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Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG

Social Dialogue, Social Rights, Working Conditions, Adaptation to Change  
**Social Dialogue, Industrial Relations**

Brussels, 29 June 2010

**SECTORAL SOCIAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE "CHEMICAL INDUSTRY"**

**PLENARY MEETING**

**held on 4 May 2010 in Brussels**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

Chairpersons: Jean Pelin (ECEG) and Reinhard Reibsch (EMCEF)

**1. Opening and welcome**

The social partners were welcomed by Jean Pelin (ECEG), Reinhard Reibsch (EMCEF) and Dirk Hadrich (DG EMPL).

**2. Approval of the agenda**

The agenda and the minutes of last meeting were approved.

**3a. The framework for the sector: International Year of Chemistry 2011**

Simon March (ECEG) explained the objectives, themes, key messages and activities of the international year of chemistry 2011 that should be used to promote the reputation of the chemical industry sector (annex 1). It was agreed to regularly inform the SSDC Chemical industry on this initiative.

**3b. The framework for the sector: EU 2020 strategy**

Dirk Hadrich (DG EMPL) reported on the Commission's proposal of EU 2020 which is a European strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and which suggests future

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priorities, targets and flagship initiatives based on the experiences with the Lisbon strategy (annex 2).

Peter Botschek (CEFIC) presented the chemical industry perspective on EU 2020, future structural changes, innovation essentials and CEFIC's view (annex 3).

ECEG found the issues of innovation, competitiveness, reduced bureaucracy and ageing most important for the future strategy.

EMCEF underlined the importance of fighting poverty and to react on social challenges.

#### **4. Tackling the global economic crisis: experiences from the European chemical industry**

Jorge Cabrita (Eurofound) presented the European economic context, restructuring information, the recession's impact on the labour market and responses to the crisis (annex 4).

EMCEF reported on its analysis of the impact of the crisis that has been assessed through a questionnaire to the affiliates (annex 5). The information has been made available on an intranet site of EMCEF.

Mathias Schöttke (BASF) presented BASF's specific measures to deal and to manage the crisis such as reducing missions, cutting leased workers and stopping leave transfers to 2010 (annex 6).

Klaas Soens (FEB) reported on the short time working scheme in Belgium (annex 7).

#### **5. The future of sectoral social dialogue**

Francois Ziegler (DG EMPL) reported on the review and analysis of the functioning of the EU sectoral social dialogue (annex 8). The findings cover the achievements, dynamics, diversity, integration of new players, capacity to negotiate, synergies and conclusions. They should be published in a Commission staff working document in June 2010.

#### **6. Capacity building project for the chemical industry**

Evelyn Toth and Jeanne Schmitt (ITC ILO) reported on their projects on the participation of social partners from new Member States and candidate countries in European sectoral social dialogue committees (annex 9).

ECEG and EMCEF found the projects came right in time and very useful to get more stability in the labour relations of the sector.

#### **7. Sectoral social dialogue in the European chemical industry: activities, recent achievements, status quo and future tasks**

Andreas Ogrinz (ECEG) reported on the meeting that has been dedicated to nanotechnologies. There was information on the nanotechnology products concerned and the dimension of risk that is perceived.

ECEG and EMCEF found that a text for a common position on nanotechnology should be developed and that the debate on the issue should continue. A first step could be to develop a “descriptive paper” with a common view on the current state of the debate.

Liliana Dombalova (ECEG) reported on topics of the working group “Education, training and lifelong learning”. Special attention was given to the CITIES project to produce course modules for chemistry teachers, the new project on “Demography changes” and the project “Eurocompetencies”. The brochure on “Best practice of education, training and lifelong learning in the chemical industry has been further disseminated in France, Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway and Poland.

Reinhard Reibsch (EMCEF) reported on the progress of the project of the agricultural sector, the hairdressers project and the prisme2 project.

Social partners discussed the needs of a common position on the latest developments concerning emission trading and competitiveness.

It has finally been concluded to concentrate in future meetings on the issues of 1. Nanotechnology, 2. ETS and climate change and 3. impact of the economic crisis.

## **8. Closing**

### Next meetings:

7 July 2010 (WG)

14 October 2010 (WG)

2 December 2010 (WG)

The annexes can be downloaded from the "library" on the website of the SSDC Chemicals Industry: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=480&langId=en&intPageId=17>