



MEDIA ADVISORY: September 4-6, 2012

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National Conference Convenes to End Child Labour in Agriculture in Malawi

The Government of Malawi is convening the Malawi National Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture, September 4-6, 2012, to ensure that all sectors make progress toward the eradication of child labour in agriculture in the country. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), 60 percent of child labour takes place in agriculture. To address a grave situation impacting thousands of boys and girls throughout the nation, the Ministry of Labour has partnered with the Eliminating Child Labour in Tobacco Growing Foundation (ECLT Foundation) and the ILO to bring together all government sectors, labour, businesses, farmers, civil society and NGOs, international supporters, **and children** to focus on solutions that can lead to the healthy development and education of Malawian children and to make the Child Labour National Action Plan for Malawi a reality.

WHO: The Government of Malawi, headed by Her Excellency Joyce Banda and the Ministry of Labour, with the support of the ECLT Foundation and the ILO, will host up to 300 government officials, the private sector, community leaders, children, and speakers and observers from within and outside Malawi. Opening addresses will be made by:

- President of the Republic of Malawi
- Minister of Labour, Malawi
- International Partnership on Cooperation on Child Labour in Agriculture in Malawi
- President of Employers Consultative Association of Malawi
- President of Malawi Congress of Trade Unions
- ILO/UN Resident Representative
- President of the ECLT Foundation
- International Labour Affairs Bureau, US Department of Labor

WHAT: The Malawi National Conference on Child Labour in Agriculture represents the combined commitment, experience, and knowledge of all sectors invested in the elimination of child labour and hazardous labour in agriculture in Malawi. It will feature research presentations, conclusions from preparatory social dialogue, workshops, children's views, and plenary discussions across four major categories:

- The nature and complexity of child labour in Malawi
- Agricultural development and child labour in Malawi
- The role of stakeholders in combating child labour in agriculture in Malawi
- Child labour and political will in Malawi



Conference outcomes will inform public policy concerning child labour in Malawi, and will lead to the adoption of a list of prioritized actions for addressing this issue in the agriculture sector. It will commit government, social partners, business, and civil society to mutually reinforcing specific actions, timelines, and responsibilities for the realization of the agricultural component of the Child Labour National Action Plan for Malawi (2010-2016).

WHEN: September 5-6, 2012. Official opening and reception will take place September 4 at 1500 hours.

WHERE: Crossroads Hotel, Lilongwe, Malawi

WHY: According to ILO estimates, sub-Saharan Africa is the only region in which the number of children in employment actually increased from 49.3 million in 2004 to 58.2 million in 2008.¹ This worrying trend directly concerns the health and safety of many Malawian children who are part of the agricultural sector and who have a right to life opportunities and to a childhood free of child labour. These shared views underscore the importance of government and people to come together to:

- Build common understanding of the root causes of child labour in Malawi and discuss effective ways to address them
- Exchange and share good practices that eliminate child labour in agriculture
- Make the elimination of child labour in agriculture a priority within the Child Labour National Action Plan for Malawi, which contemplates diverse sectors
- Generate a Roadmap, with specific commitments, responsibilities, concrete actions and milestones for the implementation of the agriculture component of the Child Labour National Action Plan for Malawi by 2016

INFORMATION: Visit www.malawichildlabourconference.com and www.eclt.org for the conference research papers as well as documents on the Child Labour National Action Plan for Malawi, the history of the ECLT Foundation's work in Malawi, the power of the partnership in eliminating child labour, and conference background information issued by the Malawi government.

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The Eliminating Child Labour in Tobacco Growing Foundation brings together labour unions, tobacco growers, and tobacco companies to make a better life for children in communities where tobacco is grown.

¹Accelerating Action Against Child Labour: Global Report Under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work 2010. Page 10, paragraph 33. Available at <http://www.ilo.org/ipecinfo/product/viewProduct.do?productId=13853>.