

## Caterpillar's trade unions agree on a joint European strategy

(Date: 29 September 2016) Last Monday, 26 September, representatives of several trade union organisations from Caterpillar's sites in Belgium, United Kingdom and France reiterated their opposition to the restructuring and closure plans of the US multinational company. During the meeting held in Brussels under the umbrella of industriAll Europe, they once again expressed their solidarity with all affected workers, families and regions as they have decided on joint strategy and actions.

Adhering to a perspective remote from any industrial logic, the Caterpillar group has been pursuing a global restructuring plan for a year, whose high price could be paid by the thousands of workers and subcontractors at Gosselies (Belgium) and Monkstown (Northern Ireland) plants. Moreover, concerns about the future of the group's other sites in Europe are legitimately arising as a consequence of Caterpillar's intentions to close those plants and to reorganize production in some locations, including Grenoble (France).

[Those brutal and incomprehensible announcements](#) relate to the same comprehensive plan which is driven by a financial outlook focused on the creation of shareholder value. In times of crisis in the mining and construction sectors largely, fuelled by European austerity policies, stubbornness to move forward in this financial direction results in a crazy cost-cutting hunt solely aimed at maintaining high level of dividends.

European trade union organisations reiterate their opposition to restructuring plans which rely on such a short-term view and which endanger the industrial base and know-how needed in Europe. As they refuse the planned closures, European trade unions require Caterpillar's full transparency on its global strategy as well as on its strategy for the future of all its European sites. They will keep a watchful eye on the respect of workers' rights to an effective information and consultation process: social dialogue must allow discussion about the intended decision itself, not just about reducing its social impact. Alternatives trade unions will submit must be taken into account.

As a conclusion to the coordination meeting chaired by industriAll Europe, trade union organisations agreed on a series of joint actions to be carried out in the coming days and weeks, including a forthcoming European action day against Caterpillar's restructuring plan.

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IndustriAll European Trade Union represents the voice of 7 million working men and women across supply chains in manufacturing, mining and energy sectors across Europe. We aim to protect and advance the rights of the workers. Our federation has 177 trade union affiliates in 38 European countries. Our objective is to be a powerful player in the European political arena vis-à-vis European companies, European industries, employers' associations and European institutions.