



Europäisches GM Arbeitnehmerforum



Europäischer Metallgewerkschaftsbund  
Fédération Européenne des Métallurgistes  
European Metalworker's Federation



*Press Information* ◆ *Press Information* ◆ *Press Information*

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## **THE VICTORY OF REASON: European Framework Agreement about GME restructuring avoids plants closures and forced redundancies!**

In the night of 7<sup>th</sup> December 2004, GM Europe management and the GM European Employees Forum supported by the EMF reached in the night of a European Framework Agreement to push GME restructuring on a path of social responsibility, at the same time supporting the need for a change of approach towards competitiveness in difficult European car markets.

Both parties agreed to avoid collective redundancies and plant closures as well as to find other alternatives for a socially acceptable path towards growth, development and competitiveness.

European trade unions and workers representatives from Austria, Belgium, Germany, Spain, France, Sweden and the UK met yesterday afternoon at the Adam Opel plant in Rüsselsheim, within the European trade union coordination group in order to evaluate, discuss and approve the European Framework Agreement.

The basic demands of the European metalworkers' unions and the EEF have been reached:

- **avoiding plant closures**
- **avoiding forced redundancies**
- **developing and contributing to a European growth strategy for the European brands: Opel, SAAB and Vauxhall for GM Europe.**

"The European Framework Agreement is a success for the workers, the EEF and the EMF after a long fight with the GM US and European managements!" stated Klaus Franz, President of the EEF.

We will bear in mind: the EMF and the EEF had to organise a European action day on 19 November 2004 with the participation of more than 100,000 employees, their families and Civil society in Europe.

On the basis of this broad solidarity movement, European metalworkers in GM Europe resisted entering a downward spiral as well as the pressure of the company to close one production site, either Opel Rüsselsheim or Saab Trollhättan.

Well elaborated trade union coordination and a close cooperation with the European Employee Forum guaranteed European solidarity which has opened the way towards a European Framework Agreement. The European framework will now be the umbrella for special negotiations at the national level.

Close coordination will be organised by the EMF on the basis of full transparency and complete information in order to avoid any opportunity of being played one against the other at the national level.

The EMF thanks all workers, workers representatives and trade unions for their solidarity. We have now accomplished our major aim of preventing plant closures and forced redundancies.

The EMF is aware that this plan puts a heavy burden on the workers but all alternatives would have been worse, imposing unacceptable conditions on the workers and abolishing car manufacturing in core industrial European regions.

“This European Framework Agreement is a significant step forward to create a European negotiation space” Reinhard Kuhlmann, EMF General Secretary stated “but all this exercise is defensive and not really safeguarding manufacturing jobs in the car industry in Europe. The weakness of internal demand, the lack of growth and the persisting danger of stagflation all over Europe puts new pressure on industry, especially on its manufacturing branch. If there is no increase in markets even this framework agreement could just be the first step in a further round of additional job losses in the car industry.

The EMF trade union coordination group will not only monitor the implementation of this European Framework Agreement, it will immediately start to coordinate the follow-up national negotiations.

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