PRESS RELEASE

Recent BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition in Dubai (17 - 20 May 2015)

E-Scrap Committee:

E-scrap opportunities "waiting to be tapped"

Brussels, 26 May 2015

Business opportunities in different parts of Asia were highlighted during the BIR E-Scrap Committee meeting in Dubai on May 19, which was chaired by Thomas Papageorgiou of Anamet Recycling Industry SA in Greece.

Providing a status report on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) in the Arab countries of the Middle East, Fares Al-Mutairi of Saudi Arabia's Al-Qaryan Group contended that many of them had very few or no proper recycling facilities focusing on e-waste, most of which was "exported to Asia and Europe for recycling by private organisations". Saudi Arabia was one of the largest e-waste generators in the region but, as yet, had no comprehensive regulations to address e-waste management. "There are numerous private businesses that focus on various types of recycling, but not that much on e-waste," he stated. And for these Arab countries as a whole, "there are business opportunities for developing facilities and technology transfer from developed nations in order to improve e-waste management in the region", he concluded.

According to research from Technavio, India's e-scrap market should witness a compound annual growth rate of more than 26% compared to a global average of nearer 14%, it was noted in the Indian market report from Surendra Borad Patawari of Gemini Corporation NV in Belgium. "It's an opportunity waiting to be tapped," he added.

Commenting on his own domestic market, Dr Steve Wong of the China Scrap Plastics Association spotlighted the use of automation for recycling the scrap plastics contained in

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WEEE. At the same time, the Chinese government had cracked down on many smaller operators because they lacked appropriate environmental systems.

In a submitted report on the American market, John Shegerian of Electronic Recyclers International, Inc. noted figures from the US Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries that suggested the domestic electronics recycling industry was valued at more than US$ 20 billion and employed more than 45,000 people either directly or indirectly. However, the collection infrastructure for residential used electronic products remained "a patchwork" owing to the range of laws passed at state level rather than a national approach. "There are 25 states with formalised take-back programmes - but no two programmes are the same in their structure," he said.

The report went on to describe the proper management and recycling of CRTs as "probably the biggest short-term challenge facing the US electronics recycling industry", with estimates that nearly half of all households still owned at least one CRT.

Guest speaker Klaus Hieronymi of Hewlett-Packard warned of major repercussions for electronics recycling in 15-plus years from now owing to a move towards greater use of plastics and glass fibre, resulting in "almost no copper cables" and "no precious metals within processors". In other words, he said, there would "not be the value you are used to today".

In her guest presentation on IBM's product end-of-life management programme, Andrea Sarudi underlined the importance to her company of monitoring legislation and of advocacy. By knowing and understanding the legislative requirements of each country, crucial information could be passed along the chain to IBM's design and operations teams, she pointed out.

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