

[unofficial translation of Dutch letter published on October 3, 2017, available [here](#). Background information on the Dutch bill available [here](#)]

## **A law on the duty of care for child labour seriously tackles the issue of child labour**

Dear members of the *standig committee for foreign affairs, defence and development cooperation*, dear members of the first chamber,

With this letter, we as a private sector jointly express our support for a legal framework for a duty of care on child labour.

No matter how common child labour is, it is a system error. The problem is not being dealt with seriously enough and the current handling is not sufficient.

Based on voluntary initiatives and self-regulation, more is needed to tackle the problem. For the following reasons, we as a private sector are in favour of a legal framework:

1. Child labour must be tackled seriously: A serious problem needs serious action. We are all against child labour. The international treaties are explicitly and widely ratified. The OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises require due diligence to assess the risk of human rights violations. The United Nations *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDG 8) state that child labour must definitely be abolished by 2025. Businesses and the government must assume their responsibility.
2. Reward the pioneers in the private sector: The creation of transparency in the production chain and the fight against child labour is costly. Legislation provides the right incentives, rewards efforts and contributes to a level playing field for companies, which helps prevent child labour. The law demands nothing impossible from companies. Businesses must make a statement that they are doing what is necessary to prevent child labour, identify the risk of child labour in their production chain and address the problem within their capabilities. Companies that have taken on a pioneering role show that this is feasible and the developed systems make this possible (also financially) for everyone.
3. Keep the Netherlands in the group of frontrunners: Other countries have already adopted similar laws in related matters or are preparing legislation. With national legislation, these countries are taking action against free riders, creating a level playing field to tackle the problem of human rights violations in the production chain.

Legislation demands transparency and accelerates targeted activities of companies to seriously prevent child labour in their production chain. A legal framework provides clarity about the norms and rules to be followed and enables the tackling of child labour.

Child labour robs children of their future. It's time we seriously address the issue. The Dutch government has the authority to impose a duty of care on all companies through legislation to prevent the supply of products created by child labour. All products and services on the Dutch market must comply with the 100% child labour free standard. You determine this standard.

With kind regards

Tony's Chocolonely, Henk Jan Beltman, Chief Chocolate Officer

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ASN Bank, Arie Koornneef, Directeur

Barry Callebaut, Antoine de Saint-Affrique, Chief Executive Officer

Cargill Cocoa & Chocolate, Harold Poelma, President

Fairphone, Bas van Abel, Chief Executive Officer

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Holland Biodiversity, Aletta Nieuwenhuijs, Chief Executive Officer

Marcel Wanders Studio, Marcel Wanders, Chief Executive Officer

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Moyee Coffee, Guido van Staveren van Dijk, Oprichter

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