

Solvay and AREVA join their expertise in the development of new applications for thorium

Brussels, December 20, 2013 --- Solvay and AREVA have signed an agreement to develop new applications for the use of thorium, an element that is abundantly present in the earth's crust and part of rare earth elements or uranium.

The agreement aims to define the conditions ensuring the responsible management of thorium. It includes the deployment of a R&D program to study, amongst others, the use of thorium as a potential fuel in nuclear plants, as a complement to fuels using uranium and plutonium.

Through the extraction of rare earth elements from Solvay and AREVA's uranium extraction activities, both companies have inventories of thorium in France.

Olivier Wantz, Senior Executive Vice President AREVA, Mining Business Group, said: *"We are very pleased with this partnership which is perfectly in line with our sustainable development policy. This will allow us to offer additional options within the nuclear cycle in the future."*

"This agreement highlights our commitment to ensure sustainable management of natural resources. It should open the door to develop this element and provide new opportunities for collaboration," said Xavier Houzard, EVP Environmental Rehabilitation at Solvay and in charge of the development of thorium.

As an international chemical group, [SOLVAY](#) assists industries in finding and implementing ever more responsible and value-creating solutions. The Group is firmly committed to sustainable development and focused on innovation and operational excellence. Solvay serves diversified markets, generating 90% of its turnover in activities where it is one of the top three worldwide. The group is headquartered in Brussels, employs about 29,000 people in 55 countries and generated 12.4 billion euros in net sales in 2012. Solvay SA ([SOLB.BE](#)) is listed on [Nyse Euronext](#) in Brussels and Paris (Bloomberg: [SOLB:BB](#) - Reuters: [SOLB.BR](#)).

AREVA supplies high-tech solutions for power generation with less CO₂. Its expertise and unwavering insistence on safety, security, transparency and ethics are setting the standard, and its responsible development is anchored in a process of continuous improvement.

Ranked first in the global nuclear power industry, AREVA's unique integrated offering to utilities covers every stage of the fuel cycle, nuclear reactor design and construction, and related operating services. The group is also expanding in renewable energies – wind, bioenergy, solar and energy storage – to become a European leader in this sector.

With these two major offers, AREVA's 47,000 employees are helping to supply ever safer, cleaner and more economical energy to the greatest number of people.

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