

## UNI / OTE / OME-OTE Global Agreement

### New Global Agreement with OTE

On 26 June in Athens, Greece, UNI and OTE, the Greek Telecoms, Mobile and Internet Company, signed a global agreement to respect union rights. UNI and Greek affiliate the OME-OTE, which represents over 90% of the workforce, worked together to achieve this result. OME-OTE President, Panagiotis Kotronis co-signatory of the agreement, stated that the principles of union recognition, the right to organise, collective bargaining and social responsibility were taken for granted in Greece and expected these principles to be respected wherever the OTE company was open for business. OTE CEO Nikos Manasis stated that at the previous days OTE AGM he had committed the company to new principles of corporate governance where one key pillar was social partnership. Since the partial privatisation of OTE, the company has expanded into the Balkan region with a presence in several countries. Christos Economou of OME-OTE commented that the accord will mean a structured dialogue between the company and all unions concerned. This agreement is a first in Greece and UNI looks forward to working with affiliates to develop this partnership. The agreement is based on the ILO's core labour standards and includes the right to organise, employment, wages, health and safety, and working hours. Several paragraphs concern the implementation of the agreement including the creation of a monitoring group.

P. J. Jennings UNI General Secretary and Luis Neves Head of UNI Telecoms were co-signatories.

On 25 June OME-OTE concluded a two-year collective agreement with OTE after a hectic period of negotiations. In recent months UNI has entered global agreements with Carrefour and Telefonica.



OTE CEO Nikos Manasis and UNI General Secretary Philip Jennings signing the Global Agreement



George Skarpelis, Vice-President OTE; Panagiotis Kotronis, OME-OTE President; Nikos Manasis, OTE CEO; Philip Jennings UNI General Secretary; and Luis Neves, UNI Telecom

### THE GLOBAL AGREEMENT

#### PREAMBLE

This agreement is concluded by and between *Union Network International* (hereinafter UNI) representing trade unions OTE employees world wide, the *Federation of Greek Telecommunications Employees* (hereinafter OME-OTE), the principle bargaining union in Greece for OTE operations, and the *Hellenic Telecommunications Organisation* (hereinafter OTE) in order to set out the operating code of conduct for the parties to monitor the practical application of agreed principles. Those principles include:-

#### THE PARTIES COMMON RECOGNITION OF FUNDAMENTAL

## HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE COMMUNITY AND THE WORKPLACE

1. UNI and OTE and OME-OTE affirm their support for fundamental human right in the community. That is:-

### Employment is freely chosen

There shall be no use of forced labour or bonded labour (ILO Conventions 29 and 105)

### There is no discrimination in employment

All workers shall have equality of opportunity and treatment regardless of their ethnic origin, colour, gender, religion, political opinion, nationality, social origin or other distinguishing characteristics. Workers shall receive equal pay for work of equal value (ILO Conventions 100 and 111).

### Child labour is not used

Child labour shall not be used. Only workers above the age of 15 years or over the compulsory school-leaving age, if higher, shall be employed (ILO Convention 138).

Children under the age of 18 shall not perform work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children (ILO Convention 182)

2. UNI, OTE and OME-OTE affirm their support for fundamental human rights in the workplace. In that respect the company agrees to; comply with the ILO conventions on freedom of association and trade union rights, to recognize the right to organize and the right of trade unions to represent and negotiate on behalf of the workers, and to apply minimum standards in respect of wages and working conditions.

### Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected.

All workers shall have the right to form and join trade unions (ILO Convention 87). Where UNI affiliates represent the workers employed in companies owned by OTE – and its subsidiaries- the company shall recognize the right of unions to represent said workers in :-

- (a) Collective bargaining (ILO Convention 98)
- (b) All dispute settlement procedures
- (c) Negotiations and consultations in all matters affecting jobs and training
- (d) Where no trade union exists, the company shall adopt a positive and flexible policy in a way that does not prevent workers from organizing. The company shall also respect the right of trade unions to organize employees (ILO Convention 98)

### The right to represent workers

The company guarantees that workers representatives shall not be discriminated against and shall have access to workplaces to enable them to carry out their representation functions (ILO Convention 135 and Recommendation 143). It shall also allow unions access to organize workers and to distribute publicity, including by electronic means.

### Living wages are paid

Workers shall be paid wages and benefits for a standard working week that are at least as favourable as those established by national legislation or agreements, for work of the same character in the trade or industry concerned in the area where the work is carried out. No worker shall be paid less than the legal minimum wage and shall always be sufficient to meet basic needs of workers and their families and to provide some discretionary income. (ILO Conventions 94, 95 and 131).

Deductions from wages, unless permitted under national law, shall not be made in any circumstance without the

express permission of the worker concerned. All workers must be provided with clear information about wage conditions.

#### **Hours of work are not excessive**

Weekly hours of work shall be agreed with unions and shall, as a minimum, meet the requirements of appropriate national legislation, national agreements and industry standards (ILO Conventions 1, 47 and Recommendation No. 116). Overtime shall be voluntary wherever possible, shall not be demanded on a regular basis, shall not be a substitute for inadequate regular wages and shall always be compensated as provided by the Law.

### **THE PARTIES COMMON RECOGNITION OF THE NEED TO CONTRIBUTE TO DECENT CONDITIONS IN THE WORKPLACE AND THE COMMUNITY.**

3. Strict respect of standards applicable to the environment, security, health and safety at the workplace. That is:-

#### **Working conditions are decent**

A safe, hygienic and sustainable working environment shall be provided (ILO Convention 155).

Best occupational health and safety practice shall be promoted, safety equipment and training shall be provided and specific hazards such as asbestos shall be avoided wherever possible. These practices shall comply with ILO Conventions, Standards and Health and Safety Codes of Conduct (for example, ILO Convention 167, Safety and Health in Construction).

There shall be co-operation between the company and the workers and their representatives, for the observance of adopted measures to guarantee health and security. The workers and their representatives will receive the appropriate information and training in the area of occupational health and safety.

#### **Respect of others at work**

A workplace shall be provided that is free from physical abuse, the threat of physical abuse, unusual penalties or punishments, sexual or other forms of harassment and threats.

Workers and management should observe harmonious relations avoiding any behaviour that implies a lack or respect or discrimination towards other employees. Those that are responsible for a working team should fairly distribute tasks, both in the amount and the quality of that work.

#### **Education and training**

All workers shall be given the opportunity to participate in education and training programmes including training to improve workers skills to use new technology and equipment.

#### **Employer obligations are respected**

Employer's obligations to employees under labour or social security laws and regulations arising from the regular employment must be respected. The parties shall work towards creating permanent employment relationships.

#### **Respect for the environment**

UNI, OTE and OME-OTE share concerns about the impact that the operation of OTE's business may have

upon the natural and human environment and will commit to taking all efforts to ensuring that all environmental concerns are met.

## IMPLEMENTATION

In order to achieve the objectives and undertakings given in this document, OTE, UNI and the OME-OTE will engage in on going dialogue and will meet regularly, according to the following principles:

- (i) OTE management and a UNI delegation will meet once a year
- (ii) Further, ad hoc, OTE-UNI meetings may be convened with the agreement of both parties
- (iii) The joint annual meeting will last at least one day and will be preceded by a preparatory meeting of the UNI delegation of at least one day
- (iv) At the joint annual meeting OTE management will communicate general information in the form of an oral presentation and written documents regarding the company's world-wide activities and prospects and their impact on employees' interests. The information will include a forecast of the level and structure of employment in the various entities in which the company is involved. The information will also include a description and appraisal of the company's social policies
- (v) A discussion and exchange of views will follow the oral presentation by OTE management. Sufficient time will be set aside for this discussion.
- (vi) OTE and UNI will also agree on certain specific topics (e.g. trade union rights, equal opportunities, safety and health, training, new technologies) for discussion at the joint meetings, with a view to agreeing on initiatives to promote good standards and practice in all the entities in which the company is involved
- (vii) OTE agrees to give advance notification to UNI and hold an extraordinary meeting with a UNI delegation if, in the interval between the annual meetings, new developments occur which are likely to have a significant impact on employees' interests
- (viii) OTE, OME-OTE and UNI will each appoint a contact person, who will be responsible for making practical preparations for the meetings, including the advance distribution of background documents
- (ix) OTE, OME-OTE and UNI will agree on the languages in which documents are to be drafted and on the interpretation to be provided at joint and preparatory meetings
- (x) The costs arising out of the application of this agreement will be borne by OTE. These costs include the necessary travel, accommodation and other expenses of an agreed number of UNI delegates, the facilities needed to hold the joint and preparatory meetings, and the costs of the contact persons. Any UNI delegates who are OTE employees will receive their normal pay during their absence for the meetings

OTE and OME-OTE will provide information concerning this agreement in both written and verbal form at all work sites.

The parties shall be responsible for the administration and implementation of this agreement.

As OTE considers the respect for workers rights mentioned in this agreement are to be an element of progress in the industrial relations, the company will tell the companies that would like to provide contracts and services the need to adhere to these principles.

OTE considers the respect for workers rights to be a crucial element in sustainable development and will therefore seek to engage –to the extent it is possible- those contractors, subcontractors and suppliers which recognize and implement the social criteria listed above.

The parties agree that any difference arising from the interpretation or implementation of this agreement will be examined jointly for the purpose of making recommendations to the parties concerned. If necessary a monitoring group will be appointed that comprises two members from OTE and two members from UNI to examine and report to the President of OTE and the General Secretary of UNI.

**DURATION AND EVALUATION**

The duration of this agreement is five years, after which this agreement will be evaluated and may be prolonged for a new period.

Signed this\_day

Philip J. Jennings  
UNI General Secretary Chairman and CEO of OTE

Panagiotis Kotronis  
President of OME-OTE

Luis Neves  
Head of UNI-Telecom

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