

BIR is the international trade association of the recycling industries. Around 70 countries are represented through their national trade associations and individual companies which are involved in recycling. BIR comprises four commodity divisions: iron and steel, non ferrous metals, paper and textiles, and has committees dealing with stainless steel and special alloys, plastics and rubber. BIR's primary goals are to promote recycling and recyclability, thereby conserving natural resources, protecting the environment and facilitating free trade of secondary raw materials.

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Brussels, 30<sup>th</sup> October 2009**

### **BIR Autumn Round-Table Sessions** **Amsterdam, 26-27 October 2009**

#### ***Non Ferrous Metals Division:*** ***Industry on a better course***

Compared to the BIR 2008 Autumn Convention, a far greater measure of optimism permeated the latest Non-Ferrous Metals Round-Table in Amsterdam, with divisional President Robert Stein of US-based Alter Trading expressing the hope that “we’ve seen the worst of what the world has to give us”. Although some companies have “vanished” and many have “lost a lot of money”, the industry for the most part “is on a far better course than we were last autumn”.

Having highlighted the boost provided by governments’ financial stimuli and strong demand from developing nations, Mr Stein continued: “As restocking of finished non-ferrous products takes place, as the automotive industries around the world improve, as delayed construction projects are rejuvenated and people go back to their jobs, I think we can look forward to sustainable improvement in our businesses.” However, he also identified “more caution” in the marketplace as well as increased recognition among buyers that sellers require financial performance guarantees.

Guest speaker Michael Widmer, Metals Strategist with Banc of America Securities-Merrill Lynch in the UK, envisaged potential for a “relatively healthy rebound in GDP growth” and an improvement in metals demand next year, not least because many government stimulus packages will roll over into 2010. He ventured an average copper price for next year of US\$ 7000 per tonne.

But fellow guest speaker Günter Kirchner, Secretary General of the Organisation of European Aluminium Refiners and Remelters (OEA), confessed that he is “not so sure the bad times are really over”. However, he also expressed certainty that, for the long term, recovery of aluminium from scrap will increase.

A massive leap in international aluminium scrap flows - from 427,200 tonnes in 1995 to an estimated 2.8m tonnes in 2007 - was identified by Mr Kirchner, whose presentation also included a call for a casting alloys pricing system that provides a stable relationship between aluminium alloys and scrap which, he said, is currently “missing”.

In a review of recent BIR International Trade Council activities, its Chairman Robert Voss of Voss International in the UK outlined the efforts made by BIR, with the help of BIR ambassador in India Ikbāl Nathani, to ensure a smooth flow of scrap into India in response to the country’s proposed import measures. He also indicated that, for companies wishing to register to supply scrap to China, the country’s General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine (AQSIQ) wants all new applicants to be certified to ISO 9001 or equivalent. However, a recent communications from AQSIQ insinuates that this requirement might not apply to those companies looking to renew their registrations.

In addition, Mr Voss referred to the opening-up of a “channel of communication” with the credit insurance sector which could eventually lead to the development of a policy tailored to the entire scrap industry.

The meeting in Amsterdam also featured a review of latest non-ferrous scrap market conditions around the world from divisional board member Dhawal Shah of Metco Marketing in India. He pointed to “doubts” over the strength of domestic demand in China and, in particular, to the “rather sombre” mood pervading the non-ferrous market in the south of the country. Meanwhile, non-ferrous trading volumes in the USA have shrunk to around 50% of the level of last year’s highs, he added.

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