



RELEASED 15th OCTOBER 2020

## **The Environmental Audit Committee is set to revisit the fast-fashion inquiry**

Yesterday the [All-Party Parliamentary Group for Ethics & Sustainability in Fashion](#) held its third evidence session as part of an ongoing inquiry into modern slavery, labour exploitation and sustainability in the UK fashion sector for the upcoming [Cleaning Up Fashion](#) report.

As the Secretariat for this All-Party Parliamentary Group, [Fashion Roundtable](#) recognises that the environmental and social cost of our clothes is increasingly untenable, which is why Fashion Roundtable successfully lobbied the [Environmental Audit Committee](#) (EAC) to keep fashion on its agenda and urged the Chairman of the Committee, [Philip Dunne MP](#), to take action by revisiting its 2018 inquiry, [Fixing fashion: clothing consumption and sustainability](#). Fashion Roundtable is, therefore, pleased that the EAC has elected to revisit fashion to reassess concerns around the environmental impact of the fashion industry and working conditions in UK garment factories.

CEO & Founder of Fashion Roundtable, [Tamara Cincik](#), said: *"I am so pleased that the EAC has reviewed and changed its decision to revisit its important work on the fashion industry, thanks to our advocacy work. Our meeting with Chairman of the EAC, Philip Dunne MP, highlighted how engaged this Committee is in making our fashion and textiles industry as ethical and sustainable as possible. This is why the work we do as the Secretariat for the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Ethics and Sustainability is so timely, with our meeting yesterday looking at climate change and our on-going commitment to eradicate modern slavery in the sector's supply chain. We urge everyone to [take the survey on Cleaning Up Fashion](#), and [submit to the EAC's call for evidence](#). The more that our parliament and government engage with these conversations and hold manufacturers and retailers to account, the more we can be sure that our sector is in the news for all the right reasons."*

EAC Chairman said: *"The fashion industry has a major environmental footprint – from the extraordinary amount of water to create cotton and polyester, to the sheer scale of waste with many items being worn once and thrown away. Our thirst for the latest trends is simply unsustainable. But, as we found two years ago, this inquiry goes beyond the harmful impact to the environment. Accusations of labour market exploitation in the UK remain, with poor working conditions and illegally low wages. Two years on, I hope there have been some improvements in the fashion industry. We will be unearthing whether this is the case, and what more needs to be done to secure our goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050."*

Figures from the 2018 report demonstrates the environmental cost of fashion: more than \$500 billion of value is lost every year due to clothing underutilisation and the lack of recycling. By 2030 global apparel consumption is projected to rise by 63 per cent, from 62 million tons today to 102 million tons - equivalent to more than 500 billion additional T-shirts. Simultaneously, over 90 per cent of workers in the global garment industry have no possibility to negotiate their wages and conditions, according to the global trade union

IndustriALL. And locally, the city of Leicester has the second highest concentration of textile manufacturers in the country with 700 factories employing 10,000 textile workers, but *“written evidence from HMRC shows that UK-based garment factory owners have been forced to pay out almost £90,000 to employees for non-payment of minimum wage”*, said the 2018 report. As [recent developments from the East Midlands](#) show, urgent action to hold brands accountable is needed now.

If you or the company you represent would like to talk more on this topic, please contact [admin@fashionroundtable.co.uk](mailto:admin@fashionroundtable.co.uk).

**ENDS.**

**Notes to Editors:** Fashion Roundtable Organisation Ltd is our NFP which covers our All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) and policy work. Fashion Roundtable is the leading think tank for the fashion industry, improving people’s lives by influencing policy and outcomes. We collaborate with Government and Parliament, through our APPGs, and across the public, private and third sectors to develop our policy ideas and strategies.

We work across the fashion and textiles industry, technology, innovation, education, skills and sustainability policy. Fashion Roundtable is the Secretariat for the two APPGs which work with the fashion industry, allowing us a pivotal and powerful voice in the intersection between stakeholders and policy. The expertise, authority and credibility of our research and recommendations is key to who we are. Our research is independent and evidence-based and we share our ideas with stakeholders and parliamentarians from all sides of the political spectrum.