



Joint Declaration of the Social Partners of the European Chemical, Pharmaceutical, Rubber and Plastics Industries¹ and the European Chemical Industry Council on the review of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive (2004/37/EC)

Worker health and safety is a top priority of the chemical industry

For the EU chemicals industry, the protection of workers and enhancing health and safety in the workplace is a key priority. Healthy workforces are a core part to the success of any business and we place the protection of workers' health and safety as being of extreme high importance to achieving sustainable healthy workplaces.

We believe that an effective occupational health and safety legislation - combined with voluntary initiatives such as the worldwide Responsible Care programme in chemical industry - plays a pivotal role to safe use of chemicals at the workplace.

In this sense we welcome the Commission's initiative to facilitate the implementation of the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive by introducing Europe-wide binding exposure limit values for a number of substances. Harmonised exposure limits on EU-level will be an important step towards reducing work-related cancer across the EU 28 as it promotes upwards levels of protection throughout the EU.

Autonomous Social Dialogue on all levels enhances the development of effective and fit-for-purpose legislation

EU occupational safety and health legislation dealing with dangerous chemicals – including the Commission's proposal of 13 May 2016 amending the Carcinogens and Mutagens Directive (2004/37/EC) – is applicable to all industrial sectors and types of companies, including small and medium sized enterprises. It means legislation has to take into account the specificities of many different occupational activities which often represent a major challenge. To address this challenge, we believe that only a transparent and comprehensive approach, based on scientific evaluation and feasibility assessments, via the social dialogue and the consultation process of the Social Partners pursuant to Article 154 TFEU² lead to an effective and fit-for-purpose legislation increasing workers' protection on the ground.

This social dialogue approach has made a huge contribution to improving health and safety, at EU-, national, sectorial and company level and led to balanced results in the past.

We believe that any amendment looking to potentially improve the Commission's proposal and OSH legislation in general, should be subject to the same balanced, comprehensive approach.

We call upon the European Institutions to recognise the expertise of the Social Partners and the importance of the social dialogue and the above-mentioned consultation process in developing OSH legislation dealing with chemical substances.

¹ Abbreviated in the following text as "chemical industry"

² TFEU = Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union



Brussels, 24 February 2017.

Emma ARGUTYAN-KAHLMEYER

Sylvain LEFEBVRE

Director General

Deputy General Secretary

European Chemical Employers Group, ECEG

industriAll European Trade Union

Marco MENSINK

Director General

European Chemical Industry Council (CEFIC)

The **European Chemical Employers Group (ECEG)** represents the chemical, pharmaceutical, rubber and plastics industries in Europe. As a Brussels-based social affairs organisation it is a recognised Social Partner and a consultation body of the European Institutions and other stakeholders. With approximately 3.3 million direct employees in more than 94.000 enterprises, the sector is one of the biggest and most dynamic industries in the EU.

IndustriAll European Trade Union is the voice of industrial workers all over Europe. It represents 6.9 million workers across supply chains in manufacturing, mining and energy sectors on the European level.

CEFIC, the European Chemical Industry Council, founded in 1972, is the voice of 29,000 large, medium and small chemical companies in Europe, which provide 1.2 million jobs and account for 17% of world chemicals production.