

**SOLVAY SCIENCE FOR INNOVATION 2010 CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON HOW SCIENCE CAN HELP DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY*****Nobel Prize Winners Peter Grünberg and Ada Yonath Address Solvay Researchers***

Lectures by Peter Grünberg (Nobel Prize Laureate in Physics, 2007) and Ada Yonath (Nobel Prize Laureate in Chemistry, 2009) today concluded a three-day Solvay Science for Innovation conference, which focused on *Sustainability or Chaos: will science (help) tackle the challenge?* The conference, which was the fourth of its kind organized within Solvay, mustered more than 150 of the Group's high level experts and researchers from Europe, the United States and Asia as well as some 25 representatives of the international scientific community.

The objective of the latest Solvay Science for Innovation conference was to provide an opportunity for the Solvay Group to exchange comprehensive and cohesive understanding on the relationships between energy, raw materials and purity (impact of natural resources), waste (e.g. new raw materials), improved process efficiencies, multi-scale physical in material and global uncertainties. These relationship understandings will help map out the best roads for the future.

Solvay's exploratory research in these fields currently includes projects focusing on:

- materials for a novel concept of printed organic non volatile electronic memories;
- bio-plasticizers for PVC and PVDC based on natural sustainable resources;
- anti reflective coatings for solar photovoltaic panels to increase energy efficiency;
- designing a mobile batch solar dryer for food products, such as fruit, fish, meat, herbs and medicinal crops for emerging countries lacking industrial infrastructures.

The Science for Innovation conferences foster scientific emulation and cross-fertilization between Solvay's worldwide research centers and between the Group's two sectors of activity, Chemicals and Plastics. They form part of Solvay's endeavor to become one of the global leaders in sustainable chemistry. Solvay also operates a New Business Development (NBD) unit, whose mission is to explore new technologies, products and markets, where Solvay's expertise could generate economical solutions for the major challenges of tomorrow's world. These are growing and ageing population, climate change, resources scarcity, new consumers (in particular in Asia), etc. NBD is busy developing new areas of potential growth, through a process of open and collaborative innovation. This approach is reflected in particular by partnerships and consortia with start-ups and research organizations.

NBD focuses on four platforms: renewable energies, printable organic electronics, nanotechnology and renewable chemistry. Recent developments include significant initiatives in the areas of printed organic electronics and fuel cells. Among the latter, Solvay is installing one of the largest demonstration proton exchange membrane fuel cells in the world in Solvay's plant in Antwerp, Belgium, and another demonstration fuel cell with a platinum-free cathode in Solvay's plant in Warrington, United Kingdom. Fuel cells generate electrical power out of a catalytic reaction of hydrogen with oxygen.

Solvay employs some 800 people in its 15 Research and Development centers, located in Europe, North America and Asia. The Group's total R&D investment in 2010 is expected to reach EUR 130 million. On average over the last three years, R&D contributed yearly to a competitiveness improvement of 8% of Recurrent EBIT (REBIT) and generated 10% of current new sales.

"Our strategy is to generate sustainable growth and to ensure competitiveness through innovation. In a context of sustainable development, this objective will rely on open innovation," said Jacques van Rijckevorsel, Member of the Executive Committee, General Manager of the Plastics Sector and Group Innovation Sponsor. "The Solvay Science for Innovation conferences illustrate the vitality and openness of our R&D activities, which are delivering very positive results," added Jean-Michel Mesland, Member of the Executive Committee, Group General Manager of Technology, Research & Procurement.

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*Ce communiqué de presse est également disponible en français - Dit persbericht is ook in het Nederlands beschikbaar*

The International Solvay Institutes for Physics and Chemistry are simultaneously hosting a 22<sup>nd</sup> Solvay Conference on Chemistry, from October 13 to October 17, 2010 in Brussels, on the topic of *Quantum Effects in Chemistry and Biology*. A public event with Rudolph Marcus, 1992 Nobel Prize in Chemistry and Wolfgang Wiltschko, 1994 Elliot Coues Award of the American Ornithologists' Union, is scheduled in this context on October 17. For further information, go to [www.solvayinstitutes.be](http://www.solvayinstitutes.be).

The Solvay Institutes and the Solvay Company have the same founder – Ernest Solvay – but are separate entities. When he created the Institutes and initiated the conferences which bear his name, Ernest Solvay sought to encourage pioneering fundamental research. In 1911, the very first *Conseil Solvay* assembled the most famous chemists and physicists of the day, including Marie Skłodowska-Curie, Albert Einstein, Max Planck, Ernest Rutherford, Henri Poincaré and Maurice de Broglie.

**SOLVAY** is an international industrial Group active in Chemistry. It offers a broad range of products and solutions that contribute to improving quality of life. The Group is headquartered in Brussels and employs about 17,000 people in 40 countries. In 2009, its consolidated sales amounted to EUR 8.5 billion. Solvay is listed on the NYSE Euronext stock exchange in Brussels (NYSE Euronext: [SOLB.BE](http://www.nyse.com/quote/NYSE:SOLB) - Bloomberg: [SOLB.BB](http://www.bloomberg.com/quote/SOLB:BB) - Reuters: [SOLBT.BR](http://www.reuters.com/quote/SOLBT:BR)). Details are available at [www.solvay.com](http://www.solvay.com).

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