



Occupational Health & Safety Authority



Joint Press Release

Signing of Collective Bargaining Agreement

26.07.04

After months of marathon discussions and negotiations, consensus has been reached on the first Collective Agreement for the employees of the Occupational Health and Safety Authority (OHSA). The negotiations were carried out between representatives of the Authority, the Ministry for Education, Youth and Employment (previously the Ministry for Social Policy), Union Haddiema Magħqudin (UHM) and the Collective Bargaining Unit.

The formal signing of the Agreement took place this morning at the premises of UHM in Floriana. The Agreement covers a period of three years, commencing from 1 January 2004 until the end of December 2006. It includes general terms and conditions of employment such as hours of work, salaries, leave and disciplinary action, amongst others, and complement the various administrative provisions of the OHS Authority Act 2000.

Speaking during the event, Dr Mark Gauci, the Chief Executive Officer of OHSA said that discussions on the agreement started after UHM forwarded to the Authority a draft collective agreement in March of last year. Although there was a wide diversity of opinion about the various issues and the course that OHSA should chart on this matter, there was also wide agreement on the need to offer a suitable package of conditions for the Authority's co-workers.

'The negotiations were tough, initially with various points of contention, yet we were very pleased to note that they were always conducted in a gentlemanly manner. With the signing of this collective agreement, we have renewed confidence that this will result in a genuine ameliorated output from OHSA's employees,' Dr Gauci said.

'It is of great satisfaction that the Union Haddiema Magħqudin concluded this Collective Agreement from which many benefits are achieved especially better working conditions such as family friendly measures, insurance coverages and also financial packages', Jesmond Bonello, UHM's Public Entities Section Secretary said.