



EFFAT EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM TRADE UNIONS

Brussels, 06 February 2006

Press release: Coca-Cola restructuring leaves a bitter taste

Today, Monday, February 6, 2006 hundreds of Coca-Cola Enterprises (CCE) employees will demonstrate their opposition to restructuring plans outside their Paris HQ.

The demonstration is organized by EFFAT and affiliated trade unions representing workers in the company's plants in Belgium, the Netherlands, France and the UK. Over 500 employees will participate in order to protest the announced job cuts and demand that Coca-Cola Enterprises respects its obligation to inform and consult with the European Works Council and conduct proper negotiations with the relevant trade unions.

Background

CCE has already carried out 496 redundancies Belgium, the Netherlands, France and the UK over the last two years and has recently announced a continuation of this trend with hundreds more jobs destined for the chop.

- In 2004 the introduction of new bottling lines in the Netherlands cost 65 jobs.
- In November 2005, CCE announced its third consecutive restructuring plan for Belgium in two years, adding a further 50 job losses to the total.
- In December 2005 it announced plans that would axe another 143 jobs in France.
- In January 2006 it announced new plans for the UK with an initial cost of 170 jobs

These restructuring plans have all been announced to employees as *fait accompli*, ignoring Coca-Cola's obligation to inform and consult with the European Works Council and to have proper negotiations with the relevant trade unions.

Harald Wiedenhofer, EFFAT's General Secretary said, "CCE's employees have been ready to cooperate and engage with the real challenges facing the company. However, they have been faced with a stream of new managers with no real understanding of the business and who, rather than draw on the experience of the workforce, prefer to repeat the same old mistakes. What is more, these 'young talents' then somehow manage to leave with huge pay-offs, while the people they make redundant lower down the in the hierarchy are palmed off with inadequate settlements." He continued, "we understand CCE's desire to 'hunt every penny down the corridor', although Europe remains highly profitable for Coca-Cola. However, we can't accept that this means firing the little guys, while throwing money away in other directions. Coke cannot build for success unless it starts to engage its employees in a dialogue about its future - as set out in its own *Manifesto for Change* - but until now CCE's actions have only served to undermine the passion and commitment of their employees."

EFFAT represents as a European Federation of Trade Unions some 2.6 million employees in the Food, Agricultural and Tourism sectors.

EFFAT REGIONAL ORGANISATION WITHIN THE IUF - MEMBER OF THE ETUC

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