

TALKING POINTS

Malawi Child Labour Conference

This note is divided into two sections:

- i) Key message/ points to make
 - ii) 5 minute speech
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i) Key message/points to make

- The root causes of child labour in agriculture in Malawi are many, complex and multifaceted; tradition can be changed when the future of children is at stake
- The elimination of child labour in agriculture requires that government, labour, employers, farmers and communities adopt a common vision and implement mutually reinforcing actions;
- The ECLT Foundation supports the efforts of the Malawi Government, MCTU and ECAM, and other national stakeholders to develop a roadmap for the implementation of the agricultural component of the National Action Plan;
- Thousands of people across rural communities in Malawi invest their own time and efforts to run volunteer-based systems that provide vigilance to child labour problems, and
- Agriculture without child labour is possible and within reach.

Her Excellency Madam Joyce Banda, the President of the Republic of Malawi and the First Gentleman, Mr Richard Banda

The Vice President of the Republic of Malawi, Mr. Kumbo Kachali, MP

Your Excellencies, the members of the Diplomatic Corps

The Honourable Minister of Labour, Mrs. Eunice Makangala, MP and all Ministers here present

Members of Parliament and Senior Government Officials here present

The President of ECAM, Mr. Buxton Kayuni

The President of MCTU, Mr. Luther Mambala

Members of the ECLT Foundation Board here present

The Executive Director of the ECLT Foundation, Ms. Sonia Velazquez

Distinguished representatives of International Organizations and Members of the civil society and agricultural sectors here present

The Children here present, ladies and gentlemen
Your Excellency, it gives me great pleasure to join you, the Malawi Government and social partners on this historic occasion to mark the official opening of the Malawi Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture. The conference is a culmination of a process of national dialogue and consensus-building, with the aim of developing a roadmap for the implementation of the agricultural component of the National Action Plan for Child Labour in Malawi.

The Eliminating Child Labour in Tobacco Growing Foundation supported the implementation of a genuinely consultative, inclusive and locally driven process and joined as a partner to Government, to deal with the problem of child labour in agriculture in Malawi. As a multi-stakeholder initiative bringing together tobacco growers, tobacco companies and unions, advised by the ILO, the ECLT Foundation believes that child labour is wrong

and robs children of a bright future that they deserve, and limits the development potential of any country where it occurs.

Your Excellency, the ECLT Foundation has worked in Malawi since 2002, and in 2011 we launched a the largest project in our history to combat child labour in 3 tobacco growing districts in Malawi. Even as we did so, we were acutely aware that any effort in isolation, would not bring about an enduring change in national child labour prevalence.

I want to end by honouring the children that will speak truth from their hearts during the next two days, as they represent the hope for the future, a message that we have repeatedly heard from your Excellency. The ECLT Foundation sincerely thanks you. Zikomo!