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## *Recent BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition in Rome (30 May – 1 June 2012)*

### *General Assembly.*

#### **2011 signals “a great success” for recycling industry**

**Brussels, 4 June 2012**

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2011 was “the year in which the world realised that you cannot keep borrowing money forever - someday, you must pay it back”, said BIR World President Björn Grufman of Sweden-based Metallvärden AB in addressing the BIR’s General Assembly in Rome. And it was also the year in which the recycling industry achieved “a great success”, he proclaimed.

“After decades of lobbying by the European BIR daughter associations EFR and Eurometrec, we were finally given the possibility within Europe of extracting our end products from the waste regime,” he explained. “End-of-waste criteria have already been introduced for iron, steel and aluminium scrap, and the industry’s efforts to secure a similar result for copper and recovered paper are well under way.”

According to Mr Grufman, the global recycling industry “must be allowed the scope to develop - and with a healthy measure of profitability - in order to continue to make its important contribution to the sustainable society of our future”. And he added: “We shall make BIR *the* natural voice of the industry. We shall continue to develop our Conventions as the best networking opportunities available to the industry. We shall provide our membership with accurate and highly useful information. And above all, we shall continue to support our members wherever our help is needed.”

Mr Grufman confirmed that the Rome Convention proved to be highly successful, attracting more than 1300 delegates and over 300 accompanying persons from some 60 countries. He also noted

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

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that, since the previous General Assembly in May 2011, the BIR had welcomed into membership some 93 companies and two national associations (from China and Japan).

Having been appointed to the role on an interim basis in 2011, Ranjit Baxi of J & H Sales International in the UK, who was officially installed as BIR's Treasurer at the Rome Convention, confirmed that a financial surplus had been achieved by the world organisation last year.

The BIR General Assembly was followed by a Keynote Session presentation from John Authers, Senior Investment Analyst at The Financial Times where he serves as the newspaper's main commentator on international markets. He identified Spain as a "pivotal country" in the current Euro-zone crisis, suggesting that it is "too big to be allowed to leave the Euro" and "too big for current rescue funds". He concluded: "It is the single most important risk. It cannot be allowed to crash."

According to Mr Authers, the odds favour a Greek exit from the Euro-zone at some point - but he did not expect this to happen in 2012.

Highlighting the "drastic imbalance" which has developed between the US dollar and the Euro, Mr Authers argued that a return to balance would adversely affect the USA and emerging markets but that the alternative - a disorderly collapse of the Euro - would hit them even harder. He remained "tentatively optimistic" about prospects for the USA so long as the Euro-zone works through its problems and China achieves a "soft landing" for its own economy.

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