



EUROPEAN CHEMICAL INDUSTRY COUNCIL

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Cefic President Christian Jourquin

**“The chemical industry is facing an unprecedented challenge.”**

**Lisbon, 3 October 2009 – In his mid-term speech, Mr. Christian Jourquin, CEO of Solvay, has today drawn a guarded picture of the future of the European chemical industry. Latest figures suggest that the EU chemical industry is showing tentative signs of recovery, but also that it will take years before we get back to January 2008 levels. At the annual Cefic General Assembly he underlined the strong determination of the chemical industry to overcome current economic and financial difficulties.**

“The European chemical industry is not out of the recession but I have absolute faith that, provided with the right framework in which to operate, the Chemical Industry contains within itself the strength to overcome this challenge”, Mr. Jourquin went on. “What we look for from governments is a long-term vision for industry embodied in industrial policies that enable the creation of legal and regulatory environments, which will support the competitiveness of our industry”.

“We are in the middle of an important institutional and probably also constitutional renewal in Europe after the outcome of the Irish vote” said Mr Jourquin. “This gives our industry a window of opportunity to communicate some important messages to the new European Parliament and Commission before the legislative agenda is set. We must work to ensure the recommendations of the High level Group are implemented and we must emphasise to EU policy makers the importance of supporting the competitiveness of European industry. We have a vision for a strong, sustainable and competitive chemical industry in Europe and I want that vision to become a shared vision between industry and governments so that it is translated into a real industrial policy for Europe” he concluded.

It is precisely in this context that Cefic expresses serious concern over REACH and the European Emission Trading Scheme (ETS).

The Chemical Industry fully supports REACH. However its implementation is proving to be more complex than expected for all registrants. “We are doing more than foreseen by legislation, helping our companies and other industries with technical and legal support. We are backing ECHA as much as we can to sort out the difficult SIEF issue, but there are limitations to what can be achieved by private organisations when guidance and support related to the regulation is insufficient. If the Commission and ECHA do not react adequately, I fear that many companies risk not meeting the deadline with negative effects on the credibility of the industry”, explained Alain Perroy, outgoing Cefic Director General.

ETS, the cornerstone of the Climate Change policy of the EU, could potentially develop into an additional burden for the European Chemical Industry if at the end of the Copenhagen conference in December there are no clear and satisfactory commitments from the other participating parties. “Therefore any unilateral burden on the (chemical) industry in Europe will not help this region to stay competitive against emerging regions like Asia and Latin America”, noted Dr. Hubert Mandery, incoming Cefic Director General.

Mr Jourquin expressed his appreciation for the hard work done by Cefic and the National Federations in supporting the entire industry, especially SMEs, in the face of the economic crisis and regulatory challenges. He went on to warn that 2010 would require further efforts.

Finally, Mr. Jourquin thanked Alain Perroy for his remarkable ten years performance at the helm of the European organisation and welcomed his successor, **Dr. Hubert Mandery**, who is going to take over as Director General on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2009.

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