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Today, the International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) was selected as one of three non-profit representatives to serve on the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) [“Consultative Group to Eliminate the Use of Child Labor and Forced Labor in Imported Agricultural Products”](#) ^[1]. This group was established through the 2008 Farm Bill. The mandate of the Group is to “develop recommendations relating to a standard set of practices for independent, third-party monitoring and verification for the production, processing, and distribution of agricultural products or commodities . . . produced with the use of forced labor or child labor.” Ultimately, as described in the Managers Report accompanying the final passage of the Farm Bill in 2008, the recommendations should provide the basis for “a voluntary, third-party certification effort [sic] designed to reduce the likelihood that products produced with forced labor or child labor are imported into the United States as directed in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2005 (TVPRA).

The Consultative Group, chaired by USDA, includes non-profits, academics, agricultural companies, a certification organization and representatives from USDA, the US Department of Labor (DOL), and the US Department of State. The work of the Group will build off of the “List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor” released by DOL on September 10, 2009 as part of its requirement under the TVPRA. DOL’s list included 122 products from 58 countries, of which agricultural crops comprise the largest category. The recommendations for standard set of practices for third-party monitoring and certification developed by the Consultative Group can be used by producers, importers and retailers to help ensure that the agricultural products named on the DOL list that they source are produced without forced labor or child labor.

Bama Athreya, Executive Director of the International Labor Rights Forum, said, “ILRF is glad to have this opportunity to contribute our 20+ years of experience working with workers and grassroots organizations around the world to end child labor and other labor rights abuses. We look forward to working with other stakeholders toward the ultimate goal of eliminating forced labor and child labor in global commerce.

The International Labor Rights Forum (ILRF) is an advocacy organization dedicated to achieving just and humane treatment for workers worldwide. For more information, please visit www.LaborRights.org ^[2].

For background information about the Consultative Group, please see: <http://www.laborrights.org/stop-child-labor/child-labor-free-certification-initiative> ^[1].

Source URL: <http://www.laborrights.org/stop-child-forced-labor/child-labor-free-certification-initiative/news/12125>

Links:

[1] <http://www.laborrights.org/stop-child-labor/child-labor-free-certification-initiative>

[2] <http://laborrights.org>