

SODEXO

20 September 2012

Communiqué of the French NCP for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises

The National Contact Point (NCP) for the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises received a specific instance referral on 4 August 2010 within the framework of its good offices mission from the *Fédération Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT) des personnels du Commerce, de la Distribution et des Services* about the activities of the SODEXO Group in the United States and Colombia. This complaint was then extended in July 2011 to include the Group's activities in Morocco and the Dominican Republic.

The referral refers mainly to Chapter V of the Guidelines, Employment and Industrial Relations (formerly Chapter IV), and specifically freedom of association. The chapter states: “*Enterprises should, within the framework of applicable law, regulations and prevailing labour relations and employment practices:*

1.a) Respect the right of workers employed by the multinational enterprise to establish or join trade unions and representative organisations of their own choosing.

4.c) Take adequate steps to ensure occupational health and safety in their operations”.

The complaint also refers to other chapters in the Guidelines.

In accordance with the Implementation Procedures of the OECD Guidelines, the NCP consulted with all relevant parties.

From these consultations, the NCP learned that a settlement had been reached between SODEXO's US subsidiary and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), a US trade union¹. This settlement acknowledges the rights of SODEXO employees to make free and informed choices about unionization. The NCP is delighted that this settlement has been reached, bringing to a conclusion the specific instance opened regarding this dispute.

The NCP also notes that the CGT stated that this settlement brings to an end its dispute with SODEXO. As a result, it has withdrawn the specific instance referral and additional statement about the affair dated July 2011.

The NCP has also learned that SODEXO and the International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) signed an International Framework Agreement on 12 December 2011². The agreement provides for a continual and progressive dialogue between SODEXO management, SODEXO employee representatives and the IUF on various matters (commitment to the respect of fundamental rights at work, rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining, rights of employees to establish and join labour organisations at their own free will and choice).

¹ “Under the settlement, Sodexo and SEIU have affirmed their mutual commitment to the rights of Sodexo's employees to make free and informed choices about unionization. The specific terms of the settlement agreement are confidential” - cf.

<http://sodexousa.com/usen/newsroom/press/press11/sodexoseiusettlement.asp>

<http://www.seiu.org/2011/09/seiu-and-sodexo-reach-amicable-settlement.php>

² <http://www.sodexo.com/en/media/press-releases/111213-agreement.aspx>

The NCP also draws attention to SODEXO's commitment to fully comply with the recommendations in the OECD Guidelines regarding industrial relations.

In accordance with the spirit of the agreements already reached, the NCP encourages the SODEXO Group to maintain dialogue between labour and management representatives in all the countries where it operates.

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