

## AUCHAN RETAIL'S POSITION

17 February 2023

Having read the investigative report produced by *Le Monde*, the press groups BellingCat and The Insider, Auchan Retail wishes to make the following comments:

Auchan Retail flatly denies the statements made in this investigative report and their interpretation.

Auchan Retail is extremely surprised by these allegations, which are in no way corroborated by the reality of its internal investigation.

Auchan Retail thus reasserts that those of its stores that are open in Russia to enable the Russian population (like in Ukraine for the Ukrainian population) to have access to food do not provide any voluntary or active assistance to any supply to consumer categories other than the Russian civilian population.

Auchan Retail does not conduct, support or finance any “charitable” collections for the Russian armed forces.

To take only 2 examples verified this very morning,

An order was placed in March 2022, just 3 weeks after the outbreak of the war, by the Saint Petersburg City Hall, as it had made a year earlier in response to the Covid epidemic. There was nothing in the products ordered during that period that might have led the company's contacts to suspect a particular final destination. When asked this morning following the publication of the article in *Le Monde*, Nataliya Z. denied having received a question from Aleksei R. and denied having answered it in the sense presented. Aleksei R. has not worked for the company since September 2022, having abruptly left the country. As far as Auchan and its teams are concerned, this order came from the Saint Petersburg City Council for the populations it supports.

Moreover, when collections are proposed to consumers, none of them are done with the agreement of or on the Auchan store's surface. Of course, none of the food drives are funded by Auchan. This is the case of the owner of the Kosmoport shopping centre in Samara who, on his sole initiative, set up a collection point in the shopping centre (non owned by Auchan), and by no means at the Auchan store. The Auchan teams did not provide any assistance or have any power to intervene in this operation. There is obviously no “collaboration” with the associations.

As with any buyer, individual or professional, Auchan has no way of knowing how the products purchased are ultimately used.

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