



European Economic and Social Committee

Workers' Group

Statement

The president of the Workers' Group, Georges Dassis, expresses his solidarity with the Turkish workers

The coal mine disaster in Soma, Turkey, has reached an alarming scale as more than two hundred miners were killed from carbon monoxide fumes produced by the fire that was the cause of the accident. Moreover, the situation of the workers still trapped in the mine is extremely worrying.

The size of this disaster and the way in which it was caused reminds us of the coal tragedy of Marcinelle (Charleroi) in August 1956, during which 256 miners lost their life. That disaster resulted in the European Coal and Steel Community intervening decisively in order to ameliorate the safety and work conditions, especially in the carbon mines but also in all extractive industries.

The president of the Workers' Group of the European Economic and Social Committee, Georges Dassis, expresses his solidarity with the Turkish workers and his sympathy for the families of the victims and of the miners who are still in danger. He calls on the European institutions to take immediate actions of effective solidarity in favour of the affected families and to propose the provision of European technicians to aid in rescuing the surviving miners.

He invites them also to take measures encouraging the transfer of knowledge acquired by years of work, research and innovation in the European mines, in order to ameliorate the level of security of the coal mines in Turkey and in other third countries which have similar problems (Ukraine, Russia and China), so that such tragedies can be avoided in the future.

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