

LETTER TO SOLAR COMPANIES ON FORCED LABOUR

How do I know whose supplying my primary supplier? All suppliers should be able to name their own suppliers: including their English and Chinese names, their Chinese social security number and the full addresses of the factory(s).

Why is this letter recommended over a standard due diligence request? Unlike standard RASAs, the forensic questioning outlined in this letter is designed by experts to expose which suppliers are cooperating in the Chinese government's state-sponsored 'surplus' labour programmes.

What does it mean if a supplier responds that they use? As a rule, if suppliers respond that they are involved in or benefit from the state labour transfers, Xinjiang City Pairing, or land co-corporatisation programmes, procurers/consumers can presume they are engaging in exploitative coercive programs that do not align with ethical values or conform to the expectations of suppliers set out in procurement policies. Similarly, companies which pay their workers through government schemes are likely to be directly linked to forced labour practices.

TEMPLATE LETTER:

Dear [supplier name],

[Council/ branch] aims to procure public goods and services responsibly, as set out by the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. Therefore, we act to ensure that human rights are being upheld by the companies from which we source.

We are committed to climate change prevention and believe solar energy to be a crucial part of a net zero strategy. However, Just Transition to net zero, as defined by the International Labour Organisation and supported by the international community, necessitates a future where all jobs are green and decent, poverty is eradicated, and communities are thriving and resilient. Therefore, given the credible evidence of pervasive forced labour in the production of solar panels, we are compelled to conduct further due diligence into your company's purchasing practices and contract management.

With these objectives in mind, we adhere to a responsible procurement policy which requires us to ask solar suppliers how their policy ensures human rights violations are avoided throughout their supply chains.

In general, we would like to know:

- What action do you take during the pre-contract phase to assess the labour rights risks of all your suppliers throughout their supply chains?
- How do you use contract clauses with your suppliers to improve workers' rights?
- Where violations of the code of conduct are found, is there access to effective resolution, remediation, and grievance mechanisms for workers? How? Please give examples.

Regarding solar production in The Uyghur Region (Xinjiang):

- Has your company or any of your suppliers participated in any state-sponsored poverty alleviation campaigns in the Uyghur Region?

Has your company or any of your suppliers benefited from Xinjiang Aid or City Pairing Programmes? If yes, which ones?

Has your company or any of your suppliers accepted any labourers from the Xinjiang region?

- Has your company or any of your suppliers participated in any land corporatisation schemes in the Uyghur Region?

Does your company or any of your suppliers engage with the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps?

- Please also answer if any of your suppliers are involved in these practices?

- Is your company directly paying its employees or are your employees paid through a state programme?

- Are ethnic minority workers (especially those from Xinjiang) provided with equitable housing? Are they monitored by special guards or required to participate in mandatory ideological training?

- Are employment contracts signed between the direct employees and the company or are they employed through a government contract?

- Do Uyghur workers have freedom of movement during their leisure time?

- Do Uyghurs have the same holidays and are they able to return home for those holidays?

- If your company has a factory in Xinjiang, have you considered relocating from Xinjiang? If so, what are your plans?



Sheffield
Hallam
University

Helena Kennedy
Centre for
International Justice

**STOP UYGHUR
GENOCIDE**