



*THE Minister for Labour, Ms Gaudencia Kabaka (left), cuts a ribbon to officially launch a project on Elimination of Child Labour in Tobacco Farms (ECLT). Looking on is the Geneva-based ECLT vice-president. (Photo by a staff photographer)*

## 30,000 children rescued from bad forms of labour

By LUDOVICK KAZOKA

ABOUT 30,000 children have been withdrawn from child labour since the introduction of Employment and Labour Relations Act No.6 of 2004, which was enacted to make provisions for core labour rights.

Speaking during the launch ceremony of the programme on promoting sustainable practices to eradicate child labour in tobacco in Dar es Salaam yesterday, the Minister for Labour and Employment, Ms Gaudencia Kabaka, said the Act prohibits employment of children under the age of 14.

"Any person convicted of the offence may be sentenced to a fine not exceeding five million shillings, imprisonment for a term of one year or both fine and imprisonment," said the minister.

She pointed out that the problem is found at the household level, community level and in almost all sectors of the national economy, including in domestic work, commercial, agriculture, fishing and mining both in rural and urban areas.

"Child labour denies children the intellectual and psychological development necessary for a better future," she said.

She said the reviewed Child Development Policy of 2008 and the enactment of the Law of Child Act of 2009, both prohibiting child labour signifies the importance which the government attaches to the problem of child labour.

However, she said inadequate infrastruc-

ture and resources remained as major challenge to undertake immediately large scale withdrawal and rehabilitation programme for all working children.

Ms Kabaka hailed the Foundation of Eliminating Child Labour in Tobacco Growing (ECLT) for embarking on the initiative on Promoting Sustainable Practices to Eradicate Child Labour in tobacco (PROSPER), saying the programme would help take back many children in tobacco growing areas to school.

According to the PROSPER Acting Director, Ms Mary Kibogoya, the programme aims to protect children from the worst forms of child labour in the Urambo and Sikonge Districts in Tabora Region.

"The Prosper programme focuses particularly on orphans and vulnerable children affected by HIV/AIDS who are the most at risk of entering in child labour," said the PROSPER Acting Director.

She said through the programme about 6,000 children between the ages of 5-17 would be withdrawn from the child labour from 2011-2015, saying a further 1,800 children between the ages of 5-17 would be prevented from entering child labour.

The ECLT Foundation Vice-President, Ms Barbara Martellin, said her foundation was extremely committed to the cause of fighting child labour and supporting the PROSPER programme, saying PROSPER not only gives the children the education and skills they need for better future but also tackles the wider causes of child labour in tobacco growing.