

Ballast Nedam

The Dutch multinational construction company Ballast Nedam and the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers signed on 18 March 2002 in Nieuwegein, Netherlands an international agreement. With this agreement Ballast Nedam follows IKEA and Skanska in Sweden and Faber Castell and Hochtief in Germany with whom the IFBWW already signed agreements. In the Netherlands, the agreement is unique and the first one in the Dutch construction.

Some Dutch multinationals already have unilateral codes of conducts however not negotiated with any global trade union organization. The Dutch construction union FNV-Bouw led the negotiations with Ballast Nedam.

Ballast Nedam is an albound international construction company with about 7,000 employees all over the world. The company is involved in infrastructure and civil engineering projects in Argentina, Canada, Ghana, India, Malaysia, United Kingdom, United States, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam.

Ballast Nedam acknowledges its responsibility for its own employees and the employees of its contractual partners. The company commits itself to respect the most important conventions of the ILO. That means no child labour, freedom of association and collective bargaining, adequate wages, decent working conditions and working time.

Ballast Nedam also commits itself to the OECD principles such as respect for human rights, combating corruption and avoiding unfair competition.

Anita Normark, IFBWW General Secretary: "The agreement provides an added value for Ballast Nedam. The verification of the efforts of the company to live up to international standards can be facilitated through the use of a global union network which IFBWW can provide with 289 affiliates in 125 countries! It is also important for governments to provide a legal framework for the implementation of global ILO and OECD standards."

IFBWW in cooperation with FNV-Bouw and the Works Council will be together with Ballast Nedam monitoring the agreement once a year but also continuously discussing upcoming matters. Ballast Nedam will inform its employees about the agreement and special information will be given to managers at international projects.

Roel de Vries, IFBWW President and President of FNV-Bouw: "IFBWW made the experience that this type of agreement with serious companies can open the door for an improved social dialogue between unions and management in many countries with regard to working conditions, wages and health and safety standards."

BALLAST NEDAM AND IFBWW AGREEMENT CONCERNING THE RIGHTS OF ITS OWN EMPLOYEES AND THE EMPLOYEES OF CONTRACTUAL PARTNERS

1. BALLAST NEDAM acknowledges that it not only bears responsibility for the conditions under which its own employees work but also shares responsibility for the conditions under which the employees of its contractual partners do their work;

2. BALLAST NEDAM therefore requires of its own units and subsidiaries and of its contractual partners that they at least meet the requirements of national legislation. BALLAST NEDAM advocates that the relevant conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) concerning the company's business activities shall be respected, such as:

- employment must be freely chosen
- there is no discrimination in employment
- no use is made of child, forced or bonded labour
- the right to freedom of association and free collective bargaining is respected
- adequate wages and salaries must be paid
- working time must not be unreasonable
- working conditions must be decent
- conditions of employment must be established

3. The International Federation of Building and Wood Workers (IFBWW), the Dutch Building and Wood Workers Union (FNV BOUW) and the employees' representations within BALLAST NEDAM support BALLAST NEDAM in the implementation of this agreement. Should the IFBWW, FNV BOUW or the employees' representations within BALLAST NEDAM or the companies with contractual ties with BALLAST NEDAM become aware of any contravention of the spirit or the letter of this agreement, they will report this contravention to the Executive Board of BALLAST NEDAM. This body will examine and introduce suitable measures to remedy the issue. To this end, BALLAST NEDAM appoints

an Officer for the application of this agreement.

4. The employees of BALLAST NEDAM will be informed orally and in writing of all the stipulations of this agreement. BALLAST NEDAM requires that its contractual partners shall support this agreement and shall also ensure that it is adhered to by any of their contractual partners who are in any way active in connection with the business activities of BALLAST NEDAM. The content of this agreement will be displayed at all work stations in the respective languages.

5. Questions of interpretation, for instance with regard to the content and/ or meaning of this agreement in respect of its application to any individual case will be clarified jointly between BALLAST NEDAM, the IFBWW and FNV BOUW.

6. BALLAST NEDAM, the IFBWW and FNV BOUW meet once a year to review the implementation of this agreement

7. By way of trial, BALLAST NEDAM, the IFBWW and FNV BOUW will enter into this agreement for a period of two (2) years.

The IFBWW and FNV BOUW will attest BALLAST NEDAM vis-à-vis state and international institutions and major private clients a particularly positive role as setting a good example of responsible corporate management, the yardstick of which is the implementation of this agreement.