Press Release

SOLVAY

Brussels, 26 April 2012, at 7:30 am

SOLVAY AND THE NATIONAL BIOETHANOL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY IN BRAZIL STRIKE DEAL TO JOINTLY DEVELOP BIO-BASED CHEMISTRY BASED ON SUGARCANE

Development of chemical routes to obtain high-added value molecules

Solvay announced today that Rhodia and the National Bioethanol Science and Technology Laboratory (CTBE) in Brazil have signed an agreement to develop chemical routes and processes to obtain molecules of a high added value from sugarcane biomass, in what is known as bio-based chemistry.

Under the agreement, research will be conducted at CTBE, backed by researchers from both parties, who will work together on the development of chemical blocks currently used in different applications and markets that the Solvay Group operates in, with a view to replacing non-renewable sources with biomass in these substances' production processes.

The head of research at CTBE, Maria Teresa Barbosa, says that the first two years of development of these technologies will be carried out on a laboratorial scale, followed by scale up efforts at CTBE's Process Development Pilot Plant. The pioneering project at CTBE in bio-based chemistry will also include computational simulations at the Virtual Sugarcane Bio-refinery (BVC).

The project will be supported by Brazil's state-owned development bank, the Banco Nacional do Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social - BNDES, which will provide BRL 7.0 million (EUR 2.8 million) over three years.

Besides this backing, Rhodia will also contribute its expertise in the chemical area for the development of new routes to high added-value molecules. Thomas Canova, director of Research & Development at Rhodia for Latin America, says the partnership has brought together two organizations that have a strong commitment to the comprehensive development of bio-based chemistry in Brazil, one of the country's strategic axes for sustainable growth. "This initiative combines the group's belief in the growing importance of the chemistry based on renewable raw materials, and our focus on value creation", adds Canova.

CBTE, the National Bioethanol Science and Technology Laboratory, is a research, development and innovation (R,D&I) institute in the sugarcane-based ethanol area. Open to external users, the CTBE was founded to contribute to Brazil's continued leadership in bioethanol production, seeking answers to scientific and technological challenges throughout the production cycle. Our scientists and technicians see sugarcane as a source of carbon that can be efficiently transformed into fuels and the most diverse products for the food, chemical, and pharmaceutical industries, among others, consolidating the mills as bio-refineries. About 9,000 m^2 of built-on area, divided into laboratories and an industrial unit, are used for scientific experiments and the scaling of processes of interest to the sugarcane energy industry. This infrastructure adds to the scientific efforts made in Brazil to obtain a fuel that is both highly productive and makes maximum use of the raw material and sustainability of the sector.

Rhodia, a member of the Solvay Group, is an international specialty chemicals company resolutely committed to sustainable development.

SOLVAY is an international chemical Group committed to sustainable development with a clear focus on innovation and operational excellence. It generates over 90% of its sales in markets where it is among the top three 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 29,000 people in 55 countries and generated EUR 12.7 billion in net sales in 2011. Solvay SA (**SOLB.BE**) is listed on **NYSE Euronext** in Brussels and Paris (Bloomberg: **SOLB.BB** - Reuters: **SOLBt.BR**).

For further details, please contact:

SOLVAY

LAMIA NARCISSE
Corporate Press Officer
+33 1 53 56 59 62

ERIK DE LEYE
Corporate Press Officer
+32 2 264 1530

MARIA ALCON-HIDALGO
Head of Investor Relations
+33 1 53 56 64 89

PATRICK VERELST
Head of Investor Relations
+32 2 264 1540

Rhodia
ROBERTO CUSTÓDIO
+55 11 3284 4322

CBTE
LUIZ PAULO JUTTEL
+55 19 3518-3119

Ce communiqué est également disponible en français – Dit persbericht is ook in het Nederlands beschikbaar