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Verité Selected For Key Role in
Improving Labor Conditions in Cocoa Production

Bringing Together Industry, Governments, Nongovernmental Organizations, Unions and
Academics to Create a Transparent, Effective and Credible Verification Process

Amherst, MA - Verité, a worldwide NGO leader in advancing sustainable business practices that promote just and humane work, has been selected by the global cocoa industry to develop a practical and independent approach to verifying and addressing labor conditions in cocoa production in West Africa.

The Verité Road Map provides credibility to the measurement of labor conditions on West African cocoa farms, ensures that any abusive labor practices are effectively identified, and that instances of trafficking in children are immediately addressed.

The Verité Road Map is collaborative and transparent, emphasizing a strategic verification process leading to improved labor conditions in the world's largest cocoa exporting countries of Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana. Central to the Road Map is the establishment of an independent Verification Board, convened by Verité that will facilitate cooperation among the governments of cocoa producing countries; the Cocoa industry itself; international and domestic NGOs; trade unions and academic specialists.

"Verité's experience over the past decade makes it clear that complex problems like labor conditions in cocoa farming can't be solved by businesses, NGOs, trade unions or governments alone," said Dan Viederman, Verité's Executive Director and winner of the Skoll Foundation Award for Social Entrepreneurship in 2007. "As the architect and facilitator of the Verification Process, we have designed a collaborative multi-stakeholder process that will improve the lives of cocoa farmers and their families."

According to Bill Guyton, President of the World Cocoa Foundation, an industry supported, non-profit organization playing a leading role in facilitating public-private partnerships to benefit cocoa farming communities around the world, "While much hard work remains, the involvement of Verité has brought a tremendous amount of insight and experience to the verification effort. And, it has yielded a way forward, one that will deliver on the promise of credible, independent verification for cocoa farming certification."

The findings from the Verification Process will be used to strengthen survey methodologies used by the governments of Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire and ensuing remediation activities, in the context of the Harkin-Engel Protocol.

About Verité

Verité is a US-based nonprofit and award-winning pioneer in the social auditing, training, research and consulting field. The organization has over a decade of experience working with Fortune 500 corporations and their local suppliers through our global network of NGO partners. Verité works in over 60 countries to empower companies, factories, NGOs, governments, and workers to create sustainable workplace practices in the factories and communities where our consumer goods are made. For more information on Verité, go to <http://www.Verité.org>.