tapijtindustrie*" [1] and the report "*Tainted Carpets - Slavery and Child Labor in India's Hand-Made Carpet Sector*" [2] which highlight that in the handmade carpet industry in India major abuses such as child labour and forced labour are commonplace?

2.

Are you willing to examine possible direct or indirect involvement of Dutch companies, including importers and sellers, in slavery, exploitation and child labour in the Indian carpet industry?

3.

How do you assess the fact that more than 20 years ago child labour and other abuses in the Indian carpet industry received extensive publicity, that since that time a range of voluntary initiatives have been undertaken but that the situation of carpet workers described in the report still is very dramatic?

4.

What do you think is the message of this report on the voluntary forms of International Corporate Social responsibility (ICSR) which have been created to solve the problems in the Indian carpet industry?

5.

Which Dutch companies are affiliated with the labels Goodweave and Rugmark and/or the Care & Fair initiative of the European carpet industry? Can this labels give assurance to the buyers that their carpets from India have not been made by slaves or children?

6.

Are you willing to contact Dutch trade associations representing the carpet importers and/or retailers of Indian carpets? Do you intend to discuss with them the need for action against slavery, exploitation and child labour in the production process?

7.

Are you willing to discuss this subject with the Indian government, if possible taking into account the Dutch-Indian *Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)* on corporate social responsibility? What other activities do you take together with India against child labour and other violations of labour rights in the framework of this MoU?

[1] <http://www.dalits.nl/140128.html>

[2] <http://fxb.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2014/01/Tainted-Carpets-Released-01-28-14.pdf>