

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Brussels, 31 October 2007

BIR Warsaw Round-Table Sessions

Tyres Committee: ***Cement industry leading consumer*** ***of used tyres in EU***

Latest figures from the European Tyre & Rubber Manufacturers' Association (ETRMA) reveal that some 87% of the EU-27's used tyres were subjected to some form of treatment last year compared to nearer 84% in 2005, the BIR Tyres Committee was informed in Warsaw by its Chairman Barend Ten Bruggencate of the Netherlands.

More than 34% of the total was directed into material recovery and 31.6% into energy recovery, while only 13.1% was consigned to disposal or some "unknown" fate. In 1994, landfill had consumed 62% of the EU's scrap tyres while material and energy recovery had commanded respective shares of just 6% and 11%, Mr Ten Bruggencate reminded delegates.

One of the leading consumers of the EU's used tyres is the cement industry. Indeed, Austria imports significant volumes of tyres from Slovakia to feed its own cement kilns, such that Slovakia is now falling short of satisfying its own domestic demand, he went on to say.

In a wide-ranging market review which covered the EU's REACH chemicals policy as well as the links between tyres and road safety/cleaner environmental requirements, Mr Ten Bruggencate also drew attention to the on-going dispute between Brazil and

the EU over the former's import restrictions covering retreaded and used tyres. The South American country has argued that these tyres have a shorter life-span than new ones and provide breeding grounds for disease-carrying mosquitoes. For its part, the EU contends that Brazil has taken these measures in order to protect its domestic tyre producers and has called on the World Trade Organization to reconsider its "extremely narrow" condemnation of the restrictions.

At the same time, Brazil has issued an edited version of the revised technical guidelines on environmentally sound management of used tyres in which it argues that there is currently no safe and long-lasting solution for disposal of large volumes of scrap tyres. The Basel Convention has decided to set up an international working group - led by Brazil - to prepare a revised version of the guidelines by the end of August 2008.

According to Mr Ten Bruggencate, some exporting nations fear the action taken by Brazil will spread to other developing countries where mosquito-related diseases are a point of concern.

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