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**Working Group  
Education, Training and Lifelong Learning**

**JOINT DECLARATION**

The Social Partners of the European Chemical Industry (European Chemical Employers Group – ECEG and the European Mine, Chemical and Energy Workers' Federation - EMCEF) have today, 2 March 2009, agreed the following points in relation to the introduction of layoffs (where workers are asked to stay away from the workplace for a period of time, but not made redundant) and short time working (where workers are asked to attend the work place for a shorter time than they normally do) or similar measures which do take place to avoid redundancy following national laws and collective agreements:

The global economic crisis has an impact on employment. Businesses are having to layoff staff or introduce short time working.

Laying off staff and short time working should only be done after consultation with the workforce and their representatives.

When this happens every effort should be made to use the opportunities of this available time for improving skills by training and education.

Training that takes place during this period – and indeed all training – should be accredited to ensure those intrinsic skills are maintained so that when the economic situation improves the Chemical and Pharmaceutical sector will not lose vital human resource for the future.

We call on the European Union, National and Local Governments to provide financial and other support for businesses and workforces during layoffs and short time working. National Social Partners are asked to look for solutions that best suit the specific needs of the Chemical and Pharmaceutical Industry.

Brussels, 2 March 2009

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