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## **RE: Marriott East Africa & Global Issues**

Dear Mr Sorenson,

When we first learned of Marriott's intention to purchase Starwood and to expand Marriott's footprint in Africa, we were optimistic about the potential for an even stronger hospitality industry, good jobs that enable our communities to flourish and thoughtful social dialogue to ensure progress for all social partners. Despite rumours of Marriott's anti-union animus, we were confident that Marriott would accept the tradition of strong unions in East Africa and embrace the benefits of social dialogue with the labor movement.

Recent events have left us very concerned about the direction Marriott is moving in East Africa.

First, despite a long history of positive labour relations at the Sheraton Kampala Hotel in Uganda, on November 20<sup>th</sup> the management of the hotel posted a letter on the notice board announcing its intention to shrink the size of the hotel staff if workers did not voluntarily retire by November 30<sup>th</sup>. While the union had begun discussions with the management about these staffing issues in good faith, we hardly need argue that the posting of this letter represents a violation of the norms of social dialogue and collaboration.

Second, when workers chose to be represented by the union at the Four Points by Sheraton in Nairobi, Kenya, we had every expectation that management would work quickly with the union to negotiate a Collective Bargaining Agreement and to establish a positive working relationship with the union. Not only has this not happened, but we have no indication that management intends to change course and negotiate with the union soon.

Third, our unions are affiliated with the global trade union federation IUF. We have received troubling reports from the annual meeting of the IUF's Hotel, Restaurant, Catering and Tourism Board concerning the current state of Marriott's industrial relations practices around the world. We are writing to call your attention to the following:

- More than 5,200 members of UNITE HERE are currently on strike across the United States in support of their demands for jobs that are safe, secure and enough to live on;
- Marriott is the subject of two complaints filed with the International Finance Corporation related to its hotel projects in India and Bangladesh;
- Union members and leaders have had their employment contracts discontinued or been terminated at the W Hotel in Bali as a consequence of exercising their right to form a trade union;
- Marriott has rejected the IUF's invitation to discuss global measures to protect workers from sexual harassment in its hotels.

Preventing sexual harassment is a global priority for workers and their unions in the hospitality industry. Marriott has rejected a global dialogue with the IUF and instead insisted on unilaterally and selectively implementing policies without the participation of the workers who are directly at risk from the harassment which afflicts the industry. We believe there can be no effective solution that does not directly involve the IUF and its members around the world.

We strongly encourage you to reverse your present course here in East Africa and in the rest of the world. We further call on you to insist that Marriott International negotiate with the IUF and its affiliates in order that Marriott be torchbearer for the highest possible standards for decent work here in East Africa and across the world.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information.

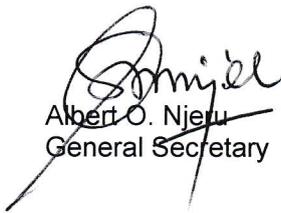
Yours sincerely,

HTS-Union (Uganda)



Stephen Mugole  
General Secretary

KUDHEIHA (Kenya)



Albert O. Njeru  
General Secretary

CHODAWU (Tanzania)



Said Wamba  
General Secretary

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