



August 17, 2018

Neeraj Govil  
Area Vice President, South Asia  
Marriott International  
Marriott Hotels India Pvt Ltd  
303A, 304, Fulcrum, B-Wing  
Hiranandani Business Park, Sahar Road  
Andheri (East), Mumbai 400099, India  
[Neeraj.govil@marriott.com](mailto:Neeraj.govil@marriott.com)

Dear Vice President Govil,

I write to you as the President of Hotel Mazdoor Panchayat- an Indian trade union that is being reorganized to organize workers in globally branded hotels and related sectors and supply chains. As a trade unionist with long years of involvement in collective bargaining, this is an effort to open a dialogue as a key stakeholder in Marriott's growing hotel operations across India on decent work and socially responsible tourism. With over 100 managed and/or franchised hotels in India and approximately 50 more under construction/ renovation, Marriott's 22,000 rooms make it the largest branded hotel chain in India with almost double the rooms held by the second largest Taj group owned by the Tatas.

We are engaging with workers in your hotels to understand what they see as opportunities and concerns in the industry, articulate their priorities, and respond collectively and shape the shared responsibility with you and your partners.

*The hospitality sector has the potential to contribute to the creation and sustainability of decent work and development.* The OECD recognizes tourism as one of the largest and fastest growing sectors in the world economy and the growth of the hospitality sector as a driver for job creation and development is presumed by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the G20. The ILO estimates the number of jobs in the sector to grow from 284 million worldwide in 2015 to 370 million worldwide by 2026. 20% of those workers are employed within multinational enterprises operating increasingly through brand identities using management contracts and franchising models. We intend to make such jobs decent.

*In India, the sector is growing and globally branded hotels attracting both Indian and foreign travelers are occupying a growing majority of the rooms.* India's travel and tourism sector ranks 7<sup>th</sup> in the world in terms of its total contribution to the country's GDP and 2<sup>nd</sup> in the world in terms of total employment generated. The 25.9 million jobs created in 2017 made India the country with the most robust growth in the sector among G20 countries. Hospitality is also among the top ten sectors in India to attract foreign direct investment. Much of this growth is centered around globally branded hotels including Marriott. India's globally branded hotel sector has expanded rapidly growing from under 20% of the rooms in India in 2002 to about 50% of current rooms and with the expectation of over 75% of the rooms by 2020. In this emerging business model, Marriott appears to increasingly function as a managing partner or franchisee requiring adherence to its global human resources policies for employment practices. Industry reports also predict that an increasing amount of Marriott International's global profits will arise from Indian and Asian travelers staying in these Indian and Asian hotel properties.

*Marriott International is an industry leader in this growing sector and therefore has an obligation to promote business and human rights best practices.* Marriott International is the largest hotel chain in the world with more than 6,500 properties in 127 countries and earning more than \$22 billion in the 2017 fiscal year. Because of its size, Marriott plays a leadership role in creating customer norms, business practices, and culture change. Its practices will likely be expanded in India and exported to other countries in the region. For this reason, we expect Marriott to respect and establishing business and human rights principles and develop a business culture which entrenches them throughout all aspects of hotel employment and operations including industrial relations.

*To ensure decent work and local development, workers must have a collective voice on workplace standards and the growth of the industry.* As a sectoral union, we intend to be an important stakeholder in developing a business ecosystem in the sustainable development and responsible tourism, which allows social and economic upgrading of Indian hotel industry. This includes ensuring the jobs created institutionalize International Labor Organization core labor standards and deliver decent work and provide living wage to workers and their families and that industry leaders model industrial relations with trade unions consistent with national law and standards set by the ILO. Through this, the sector can sustain families with human dignity and open up the path for communities and nation to build a better society and democracy. As the ILO has recognized, socially responsible tourism offers an opportunity for development when it prioritizes employment creation at local level, contributing to social and economic development and poverty reduction and expansion of local incomes along with strengthening social dialogue mechanisms and collective bargaining which enhance working conditions, career prospects and job security to the benefit of the workers. Democratic industrial relations are at the core of a business and human rights approach and trade unions play an integral role to ensure normative behavior of the business; to express grievance of the workers; and to channelize their aspirations and negotiate a shared responsible vision of the company and the industry.

*The first step in this direction is to ensure freedom of association for all hotel workers and freedom from unfair labor practices or retaliation.* We write to communicate our expectation that Marriott and its staff in its hotels will be a partner with us in creating those conditions. We expect you are aware of workers' rights to freedom of association under national law including the Industrial Disputes Act of 1947 and International Labor Standards including the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and ILO Convention 87, 98, 29, 105, 138m 172k 100, and 111. As a first step in productive dialogue, we expect you to respect those rights and will not impede, hinder, or retaliate against anyone for being informed of or exercising their right to freedom of association and collective bargaining.<sup>1</sup>

Going forward, we look forward to a dialogue to shape a broader framework for collaboration and bargaining and to operationalize it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ashim Roy', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Ashim Roy  
President  
Hotel Mazdoor Panchayat

cc:

Tu Rinsche, Corporate Social Responsibility Director, Marriott International,  
D. Taylor, President, UNITE HERE, U.S.  
Ashwini Sukthankar, Director of Global Campaigns, UNITE HERE, U.S.  
Sue Longley, General Secretary, IUF  
Massimo Frattini, IUF Int'l Coordinator Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Sectors, IUF

---

<sup>1</sup> Actions by Marriott, its employees, recruiters, contractors, and/or agents which are prohibited include but are not limited to: Terminating, altering the schedule or job, changing the supervisor, increasing the workload, changing the shift, or otherwise altering the material conditions of work of workers for actual or perceived engagement with trade unions; threatening to change contractors or recruitment locations in response to union engagement; surveilling workers directly or encouraging workers to do so; conducting one to one or captive audience meetings to interrogate or discourage workers from engaging with trade unions; threatening workers with negative business consequences in response to union engagement; and/or otherwise disparaging or maligning the trade union.