

Veerle Solia

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Aan: Veerle Solia
Onderwerp: Wednesday could be big for Workers in Qatar

Dear Veerle,

Over the past few days, **America's top diplomat, John Kerry, has embarked on his first trip abroad as US Secretary of State.** This "listening tour" began in Europe and on Wednesday, will wrap up in Doha, Qatar.^[1]

While listening is incredibly important in diplomacy, **Kerry's visit to Qatar offers a unique opportunity for the Secretary of State to speak on behalf of millions of migrant workers who can't form trade unions and are denied a voice.** Already [more than/almost] 5000 of us have stood with workers in Qatar and Kerry should too.

Secretary Kerry has been tweeting personally from the State Department's twitter feed recently, even wishing Ben Affleck good luck at the Academy Awards.^[2] While winning an Oscar is an honor, **Kerry could use his voice - like you have - to help workers in Qatar win something more important: the right to organize and improve dangerous working conditions.**

Together we can use social media encourage Kerry to stand up for workers' rights in Qatar:

[**Tweet at Secretary Kerry**](#)

[**Send him a message on Facebook**](#) (via the US Embassy in Qatar)

Migrant workers building 2022 World Cup infrastructure in Qatar are lured to the country with promises of high wages, but on arrival passports are seized and workers are forced to sign new contracts with lower wages, payments of which are often delayed or never come at all. With no way to return home, these labourers are forced to toil in incredibly hot and dangerous conditions, with little or no pay.

While running for president in 2004 Secretary Kerry declared: "I have always believed that one of the best ways to raise people out of poverty is to give them the real freedom to form a union."^[3] **On Wednesday, as Secretary of State, Kerry should again declare his support for the freedom to form a union on behalf**

of the millions of migrant workers in Qatar, attempting to support their families and keep them from poverty.

We know that Secretary Kerry personally engages on social media, so **let's use those tools to encourage him to stand up for workers' rights abroad like he has at home^[4].**

[Tweet at Secretary Kerry](#)

[Send him a message on Facebook](#) (via the US Embassy in Qatar)

As he accepted the Democratic nomination for president in 2004 - getting there with union support - John Kerry said: "Values are not just words, values are what we live by. They're about the causes that we champion and the people we fight for."^[5] **If you've got [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#), ask Secretary Kerry to join the fight on Wednesday and together, we'll make a difference for workers in Qatar.**

Thanks for all you do,

The Equal Times Campaign Team

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^[1] <http://www.rferl.org/content/kerry-trip/24910867.html>

^[2] <https://twitter.com/StateDept/status/305392151762702336>

^[3] <http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/sen-john-kerry-calls-on-worlds-largest-commercial-printer-to-stop-intimidating-and-harassing-workers-who-want-to-form-unions-according-to-graphic-communications-international-union-58970267.html>

^[4] <http://votesmart.org/candidate/evaluations/53306/john-kerry/43#.USyJcqKcfms>

^[5] <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A25678-2004Jul29.html>