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**SOLVAY INVESTS EUR 55 MILION IN REDUCED ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION AND LOWER ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF ITS ELECTROLYTIC UNIT AT TAVAUX (F)**

*Launch of membrane-based electrolytic technology*

The Solvay Group announced its decision today to invest EUR 55 million at its Tavaux site in the Jura (France) for the conversion of part of its mercury-based electrolysis into one based on membranes. The new unit will be operational by the end of 2010.

The annual chlorine production capacity at the Tavaux plant will be maintained at the current level of 360,000 metric tonnes, but most of the chlorine production at the new Tavaux unit will be produced through membrane-based electrolysis. Chlorine made by Solvay is an intermediate product the Group put to full use downstream. At Tavaux, it will be used primarily to feed the fully integrated vinyl production line.

From an economic point of view, the conversion will allow a reduction in electricity consumption, always particularly high in the electrolytic sector. This investment in one of its most important production sites worldwide is another step in Solvay's strategy to further strengthen its competitive position in the area of electrochemistry.

In the context of continuously soaring energy prices, the Solvay Group had already announced its participation in the Exeltium consortium, ensuring long term electricity supply at competitive rates. Now this particular investment provides an additional guarantee as to the durability and the development of both the Tavaux site and Solvay's presence in France.

In addition, this investment will contribute to a further reduction of the environmental impact of the Tavaux site, even if the technologies currently in use already meet extremely tight regulations.

Sales of the Solvay Group in France amount to EUR 1.5 billion, with a workforce of more than 4,500 on all its sites, the main one being the Tavaux site. On average, the Solvay Group invests some EUR 100 million annually in its French sites, either into new projects or in order to maximize their competitiveness.

**SOLVAY** is an international chemical and pharmaceutical Group with headquarters in Brussels. It employs some 28,000 people in 50 countries. In 2007, its consolidated sales amounted to EUR 9.6 billion, generated by its three sectors of activity: Chemicals, Plastics and Pharmaceuticals. Solvay (Euronext: SOLB.BE - Bloomberg: SOLB.BB - Reuters: SOLBt.BR) is listed on the Euronext stock exchange in Brussels. Details are available at [www.solvay.com](http://www.solvay.com).

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