

## PRESS RELEASE

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### *Recent BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition in Shanghai (27-29 May 2013)*

#### **General Assembly: Glowing tribute to BIR's "mastermind" and "perfect diplomat"**

Brussels, 3 June 2013

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The end of an era was reached in Shanghai as Francis Veys attended his final BIR Convention as the world organisation's Director General. He steps down from his post on August 31 this year and will be succeeded by BIR's current General Manager Alexandre Delacoux, who joined the Brussels-based body in 2012.

Mr Veys' contribution to BIR over the course of 38 years, including more than three decades as the head of the Brussels secretariat, drew rich praise from a succession of speakers in Shanghai, including a heartfelt vote of thanks from BIR's re-elected World President Björn Grufman at the General Assembly on May 28. "He has always been the man behind the scenes and not the diva in the spotlight - the mastermind behind the organisation as it is today", Mr Grufman told attendees.

Among Mr Veys' many skills, he had been "a perfect diplomat" and a "multi-tasker" who had represented the recycling industry "in a proactive way" and had "chosen his staff well", according to Mr Grufman. Under the Veys stewardship, BIR's membership had effectively tripled.

In response, the outgoing Director General listed all of the BIR Presidents whom it had been his "pleasure and honour to serve". He also directed a special thank-you to his "super team" at the Brussels secretariat and to his family. Although relinquishing his role as Director General, Mr Veys will continue to work with BIR in an advisory capacity, notably for the planning of its Conventions.

Another of the recycling industry's leading lights was honoured at the BIR General Assembly in Shanghai, with a presentation being made to Ma Hongchang, who until recently was Vice-Secretary General of the China Nonferrous Metals Industry Association Recycling Metal Branch (CMRA). Praised by Mr Grufman for his instrumental role in the development of stronger links between BIR and China, Mr Ma envisaged a "bright future" for CMRA/BIR co-operation.

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**BIR – REPRESENTING THE FUTURE LEADING RAW MATERIAL SUPPLIERS**

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Also at the General Assembly, BIR Treasurer Ranjit S. Baxi confirmed that the world organisation had recorded “healthy” financial results in 2012 despite the difficult economic conditions. Earlier, in his role as President of the BIR Paper Division, Mr Baxi had presented its latest Papyrus prize to one of Asia’s most prominent and influential businesswomen: Ms Cheung Yan, Chairlady and founder of the world’s largest recovered paper-based paper manufacturer, the Nine Dragons Group. In accepting the prize, which recognises her contribution to paper recycling and to building strong supply chain partnerships, she described recyclers as “the protectors of the environment”.

This award ceremony was followed by BIR’s Keynote Session at which guest speaker Chandran Nair, CEO of the Global Institute for Tomorrow, argued that the 6bn Asians who would be inhabiting the planet by the year 2050 could not aspire to the lifestyles of the Western World’s current middle class because sufficient resources would not be available. “We need to look at things very differently,” he told delegates. This would be “a century of austerity” in which economic activity would need to become subservient to protecting natural systems and in which resource pricing would become a “core political debate”.

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