

Outcome of negotiations for a new agreement

European Works Council Gdf Suez

(16 April 2009) The Special Negotiating Body (SNB) of the European Works Council of Gdf and the Instance Européenne de Dialogue of Suez reached the final result on the new text of an EWC agreement with management 7 April. SNB members will consult on the final text with their trade unions and works councils. Also the different language versions will need to be checked. The SNB view is cautiously positive although some small changes might still be sought. A date for final agreement and then signing is being sought.

"An excellent job of the negotiators to make sure that the European Works Council agreement reflects the positive experience of the EWCs of both companies" stated EPSU Deputy General Secretary Jan Willem Goudriaan. He participated as expert to the SNB. "The agreement marks the start of something new and is a milestone as regards information and consultation rights and facilities for the EWC" he added.

The new agreement will include:

- Strengthened definitions of information and consultation rights. Issues for information and consultation include the usual ones (as referenced in the EWC Directive) as well as: research and development policy, environmental policy, public service issues, equal opportunities, training and mobility policies, health and safety, working conditions, Group social policy in the area of restructuring
- 2 meetings per year of the EWC, 2 meetings of the sector working groups as well as 2 meetings of the social working groups. The EWC can request additional meetings.
- A secretariat of 13 Members reflecting the diversity of the company
- A meeting of the secretariat each month
- Permanent secretarial assistance (1/2 time)
- 5 training days per year
- 3 social working groups on issues such as social reporting, employment and health and safety
- 3 working groups dealing with the activities of the company (Suez Environment,

Energy and Energy Services)

- A communication work group to consider how the EWC can communicate with members and the workforce
- Communication facilities for members
- The use of experts paid for by the company
- An annual budget of 80.000 Euros
- Representation of European Trade Union Federations
- EWC members will have the possibility to visit other sites in other countries with a maximum of 35 visits per year in total.

The new EWC will have 63 Members. They will represent a work force of close to 200.000 workers in energy, water, waste and energy services companies like Electrabel, Gas de France, Suez water, SITA, GTI, Cofely, Fabricom. There will be observers for Agbar, the Spanish water company in which Suez Environment holds a dominant stake.

The negotiations were necessary after the merger of activities of GdF and Suez July 2008. The new text demonstrates the willingness of both sides to construct something new and is an interesting milestone in negotiations on new agreements for EWCs in merged companies.

The EWC of Gdf and the IED of Suez have continued functioning during the time of the negotiations. They have held joint and separate meetings including of the Steering Committees. In all meetings there has been a presence of members of the Steering Committees of both EWCs as well as in relevant activities.

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