PRESS RELEASE

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SOLVAY TO BUILD WORLD-CLASS EPICEROL® PLANT IN THAILAND

Innovative green chemistry technology to serve strong demand for epichlorohydrin

Solvay announces today that it has decided to build a world-class plant in Map Ta Phut (Thailand) for the production of epichlorohydrin on the basis of the Epicerol® process, its proprietary technology with enhanced environmental performance. Pending relevant regulatory approval, the new plant is scheduled to be operational at the end of 2009, with an annual production capacity of 100,000 metric tons, enabling Solvay to provide a fast response to the rapidly growing demand for epichlorohydrin in Asia.

The demand for epichlorohydrin has significantly outpaced the growth of the world economy in recent years and is currently expanding by more than 20% per annum in China. Epichlorohydrin is an essential feedstock for the production of epoxy resins, increasingly used in applications in the electronics, automotive, aerospace and windmill sectors.

Epicerol® is a novel process developed by Solvay, based on the transformation of glycerine, which is a renewable by-product of the biodiesel industry. After a successful start-up in April 2007, this process with greatly enhanced environmental performance is under optimization in Tavaux, France, in an industrial plant fed with glycerine derived from rapeseed oil.

"Solvay is moving fast. We are leveraging the technological advantage of our Epicerol® innovation and its successful implementation at industrial scale in France," commented Filipe Constant, Managing Director of the Strategic Business Unit Electrochemistry and Derived Specialties, Solvay. "Asia is quickly becoming the world's largest market for Epichlorohydrin," he said. "We will introduce an environmentally sustainable technology into this booming continent, using a renewable resource as raw material," added Constant.

Epicerol® is covered by more than 20 patent applications issued by Solvay. The process was honoured by an Innovation Award at the 2007 American Oil Chemists' Society (AOCS) Annual Meeting in Quebec City. It has also been awarded the Pierre Potier trophy in France for "Innovation in chemistry benefiting the environment", delivered by the French Ministry of the Industry in 2006.

SOLVAY is an international chemical and pharmaceutical Group with headquarters in Brussels. It employs some 29,000 people in 50 countries. In 2006, its consolidated sales amounted to EUR 9.4 billion, generated by its three sectors of activity: Chemicals, Plastics and Pharmaceuticals. Solvay (Euronext: SOLB.BE - Bloomberg: SOLB.BB - Reuters: SOLBt.BR) is listed on the Euronext stock exchange in Brussels. Details are available at www.solvay.com

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

Notes to the Editors:

Epichlorohydrin is one of the most useful members of the epoxide family of compounds, its major use being the manufacture of epoxy resins, which have a large number of applications in the car, housing, boating and leisure industries. Other applications include the reinforcement of paper (used for instance in the food industry to manufacture tea bags) and water purification. Epichlorohydrin is traditionally derived indirectly by reacting propylene with chlorine.

The **Epicerol®** process developed by Solvay allows the direct synthesis of dichloropropanol, an intermediate product, from glycerine and hydrochloric acid. A second step – dehydrochlorination – generates the final product, epichlorohydrin. The entire process is marked by a lower specific consumption of chlorine and water, consequently reducing chlorinated effluents. Solvay developed the glycerine-based process described in earlier scientific literature and made its industrialization possible thanks to the creation of an entirely new class of catalysts, among other innovations.

Glycerine is the main by-product of biodiesel production, with the generation of approximately 100 kg of glycerine for every 1000 kg of biodiesel.