

Wednesday, 20 January 2010

## **STATEMENT FROM BOUYGUES BÂTIMENT ILE-DE-FRANCE CONCERNING THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY CONSTRUCTION SITE**

At a press conference concerning the renovation of the French National Assembly annex at 101, rue de l'Université in Paris organised by various associations and trade unions on 13 January, several workers "without papers" mentioned their working conditions on the site.

Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France has carefully checked the records of each person who spoke out in public and would like to make known the following information:

- **Mahamadou Doucouré** was a manual labourer for temporary employment agency Activ' Interim on the site between October and November 2007.
- **Traoré Makan** was a welder for temporary employment agency Synergie on the site between July and November 2007.
- **Sako Hassama** was a manual labourer for temporary employment agency Planet Inter on the site between July 2006 and May 2008. Contrary to his statement, he did not in any way work as a framework carpenter on the site, a job for which he was not in any case qualified.

The first two worked for Adec, a subcontractor, and the third for Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France. All these workers' papers (residence permit, health insurance card, certificate from the prefecture, medical certificate) were checked by Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France. They were perfectly valid for the entire length of their assignment. The company's due diligence cannot be questioned in any way.

The three appeared at the press conference under other names: Mahamadou Doucouré as N'Fahli Doucouré, Traoré Makan as Ousmane Touré and Sako Hassama as Sacko Bilali. This would suggest that they had used a fraudulent identity with their employer.

Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France would like to emphasise that the men were paid in accordance with the legal hourly rate imposed by the collective agreement for the building industry according to their level of qualification. Their working conditions, like those of all other workers on the site, whether employed by Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France, by subcontractors or by temporary employment agencies, complied fully with the French Labour Code.

Again, Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France would like to recall the steps it takes to ensure that illegal workers are not employed on its construction sites:

- it applies very strict control procedures;
- it works with prefectures to ensure that the papers of all the foreign workers it hires are in order;
- it concludes framework agreements with temporary employment agencies containing specific clauses designed to ensure that the manpower provided is legal;
- it provides all site workers (employees, subcontractors and temporary workers) with a badge that includes a photograph taken by Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France and checked against the photograph on the official papers. The badge gives access to the site but does not in any way constitute proof that a worker belongs to Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France.

Despite all these measures, Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France does not have the means to detect certain types of fraud, including identity fraud, or false papers. Only the services of the State have the powers and resources to do so.

Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France also wishes to emphasise that it has nothing whatsoever to gain, especially in financial terms, from directly or indirectly employing illegal workers. The company scrupulously complies with working hours requirements and wage levels in the industry and pays all its taxes and social security contributions. Hiring illegal workers would leave the company liable to severe penalties. For information, several inspections are carried out on Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France construction sites every week by the police, the social security authorities and the labour inspectorate.

If the National Assembly decides to set up a parliamentary commission of inquiry, Bouygues Bâtiment Ile-de-France will be at its disposal. The company would like the terms of reference of such a commission to be extended to all professions in the construction industry.

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