



*Association des Industries de la Chocolaterie,
Biscuiterie et Confiserie de l'UE · Association
of the Chocolate, Biscuit and Confectionery
Industries of the EU*

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• *David Zimmer*
• *Secretary General*
• **CAOBISCO**
• *1 rue Defacqz - B – 1000 Bruxelles*
• *Tel: 322/533.94.65*
• *Fax: 322/539.15.75*
• *GSM : 32/478/548.817*
• *e-mail : david.zimmer@caobisco.be*

GLOBAL CHOCOLATE, COCOA INDUSTRY PROVIDES UPDATE ON EFFORTS TO ADDRESS ABUSIVE CHILD LABOUR IN THE WEST AFRICAN COCOA SECTOR

Completes Key Protocol Milestone; Working with Stakeholders to Develop Pilot Programmes to Launch During Next Harvest

Brussels, Belgium (May 3, 2002) -- The global chocolate and cocoa industry is moving forward on several fronts to eliminate abusive child labour practices in cocoa cultivation and processing in West Africa, and is preparing to launch a series of programmes on the ground in West Africa, when the next cocoa harvest begins.

Last year, the industry joined with key stakeholders to develop an international Protocol laying out a date-specific timetable to ensure that cocoa is grown without abusive child or forced labour practices. The Protocol followed industry efforts already underway to gain a better understanding of the issue and develop solutions.

Since then, the global industry has been working with governments, the International Labour Organization (ILO), non-governmental organizations and experts on labour issues to tackle the issue on two fronts:

- First, via the implementation of initiatives as outlined in the “Key Action Plan” in the Protocol
- Second, via the development of programmes to make an immediate impact, while awaiting the results of the labour study being undertaken throughout the region

The following is an update on those efforts.

Memorandum of Cooperation: Key Protocol Milestone Completed

On May 1st, 2002, as called for under the Protocol, industry representatives joined a comprehensive group of stakeholders to complete the signing of a binding Memorandum of Cooperation that will enable decisive, effective action to end abusive child labour practices in cocoa cultivation and processing in West Africa.

As part of the Protocol, the cocoa/chocolate industry established a Broad Consultative Group (BCG), consisting of current and future non-governmental signatories to the Protocol. In addition, the Protocol called for the establishment of a Joint Foundation to oversee and sustain efforts to eliminate abusive child labour practices. The BCG is charged with advising the Joint Foundation in the development of solutions to the problem.

The Memorandum formalizes the structure of the BCG and outlines the structure of the Joint Foundation. In addition, the Memorandum also establishes the working relationship between the two organizations – to ensure diverse views, skills and resources are integrated into the overall effort and translated quickly into specific action.

The signatories to the Memorandum of Cooperation include:

| Cocoa and Chocolate Industry | Organisations |
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| Association of the Chocolate, Biscuit and Confectionery Industries of the EU (CAOBISCO) | International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers Associations (IUF) |
| Chocolate Manufacturers Association of the USA (CMA) and the National Confectioners Association | Free The Slaves |
| Confectionery Manufacturers Association of Canada (CMAC) | Child Labour Coalition |
| International Confectionery Association (ICA) | National Consumers League |
| Cocoa Merchants Association of America (CMAA) | |
| The Federation of Cocoa Commerce, Ltd. (FCC) | |
| European Cocoa Association (ECA) | |
| World Cocoa Foundation (WCF) | |

Pilot Programmes to Test Different Solutions

Concurrent with finalizing the Memorandum of Cooperation, industry representatives have been working with key governments and stakeholders to develop a series of pilot programmes that will test different solutions to the problem.

The pilot programmes will be implemented throughout West Africa this September, when the next cocoa harvest begins. On the ground preparation will begin in July.

Results from the nearly complete labour study will guide the development and implementation of the final, agreed-to pilot programmes. As part of the Protocol, the industry partially funded the independent study of labour practices in the growing of cocoa in Western Africa. The study is being completed by the International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and national research collaborators throughout the region, with the additional support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the US Department of Labour, the ILO and West African governments.

Further information on the status of the study can be found by visiting the IITA's Web site, www.iita.org.

Once implemented, the pilot programmes will complement existing efforts to raise the economic livelihood of small holding cocoa farmers throughout the region. Working in partnership with USAID, the cocoa and chocolate industry has programmes underway to:

- Educate farmers at the community level on labour practices
- Improve market efficiency, thus, helping farmers obtain a greater share of the global price paid for cocoa, by strengthening farmer/community organizations, and creating/enhancing market and information systems
- Improve the productivity of cocoa growing on the smallholding farm, via education on crop cultivation techniques, providing farmers access to technology, and through environmental sustainability programmes
- Affect policies that can assist countries in transition to a liberalized market economy

These initiatives, in combination with the pilot programmes, enable the industry to direct its energies to where they can make the greatest difference – at the small/family farm level.

Editor's Note

CAOBISCO is the European Association of the chocolate, biscuit and sweet confectionery industries.

International Confectionery Association (ICA) is the global representative body of the industry.