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Dear Ambassador

I am writing to you on behalf of UNISON's 1.3 million members in public services in the UK because of our concerns over the treatment of migrant workers in the State of Qatar, and because of the lack of progress by your government in ensuring workers access their rights.

Today is the UN designated day for human rights. As a member of the United Nations, your government has a legal obligation to ensure workers' rights are implemented. International treaties, including ILO conventions, grant workers rights that must be upheld by state bodies. Your consistent denial that there is anything seriously wrong has been rejected by the ILO who are now demanding that a high-level mission be allowed in to the country. If Qatar has nothing to hide then I urge you to allow the delegation in.

The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) in its annual survey of rights ranks your country as one of the worst violators of trade union rights. This can only serve to further damage Qatar's standing in the international community.

7,000 estimated deaths before 2022 makes the World Cup, and indeed the 2019 World Athletics Championships, tournaments built on the deaths of the most vulnerable workers in your country.

As we mark Human Rights Day, I urge your government to respect the rights of migrant workers. The country has an international obligation to respect these rights. It also has an obligation to ensure that workers can realise their rights through freedom of association.

The State of Qatar has an opportunity to show to the world its respect for workers' rights. The Kafala system must be abolished, workers must be allowed to join trade unions, and they should be treated as human beings and not commodities to further the economic aspirations of the state. UNISON will continue to campaign in support of migrant workers whose fundamental human rights have been violated time and again. Change will come, but it should be implemented willingly, rather than being forced upon you.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liz Snape". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Liz Snape MBE  
Assistant General Secretary UNISON  
President Trades Union Congress (TUC)

