



Dear H.E. Mr. Olaf Scholz,

Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany,

I am reaching out to you in my capacity as the Executive Director of the Global Student Forum, representing more than 300 million students worldwide, with a pressing concern regarding the impending vote on supply chains within the EU.

As advocates for education and human rights globally, we recognize the profound connection between ensuring access to education for all and eradicating child labor. The exploitation of children in the workforce not only deprives them of their right to education but perpetuates cycles of poverty and exploitation.

The corporate sustainability due diligence directive, if passed into EU law, would mark a significant milestone in holding European companies accountable for human rights violations and environmental abuses, particularly those involving child labor. It is unacceptable that in 2024, a European company can only be prosecuted for using child labor if the child in question is European. This discrepancy undermines efforts towards a fairer and more equitable future for all.

Germany, under the leadership of the SPD, has demonstrated commendable commitment to addressing these issues through national legislation and support for broader European initiatives. It is disheartening to learn that there is hesitation in maintaining this leadership, with reports suggesting Germany may abstain from the upcoming vote, potentially obstructing the progress of this critical legislation.

Child labor disproportionately affects African countries, with alarming statistics showing that 1 in 5 African children are engaged in child labor. This is a deeply personal issue for many of us who have witnessed firsthand the detrimental effects on children's lives and their right to education.

The Global Student Forum is the global union of school and university students with 196 member organizations from 126 countries. As the umbrella federation of the world's major representative, independent and democratic student unions, it defends the educational, cultural, economic and social interests of more than 300 million learners worldwide in the decision making spaces of the international community.



The widening gap between global wealth and the rise in child labor cases underscores the urgency of addressing global inequality. The proposed EU law represents a crucial step towards combating this injustice and protecting the most vulnerable members of our society.

As representatives of students and young people worldwide, including those directly impacted in Africa, we implore you to advocate for Germany's support of the EU supply chain law during the upcoming vote. The freedom, education, and well-being of marginalized children should not be subject to political indecision.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Sebastian Berger', is written over a horizontal line.

Sebastian Berger

Executive Director - Global Student Forum

Trustee & Treasurer - 100 Million Campaign Foundation

Brussels, Belgium - 15th of February 2024