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Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations

Brussels, 10 October 2007

SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE "CHEMICAL INDUSTRY"

WORKING GROUP MEETING

held on 18 September 2007 in Brussels

DRAFT MINUTES

Chairpersons: Ladislav NOVAK (ECEG) and Reinhard REIBSCH (EMCEF)

Commission representative: Dirk HADRICH (DG EMPL)

1. Welcome by the Chairpersons and the European Commission

The Social Partners were welcomed by the Chairpersons and the Commission.

2. Approval of the Agenda

The Agenda was approved with the two postponed items concerning pharmaceuticals and SusChemInitiative.

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3. High Level Group Chemical Industry

Reinhard Reibsch reported from the High Level Group Chemical Industry that officially started its work on 10 September 2007 on the basis of a Commission decision of 24 June 2007. He explained the background, the tasks and the membership of this group (annex 1). Subgroups for specific issues have been created: infrastructure and regional aspects, competition with other regions, trade and regulation. A website has been launched for information. Experts shall help only for a limited short time period. Results and decisions shall be produced by the High Level Group.

The social partners would be invited to contribute and to comment on published documents.

4. New EU Commission Communication on Industrial Policy: “Mid-term review of industrial policy - A contribution to the EU’s Growth and Jobs Strategy”

Georgios KIRIAZIS presented on behalf of DG ENTR the Commission Communication on industrial policy "Mid-term review of industrial policy - A contribution to the EU’s Growth and Jobs Strategy” (annex 2). He explained the main areas, achievements, challenges, future strategy and conclusions.

Responding to questions he explained the extra costs of compliance and the key problems of energy intensive industries.

5. Project Restructuring, Managing Change, Competitiveness and Employment

Lutz Mühl reported on the meeting held on 10/11 September in Wiesbaden. The current development of the sector has been assessed and conclusions should be drawn that could provide help to member organisations, employees, etc. Presentations of DG EMPL and of EMCC were appreciated in Wiesbaden and gave useful background information. The next meetings were planned for 26/27 September in Prague and for 9 November in Lisbon.

6. Outlook on activities of the Working Group within the 2007 / 2008 Working Programme

It was concluded that the different aspects of qualification would be very important for the chemical sector and should therefore be emphasized in the working programme. A draft working programme should be prepared by EMCEF for the next meeting.

7. Good Practice exchange in Education, Training and Lifelong Learning

The German social partners took the GIBUCI initiative that includes seminars for training of works council members on environmental issues. The initiative was presented by the GIBUCI director Waldemar Bahr (IG BCE) (annex 3).

8. Presentation of Cedefop – European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

Jens Bjornavold explained the role, activities and contributions CEDEFOP (annex 4). It was clarified that CEDEFOP does not focus in its methodologies on the chemical sector and that it is not a training institute. There is working together between CEDEFOP and the ITC sector. Social partners were invited to identify their needs and to investigate CEDEFOP's programme in order to develop working together. Jens Bjornavold intended to send a list of contact persons who could inform about their working together with CEDEFOP.

9. European Qualifications Framework – Update on current debate and possible next steps

Jens Bjornavold explained the main features, the 8 levels, the national implementation and the challenges of the EQF (annex 5). The EQF is regarded as a driver of national QFs and mutual trust will be the condition of successful implementation of the EQF.

10. Update on CITIES project – Contributions from Social Partners

The CITIES project should be finalised by November 2007. Social partners have sent contributions to Prof. Gross who will be contacted to get information on the further developments.

11. Any other business

ECEG thanked EMCEF for providing a room for this meeting.

Next meetings:

8 November 2007 (PL), Lisbon

5 December 2007 (WG), Brussels

The annexes can be downloaded from the "archive" on the website of the SSDC Chemicals Industry: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/social_dialogue/sectorial37_en.htm