

Brussels, 16 January 2012, at 8:30 am (Brussels time)

**SOLVAY AND AIR LIQUIDE TO FORM A WORLDWIDE FLUORINE GAS BUSINESS JOINT VENTURE FOR HIGH-TECH INDUSTRIES*****On-site fluorine production for flat panel display and silicon thin film photovoltaic industries to cut greenhouse gas emissions and increase productivity***

Solvay and Air Liquide announced today they have entered into an agreement to form a worldwide fluorine gas business joint venture. It will build, own and operate modular on-site fluorine cleaning gas units for the flat panel display and silicon thin film photovoltaic industries and thus offer these industries an economic, reliable and environmentally-friendly product for cleaning applications. Fluorine gas is a cleaning gas that has no global warming potential and enables the customers to increase their productivity.

This partnership builds on both companies strengths. Solvay brings its 45 years experience in running large-scale fluorine production and its raw materials supply chain and Air Liquide its global presence, infrastructure and industrial gas supply relationships with the leading electronics manufacturers. Establishment of the joint venture is subject to antitrust approval.

Vincent De Cuyper, Group General Manager of the Chemicals Sector and Member of the Executive Committee of Solvay said: "This partnership will help satisfy growing world demand for environmentally-friendly cleaning gases. The combination of market experience and know how from Air Liquide, the market leader in gases for the electronic industry, and Solvay's proprietary breakthrough modular technology, will enable our partnership to offer significant economic benefits to its customers and bring at the same time advantages for the environment".

François Darchis, Senior Vice-President and a member of Air Liquide's Executive Committee commented: "This major step will allow Air Liquide to expand its offer in the fast growing electronics market. Solvay brings its field-proven fluorine production technology and expertise. By developing this non-greenhouse cleaning solution alternative for our customers, Air Liquide reiterates its commitment to environmental preservation. High-Tech solutions and the Environment are two of the Air Liquide Group's growth drivers."

**Air Liquide** is the world leader in gases for industry, health and the environment, and is present in 80 countries with 43,600 employees. In 2010, the Group's revenues amounted to EUR 13.5 billion, of which more than 80% were generated outside France. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris Euronext stock exchange (compartment A) and is a member of the CAC 40 and Dow Jones Euro Stoxx 50 indexes.

**SOLVAY** is an international chemical Group committed to sustainable development with a clear focus on innovation and operational excellence. Its recent acquisition of specialty chemicals company **Rhodia** created a much larger player, which is realizing over 90% of its sales in markets where it is among the top 3 global leaders. Solvay offers a broad range of products that contribute to improving the quality of life and the performance of its customers in markets such as consumer goods, construction, automotive, energy, water and environment, and electronics. The Group is headquartered in Brussels, employs about 30,000 people in 55 countries and generated EUR 12 billion in sales (pro forma) in 2010. Solvay SA is listed on NYSE Euronext (**SOLB.BE** - Bloomberg: **SOLB.BB** - Reuters: **SOLBt.BR**).

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