

On 15th November, Ciné-ONU screened 'The Chocolate Case' at Cinéma Galeries in Brussels, in partnership with the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Belgium and ILO, to mark World Children's Day.



'The Chocolate Case' follows three Dutch journalists as they uncover child labour in the cocoa production chain, which triggers them to try to persuade large corporations to end these unethical practices once and for all. Scorned and rejected by the industry, and having sought in vain to become imprisoned for their cause, the trio sets out on a mission to develop the first 'slave-free' chocolate bar known as 'Tony's Chocolonely' – now one of Holland's leading chocolate brands.

After the screening, there was a panel discussion with Ynzo van Zanten, Chief Evangelist at Tony's Chocolonely, Barbara Caracciolo, Sustainable Development Coordinator at SOLIDAR, and Irene Wintermayr, Policy specialist at the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Petra Hongell, (UNRIC), moderated.



Ynzo van Zanten began the discussion by explaining how Tony's Chocolonely, a Dutch-based company, contributes to the welfare of farmers in Africa: "We pay about 30% extra on top of the market price because we want to help farmers achieve the living wage. Then, the next step is increasing the productivity, and the last step of the strategy for us is about inspiring other

organisations to blatantly copy our business model. We actively invite them to do this.”

He continued: “Sometimes, people look at our brand and they see the brightly coloured chocolate bars and get caught up with the branding, but we want to bring the attention back to our core aim; the whole point of our company, which is to work to eradicate child slavery. Financial success is a means to an end, but we essentially have one main goal and the fact that we are so determined to achieve it means that we can keep focused.”

Irene Wintermayr highlighted the reasons why child labour can occur: “Most child labour happens on a local level, in small scale holdings. These children are often from the families of cocoa farmers who are very poor themselves. In order to prevent child labour, we need to address these kinds of vulnerabilities. One of the ways we can do this is by paying the living wage. The most successful way to reduce child labour in the long term is through education and social protection.”



Following Irene’s course of topic, Barbara Caracciolo added: “It’s very important that the workers in the plantations are able to negotiate- to encourage them to request decent working conditions, for example. So, a lot of the work we do at SOLIDAR is to help farmers work together to negotiate their own rights.”

Ynzo van Zanten concluded the discussion by emphasizing the impact that end consumers can have on the farmers at the beginning of the supply chain: “Chocolate should be a treat right? To give, to get? But, it should also be a treat for the people who make it. You have to realise that your awareness means you are responsible now. So, the next time you are walking down a supermarket aisle deciding which chocolate bar to buy, remember: your vote counts.”

- To see pictures from the evening, [click here.](#)
- For more information about the film, [click here.](#)

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