



European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
Confédération européenne des syndicats (CES)

Brussels, 15 July 2011

BS/JKD/lw

To:

Ms Connie Hedegaard, Commissioner for Climate Action

Mr Günther Oettinger, Commissioner for Energy Policy

Mr László Andor, Commissioner responsible for employment, social affairs and inclusion

[Letter sent by e-mail]

Subject: Energy efficiency and social dialogue

Dear Commissioners,

Energy efficiency is a key priority for the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) as it is for the Commission and EU. The recently proposed directive on energy efficiency is therefore welcomed by the ETUC generally as a step in the right direction.

However, considering the importance of the workplace as a primary site for the development and implementation of the measures proposed, we regret the absence of initiatives relating to the workplace and promoting social dialogue in the European level energy efficiency policy and projects.

Worker engagement and participation in energy efficiency programmes is crucial for their success. To ensure implementation, full engagement worker involvement through social dialogue in the formulation of policy and the development of skills and education programmes is of paramount importance. It is only with an educated and aware workforce, convinced of the value of energy efficiency, that the European ambitions will be achieved.

Therefore, we would like to request a meeting with you to address how the workplace and social dialogue could be better reflected in European energy efficiency policy.

To illustrate the opportunities offered through social dialogue and worker engagement, we would like to highlight the example of the German “Alliance for Employment and the Environment” in the building sector. This alliance, which surpassed its initial objectives, brings together a wide panel of stakeholders: government, social partners and non-governmental environmental organisations. It resulted, through dialogue and active involvement of all stakeholders, in the renovation of over 2.4 million apartments, delivering a reduction in CO₂ emissions of 1 million tonnes in 2006 and 1.5 million tonnes in 2009. Meanwhile it created

221,000 jobs in 2008 and 340,000 jobs in 2010, mainly in the skilled trades and construction sectors but also in the production of construction products (insulating glass, thermal insulation materials, etc.), and finally, in professional activities such as architecture, consultancy and engineering. We firmly believe that this good practice example could be a model for other countries and in other sectors. However, this demands political will and engagement, not only at national or sectoral level, but also at the European level.

We are currently analyzing the legislative proposals made in June 2011, together with our affiliates, to give a more detailed response to the Commission, member states and MEPs.

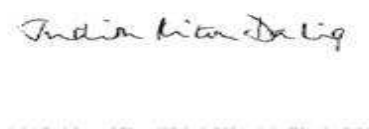
The ETUC remains convinced of the urgent need to fix ambitious targets and action plans for energy efficiency across all sectors of activities, and increase funding possibilities at European level (particularly given the impact of austerity measures at national level on various programmes). This would allow the EU to meet ambitious climate mitigation objectives, whilst boosting the European economy sustainably, creating jobs, reducing energy poverty, and increasing energy independence and security of supply. Our detailed proposals in this regard were set out in the attached ETUC Resolution “Energy Strategy for Europe 2011-2020” (December 2010).

We look forward to hearing from you and organising a meeting at your convenience on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Bernadette Ségol
General Secretary



Judith Kirton-Darling
Confederal Secretary