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Press information ▪ Press information

Closing of negotiations to set up a European Works Council at Arcelor Mittal

On 18th April 2007 in Aviles (Spain) management and employee representatives of Arcelor Mittal, the world's largest steel producer, finalised negotiations to set up a European Works Council (EWC).

The negotiating partners agreed on the concept of a newly combined EWC. This new agreement replaces earlier agreements concerning the EWC, which existed at both Mittal Steel and at Arcelor before the merger. This marks an important step in the integration process at Arcelor Mittal. The identity of the new Arcelor Mittal group was strengthened during the negotiations by the mutual respect shown for the industrial and cultural background of employees in the various European countries and the common goal to reach an agreement.

The new Arcelor Mittal European Works Council will represent more than 130,000 employees in the EU (27). Negotiations were constructive and served to develop a social dialogue between employee representatives, trade unions and management. Twenty one representatives from nine countries (Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Luxemburg, Poland, Romania and Spain), representing eighteen affiliated organisations of the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) participated in the negotiations with Arcelor Mittal.

Jacques Laplanche, Secretary of the Arcelor European Works Council, as well as Uwe Scharnberg, Chairman of the Mittal European Works Council and Luis Colunga, the negotiator for the trade unions view the new EWC agreement as an important step to establish a lasting basis for the effective representation of both worker and trade union interests within the steel group Arcelor Mittal.

Peter Scherrer, the EMF General Secretary, stated, "With this agreement management at Arcelor Mittal have shown that they accept the difference in industrial relations. This provides a good basis for the agreement and also for the future. The agreement also sets a good example for other multinational companies as it is not restricted to minimum legal regulations."

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The EMF is the representative body defending the interests of workers in the European metal industry. The EMF has a mandate for the external representation and coordination of the metalworkers' unions and a mandate to engage in bargaining at European level.

*For further information please contact:
Editor, Peter Scherrer, EMF General Secretary*