

Memorandum of Co-operation

The parties to this memorandum of co-operation are:

- The International Tobacco Growers' Association (ITGA)
- The International Union of Food, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco & Allied Workers' Association (IUF)
- British American Tobacco

On 10 June 1999, the ITGA and the IUF signed a joint statement on child labour, which was witnessed by the International Labour Organisation (ILO). In doing so, the ITGA and the IUF recognised the need to end the use of child labour in the tobacco growing sector and to provide children with an upbringing that gives them the best chance to succeed in all aspects of life.

The ITGA and the IUF share the view that child labour results from a number of factors including the generally poor social and economic conditions faced by tenant farmers and agricultural workers. These poor conditions are often compounded as a result of the deaths of family members arising from the prevalence of AIDS in rural communities in many developing countries where tobacco is grown.

On the basis of this agreement the ITGA and the IUF are jointly committed to the achievement of best practice in relation to both agricultural production and internationally recognised employment standards and workers rights.

In the joint statement the ITGA and the IUF agreed that the needs of each country differ and local solutions should be found within a framework including the following principles:

- Children have the right to schooling, a full family life and a safe and healthy upbringing
- Children under the minimum legal age or under the age recognised by the relevant ILO Convention should not be employed in the production of tobacco leaf.

Because many tobacco enterprises are family-run, it may be possible that children take part in routine chores as part of family life. However, it was agreed that this must not extend to potentially hazardous tasks using machinery and crop chemicals nor in any way undermine their schooling.

The ITGA and the IUF agreed to seek to establish a joint programme of research, information exchange and action in order that internationally recognised standards can be fostered in countries where tobacco and related crops are grown.

British American Tobacco has joined this effort and shares the aims and objectives of eliminating child labour in the growing of tobacco. The company has adopted its own clear policy on the elimination of child labour. In its policy on child labour British American Tobacco acknowledges it is sometimes customary in agricultural communities for children to play a part in day- to-day chores on farms, partly to learn essential craft skills for ensuring the long-term sustainability of farms and local agricultural communities.

Nevertheless the company aims to apply this commitment and principles to contracted leaf growers by education through its field extension service, seeking to ensure that:

- The welfare and health & safety of children are paramount at all times
- Any form of farm practice including tobacco growing activities undertaken by children for the development of craft skills, do not conflict with or impede their proper educational development including school attendance
- No farm activity that could be considered to put children at risk is undertaken by children e.g. handling mechanical equipment or agro-chemicals etc.

Working directly with farmers in countries in which it directly contracts the growing of the crop, with ITGA members and with the tobacco dealing companies, British American Tobacco undertakes to encourage the elimination of child labour through promotion of best practice. This may be reinforced through agreements and incentives with its farmers and other tobacco leaf suppliers as well as education and promotion of best practice among its stakeholders on the issue.

British American Tobacco, ITGA and IUF will also work jointly to promote these initiatives to all the stakeholders in the tobacco sector in order that child labour no longer plays a role in production. The three organisations will also promote their best practice to other agricultural sectors, to international bodies concerned with labour and child labour and to national governments.

British American Tobacco and the IUF and ITGA will work on the development of this important initiative aiming to deliver results and action through research, campaigns and education to solve child labour in tobacco farming.

LAUNCH OF THE PROGRAMME AND FIRST ACTION

The programme will be launched at an international conference in Nairobi, Kenya on October 9-10, 2000. Titled Eliminating Child Labour: Establishing Best Practice in Tobacco Farming, the conference objective is to formulate and agree on an international permanent working relationship aimed at the elimination of child labour in tobacco farming. BAT, the ITGA and the IUF agree to be the leaders of this international initiative whilst any other interested stakeholders may join as working participants in the future.

This document serves to set out the agreed terms of co-operation between BAT, the ITGA and the IUF leading up to and for the duration of the conference. Following the conference the terms and conditions for a permanent international working arrangement will be established.

DECISION MAKING AND RELATIONSHIP

All decisions in relation to the organisation of the conference will be made by consensus of all three organisations, subject to the assigned responsibilities as detailed in the Nairobi international conference programme which is attached to this document. The working relationships will be governed by the core principles of transparency and accountability by all parties.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The signatories agree that strict confidentiality shall be maintained in all their dealings in relation to this memorandum of co-operation with the exception of agreed public pronouncements whose main object will be to help promote the aims and goals of the co-operation and to educate the public and relevant stakeholders on the issue as a means of achieving success.

SIGNED:

Antonio Abrunhosa, Chief Executive, ITGA

Ron Oswald, General Secretary, IUF

Shabanji Opukah, International Development Affairs Manager, British American Tobacco

19 June 2000