

PRESS RELEASE, 6 February 2003

EUROPEAN SUGAR INDUSTRY FIRST SECTOR TO AGREE ON BROAD SCALE CSR MINIMUM STANDARDS

Tomorrow on 7 February 2003 the social partners of the European Sugar Industry, CEFS and EFFAT, will sign a joint code of conduct setting minimum standards on corporate social responsibility (CSR) in eight areas. The European Sugar Industry is the first sector to voluntarily agree on minimum CSR standards on a broad scale.

Recognizing that CSR is becoming increasingly important, the code of conduct has been developed in the Committee for Social Dialogue of the industry. It reflects the commitment of the social partners to progressively develop and demonstrate the overall sustainability of the sugar industry.

“Our vision is to create added human and social value by incorporating corporate social responsibility into all our activities,” says chairperson of the joint working group Peter Rasmussen.

The code of conduct will come into effect on 1 January 2004. The intermediate period will be devoted to prepare for its implementation by providing adequate national and local structures. Regular update and follow-up of the code of conduct will be jointly monitored and reported each year in the frame of the European Committee for Social Dialogue. The first report will be submitted in February 2004.

“We welcome that the Code of Conduct contains concrete proposals for implementation and regular evaluation,” says secretary general of EFFAT Harald Wiedenhofer.

Underlining the necessity to ensure that their sector remains sufficiently competitive to enable it to fully assume its responsibilities vis-à-vis the different stakeholders, the social partners commit themselves in the code of conduct to comply with eight minimum standards and to promote them beyond the area of activities for which the CEFS has a mandate.

The code of conduct is a first step in an ongoing process, and the eight areas mainly cover social aspects: Human rights, education and training, health and safety, relationship between social partners, fair pay, working conditions, restructuring, and business relations and choice of suppliers.

Collected examples of good practices in the eight areas will be regularly updated and serve as a source of inspiration for improvement in the companies.

Press contacts:

Peter Rasmussen, Chairperson of the joint CSR Working Group, mobile: +45 40 30 60 95

Jean-Louis Barjol, Secretary General of CEFS: +32 2 762 07 60 – 32 2 774 51 02

Harald Wiedenhofer, Secretary General of EFFAT: +32 2 218 77 30, mobile: 32 4 75496949

CEFS: Comité Européen des Fabricants de Sucre

EFFAT: European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions

The Code of Conduct, Examples of Best Practice, factsheet on the European Sugar Industry, are all available electronically on www.cefs.org and www.fffat.org