

Nieuwsbrief – Maersk Line Netherlands BV

28 februari 2023

WHAT IS ACTUALLY GOING ON AT MLNL?

MLNL's letter of 16 February 2023 to MLNL employees makes this clear.

This is evident from the following lines of their letter. The text in italics and bold is from MLNL. Our response is below it.

"It is about joining a union that truly listens to the wishes of all MLNL employees and will represent their wishes, not their own national agenda."

We are a union that listens to its members. MLNL wants to determine what unions should include in their proposal letter and MLNL wants the union to do the same for non-members.

"In addition, MLNL also wants to raise other important issues, which has not been possible with FNV/CNV so far."

If MLNL also wants to talk about other issues, they should just include it in their proposal letter. Then we will discuss that with our members and at the negotiating table.

"FNV is trying to give the impression that it is only about that one issue, which is not the case."

It was clearly communicated during the 2 sessions by FNV Havens and CNV Vakmensen that maintaining purchasing power at the moment due to high inflation actually swallows up all bargaining space. The workers present understood this all too well.

"In recent years, it has been very difficult to get a collective agreement in time. The fact that only a small percentage of MLNL employees are represented by unions is a major factor, in our opinion."

In recent years, there were three unions at the collective agreement table, one of which was MPN. So MLNL employees were well represented and MPN members were also disappointed with the final outcome of the CLA talks. All three unions/members decided not to sign the CLA. So it is unfair of MLNL to now blame FNV Havens and CNV Vakmensen for this.

"Since after the FNV sessions at our office, many workers joined another external union, MLNL is now in contact with this other union."

First of all, there were no FNV sessions but this session was still organised by FNV Havens, CNV Vakmensen and MPN. Since there was no follow-up to take over the work of the MPN framework group, MPN was no longer formally present.

MPN's appeal to join FNV Havens or CNV Vakmensen actually generated membership growth at these unions.

Besides, it is rather strange for an employer to know that many workers have joined an external union.

"On top of that, the union in question works with an independent external agency to gauge the opinions of all employees, which will be an important consideration for MLNL given the current union coverage."

So MLNL will soon determine what will or will not be agreed with unions in the collective agreement based on a survey of all workers.

Well at FNV Havens and CNV Vakmensen, the members ultimately determine the stakes of the CLA talks and the members judge the outcome by referendum. And not an external independent study whose client is a union of which our members are not members.

"If this means that the CLA will not be ready on 1 April, MLNL will still ensure application of the globally determined percentage salary increase. If necessary, retroactive changes will be implemented at a later date."

The data proposals have been rejected in advance by MLNL. This is very unfortunate and incomprehensible. We have made these data proposals for a reason. We do so because we also have other work to do and our schedules are largely already full. Of course, it may also be MLNL's intention to invite us shortly in advance in the hope that we cannot make it. And then it becomes increasingly likely that a repeat performance will take place. So that means that by 1 April 2023, a unilaterally determined wage increase will be implemented by MLNL as it did last time. Reference is made to the globally determined rate of salary increase. Not everywhere in the world inflation is of the same level. We estimate that MLNL will not go further than 6% or 7% structurally and a one-off bonus of €1500 gross. So that will then mean a sharp decline in your purchasing power.

And all this because MLNL is not prepared to submit a letter of proposals for the negotiations because they want another union at the table that listens to the boss. And that MLNL is not prepared to seriously start doing something about your loss of purchasing power. We have made concrete proposals for that. There are several possibilities.

On 8 March 2023, Niek Stam of FNV Havens will meet with union De Unie. FNV Havens and CNV Vakmensen have no problems at all if De Unie comes to the CLA table as a third union. As long as the unions are representative on the basis of member numbers and not on the basis of a study by an external agency for which a union is the client.

A trade union stands for its members and for maintaining purchasing power.

We hope the text of MLNL and our response to it will give you enough information to make the right choices later.

At Maersk's shareholders' meeting in Copenhagen, we will certainly go and denounce the current state of affairs to Maersk's big bosses and its shareholders.

We will keep you informed.

With kind regards,

Niek Stam
Bestuurder FNV Havens

Sanne Koevoets
Bestuurder CNV Vakmensen