

Message to the Senate Transmitting the Convention on the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

August 5, 1999

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification of the Convention (No. 182) Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor, adopted by the International Labor Conference at its 87th Session in Geneva on June 17, 1999, I transmit herewith a certified copy of that Convention. I transmit also for the Senate's information a certified copy of a recommendation (No. 190) on the same subject, adopted by the International Labor Conference on the same date, which amplifies some of the Convention's provisions. No action is called for on the recommendation.

The report of the Department of State, with a letter from the Secretary of Labor, concerning the Convention is enclosed.

As explained more fully in the enclosed letter from the Secretary of Labor, current United States law and practice satisfy the requirements of Convention No. 182. Ratification of this Convention, therefore, should not require the United States to alter in any way its law or practice in this field.

In the interest of clarifying the domestic application of the Convention, my Administration proposes that two understandings accompany U.S. ratification.

The proposed understandings are as follows:

The United States understands that Article 3(d) of Convention 182 does not encompass situations in which children are employed by a parent or by a person standing in the place of a parent on a farm owned or operated by such parent or person.

The United States understands the term "basic education" in Article 7 of Convention 182 means primary education plus one year: eight or nine years of schooling, based on curriculum and not age.

These understandings would have no effect on our international obligations under Convention No. 182.

Convention No. 182 represents a true breakthrough for the children of the world. Ratification of this instrument will enhance the ability of the United States to provide global leadership in the effort to eliminate the worst forms of child labor. I recommend that the Senate give its advice and consent to the ratification of ILO Convention No. 182.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
August 5, 1999.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 6.

Statement on the Convention on the Prohibition and Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor

August 6, 1999

Yesterday I sent to the United States Senate for advice and consent to ratification International Labor Organization Convention Number 182, the "Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor."

Around the world, tens of millions of children are deprived of their childhood and subjected to the worst forms of child labor: slavery; forced

or compulsory labor, including forced recruitment for use in armed conflict; prostitution; pornography; use for illicit activities; and other forms of harmful and unsafe work. Education, not hard labor, is ultimately the path to a better life for families and a stronger economy in the countries affected. But too often, very young children are denied an education and forced into abusive and exploitative work that poses