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# DOL Child Labor List Released

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Today, the US Department of Labor (DOL) [released a list](#) <sup>[1]</sup> of goods believed to have been produced using forced or child labor globally. The list includes a number of industries where the International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) has identified these labor rights abuses to occur including cocoa, cotton, tobacco and rubber.

As part of the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2005 (TVPRA of 2005), DOL's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) was tasked with "develop[ing] and mak[ing] available to the public a list of goods from countries that the Bureau of International Labor Affairs has reason to believe are produced by forced labor or child labor in violation of international standards." ILRF is pleased to see that this useful resource has been publicly released after years of work.

Since 2001, ILRF has been pushing US-based cocoa importers and chocolate companies like Hershey to take effective action to end the use of child, trafficked and forced labor on West African cocoa farms. **ILRF Executive Director Bama Athreya**  **said**, "By including cocoa on the list of products made by child labor, the US government has acknowledged the lack of progress the chocolate industry has made in eliminating serious labor rights abuses in this sector, despite years of promises." Recent events confirm the appropriateness of including cocoa on the list. In June of this year, INTERPOL rescued children in Cote d'Ivoire who had been trafficked from neighboring countries as part of an ongoing system of trafficking and forced labor in the West African cocoa industry.

ILRF has also been working to stop forced and child labor in the cotton industry globally, especially in Uzbekistan. Reports published by ILRF and its global partners have confirmed the ongoing removal of thousands of children from schools across Uzbekistan who are forced to pick cotton during harvest season.

The inclusion of tobacco on the list indicates that the US government believes that industry efforts to eliminate child labor in this sector have not been sufficient. Labor rights abuses in tobacco production continue in countries like Malawi where a recent report by PLAN International found that thousands of children as young as five work on tobacco estates and suffer nicotine poisoning from being exposed to the equivalent of 50 cigarettes a day.

Other additional products that ILRF included in its testimony to the Department of Labor that appear on the official list are: cotton from Tajikistan, cottonseed and stones from India, sugarcane from Guatemala and surgical instruments from Pakistan. ILRF also has a long history of working to eliminate child labor in the soccer ball industry in India.

