PARIS, France - French luxury goods group Kering, trying to sell its loss-making mail order unit La Redoute, said it would favor a buyer who would keep the business going after staff and politicians protested against looming job cuts.

Over 1,000 people, mainly employees and their families but also local politicians, demonstrated last week in the northern city of Lille to voice concern over La Redoute's planned sale, which labor unions say threatens around 700 jobs out of 2,500 nationwide.

Elected officials from northern France, where La Redoute has its headquarters, met with Kering Chief Executive Francois-Henri Pinault earlier on Tuesday, demanding measures to preserve jobs at a time when France is battling double-digit unemployment.

"Francois-Henri Pinault strongly reaffirmed that La Redoute has a future and that Kering is determined to give it all its chances, by choosing the buyer that will offer the most solid industrial project for the company and the best deal for its employees," Kering said in a statement after the talks.

Sources close to the matter told Reuters last week Kering was ready to inject at least 300 million euros ($403 million) into La Redoute to help find a buyer.

© Thomson Reuters 2020 All rights reserved.