

## ***BT Group and Connect Union Alliance***

A ground-breaking deal was signed between **BT Group plc** (formerly British Telecommunications plc) and communications **Union Connect** to protect the jobs of workers when off shoring and outsourcing work.

Under the agreement, which covers managerial and professional grades, BT had promised to ensure that no compulsory redundancies will occur if jobs are redeployed. The company said it will consult with the union prior to any decisions being taken.

"We believe this is the first agreement of its kind and it sets an admirable standard," said Adrian Askew, Connect general secretary.

The partnership deal reflects a change in attitude from BT's unions, which threatened strike action earlier this year when the firm announced it would be opening two Indian call centers employing 2,200 people.

Delegates at the TUC conference voted through a motion from Connect that stated: "It could be dangerous to respond to employer initiatives with arguments that could be misconstrued as arguing for 'British jobs for British workers'." It was agreed that instead unions must "protect members at home and ensure compliance with decent labor standards abroad".

Employment minister Gerry Sutcliffe said: "It shows that, by unions and management working together, the issue can be handled in a manner that is acceptable for the workforce in the UK and internationally."

### **Reference:**

People Management. (2003). BT strikes landmark partnership.

### **CITE THIS AS:**

YouSigma. (2007). "BT Group and Connect Union Outsourcing Agreement." From <http://www.yousigma.com>.