

→ Formal Notice

April 21, 2020

→ Summons

March 23, 2022

ISSUES

In March 2022, Sherpa, ActionAid France, the Turkish trade union Petrol-İş and 34 former employees took Yves Rocher to court for breach of its duty of vigilance.

They accuse the company of having violated its duty of vigilance concerning the freedom to join a trade union, the principle of non-discrimination and the health and safety of individuals in its Turkish subsidiary Kosan Kozmetik. They asked the judge to order the company to comply with its obligations and to order it to pay compensation for the damage suffered as a result of its lack of vigilance.

ACTORS

- Sherpa
- ActionAid France
- Turkish Trade Union Petrol-İş
- 34 former employees of the subsidiary Kosan Kozmetik

***Sherpa**



act:onaid
pour des peuples solidaires



Lucie Chatelain,
Advocacy and Litigation Manager, Sherpa
lucie.chatelain@asso-sherpa.org,

Salma Lamqaddam,
Campaigner for Women's Rights at Work, ActionAid
salma.lamqaddam@protonmail.com

Riza Kose,
Head of International Relations, Petrol
rizakose@protonmail.com

To go further 

[French Cosmetics company Yves Rocher facing court proceedings, Sherpa](#)

PRESENTATION OF THE CASE

Kosan Kozmetik is a subsidiary of the Yves Rocher Group since 2012. It manufactures Flormar beauty products in the Gebze industrial basin in Turkey.

Journalistic investigations and statements of Kosan Kozmetik employees testify to the working conditions in the factory, deploring very low wages, recurrent exposure to harmful products in the absence of suitable equipment, forced overtime, failure of management to take complaints into consideration, and allegations of discrimination against women.

When alerted, the Turkish trade union Petrol-İş wanted to be present in the company to ensure the protection of employees. To reach the representativeness thresholds required by Turkish law to engage in collective bargaining, Petrol-İş launched a membership campaign at the Kosan Kozmetik factory in Gebze in January 2018. As of April 2018, the Petrol-İş union had 157 members at the plant, out of a total of 379 employees.

However, from the beginning of the unionisation campaign, employees report that Kosan Kozmetik put pressure on them, clearly with the aim of forcing them to give up any unionisation.

At the same time, there was a succession of dismissals of unionised employees. Between March and September 2018, the subsidiary dismissed more than 130 of its employees, who were affiliated with the Petrol-İş trade union or had shown their support for those dismissed by applauding. According to testimonies, the majority of those dismissed subsequently suffered reprisals from other employers in the region.

While the Yves Rocher Group has become a "mission-driven company" under French law, and its CEO, Bris Rocher, has been entrusted by the Government with a mission on "responsible corporate governance", the group has not made its vigilance plan public until 2020, after having been put on notice by the organisations. Moreover, its vigilance plan makes no mention of the risks of violations of workers' fundamental rights caused by the activities of its Turkish subsidiary, nor of the preventive measures taken to avoid them.

34 former employees are co-plaintiffs in the lawsuit brought before the French courts to hold the parent company of the Rocher Group liable, alongside the Turkish trade union Petrol-İş and the NGOs Sherpa and Action-Aid.

