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From: Apple Supplier Responsibility <supplierresponsibility@apple.com>
Sent: Wednesday 21 October 2020 00:39
To: Defenders OHCHR
Cc: CAMPBELL Scott; CONSULTANT SEALE Stephanie; Stacey May
Subject: [External] Response from Apple to Special Rapporteur

Dear Office of the High Commissioner:

Thank you for your recent letter. At Apple, people are at the heart of everything we do and everything we make. That means considering not only those who will use a product, but also those who help build it. So we hold ourselves and our suppliers to the highest standards to protect people and the planet we all call home.

We are committed to respecting the human rights of everyone whose lives we touch and our Human Rights Policy governs how we treat everyone from our customers and teams to our business partners and people at every level of our supply chain. As a global technology company, we feel a deep sense of responsibility to make technology for people that respects their human rights, empowers them with useful tools and information, and enhances their overall quality of life.

Our approach is based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the International Labour Organization's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Following these guiding principles, we conduct human rights due diligence to identify risks and work to prevent or mitigate them, seek to remedy any adverse impacts, track and measure our progress, and regularly report our findings publicly. Our policy prohibits harassment, discrimination, violence, and retaliation of any kind. We have zero tolerance for violations motivated by any form of prejudice or bigotry, and we continually assess our progress and build the lessons we learn into everything we do.

Our Supplier Code of Conduct is designed to uphold our commitment to protecting people and the planet, with labor, human rights and environmental protections as the foundation of our policy. We enforce our Code by assessing and closely partnering with suppliers at every point in our supply chain. These rigorous assessments of suppliers cover over 500 requirements across standards in the areas of labor and human rights, health and safety, environment, ethics, and management systems.

Last year, we conducted 1,142 assessments in 49 countries, which included 100% of the refiners and smelters that supply tin, tantalum, tungsten, gold, and cobalt to our suppliers. We also interview tens of thousands of supplier employees each year to better understand their experience and identify areas for improvement, and we provide anonymous hotlines for supplier employees to report any concerns they may have.

We want everyone—from our customers to our industry peers—to know about our values and the progress we're making for people and the planet. We track and measure our performance across a range of areas, and we apply the lessons we learn to continually improve. We report our performance publicly in several ways, including in our Transparency, Supplier Responsibility, Modern Slavery, and Conflict Minerals reports, available on our Apple Values pages here.

To ensure progress is as meaningful and impactful as possible we work with a broad range of stakeholders, including workers' rights advocates and local leaders, and consult with organizations that include United Nations bodies, governments, non-governmental organizations, and the world's leading human rights and labor experts.

We work broadly to promote human rights, supporting 21 organizations working to address supply chain challenges. One example is our partnership with the Fund for Global Human Rights (“the Fund”), which is currently in its fourth year. The Fund directly supports human rights and environmental defenders working on the frontlines in communities around the world. We believe that empowering local, independent voices is critical to identifying risks and opportunities in the supply chain.

We’re also deeply committed to the essential work of improving diversity, increasing inclusion, and advancing racial justice—both within our company and through efforts like our Racial Equity and Justice Initiative, which is focused on education, economic equality, and criminal justice reform. Our efforts here are motivated by a strong desire to create a welcoming and supportive environment for all our teams and to help combat discrimination, injustice, and systemic racism.

We always strive to be an example for others to follow, and to share our progress to accelerate industrywide change. Thank you for the opportunity to provide some context on our work to protect people and the planet.

Additional references

[Apple Human Rights Policy](#)

[2020 Supplier Responsibility report](#)

[Privacy and Transparency report](#)

[Supplier Code of Conduct](#)

[Supplier Responsibility Standards](#)

[Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery](#)

[Conflict Minerals Report](#)

[Apple’s partnership with the Malala Fund](#)

[Apple Racial Equity and Justice Initiative](#)

Thank you,

Apple’s Supplier Responsibility Team