

DR. CAROLINE LUCAS

Green Party  
*for the South East of England*

Commissioner Mandelson  
DG Trade  
The European Commission  
200 Rue de la Loi  
B1049 Brussels  
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Dear Commissioner,

The EU is a major importer of cotton from Uzbekistan and is thus well placed to press for environmental and social improvements in the industry. Extensive use is made of child labour in the state cotton industry and workers are tied to the land by means of a visa system that effectively prevents them from leaving. The industry makes use of water from the Aral sea, which is now 15% of its original size and suffering from large scale ecological damage.

I am, therefore, calling on the Commission to bring pressure to bear on the authorities in Uzbekistan to end the use of child labour in the state run cotton industry, by means of introducing a Europe wide regulation prohibiting the import of cotton or cotton products from Uzbekistan using forced child labour. In parallel, I would like to urge the Commission to actively promote fair trade and organic cotton in countries like Uzbekistan.

I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Lucas - Green Party MEP for South East England.