

IndustriALL gives voice to workers at OECD Steel Committee

The latest meeting of the OECD Steel Committee was held 11-12th May in Paris, France. 150 delegates attended the Committee, which consists of 25 OECD Member Countries plus Associate members and also other invited Government Participants. The Committee established to provide a forum for governments, producers and unions to address the evolving challenges facing the steel industry and to identify political solutions to encourage open and transparent markets for steel.

The areas covered in the latest meeting included steel market developments, industry viability and competitiveness, trade policies, excess capacity. At the committee the IndustriALL Global Union representatives, Fernando Lopes AGS IndustriALL and Rob Johnston Industrial Director Community the union UK highlighted the importance of considering the impact on workers in addressing these issues.

In a written submission to the committee (and link) IndustriALL drew attention to workplace developments in the industry. Outlining the importance of giving workers and their unions a voice in the workplace. There is a wealth of literature demonstrating how workers having a voice and engagement are good for business.

Rob Johnston stated “that bad examples such as **Tata Steel UK** decision to close its pension scheme in the UK cast a shadow over the whole industry. Undermining its own internal values and undermining its claims to be the worlds most ethical Company”.

Equality also continued to be a major challenge within the Steel Industry where employers could do better. Opportunities for women varied from employer to employer and in particular the industry could do better in having more women in senior positions in the industry. In order to achieve this it is important to ensure that women are not under-utilised in the workplace, which is not only unjust but also unfair and a loss to the industry.

Fernando Lopes AGS IndustriALL highlighted the need to have “A proactive industrial policy to promote the continuous improvement of infrastructure is fundamental to increase the consumption of steel and to underpin employment security within the industry”.

