

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition Athens, 21-23 May 2007**

#### **General Assembly:** **New BIR President outlines some of his priorities**

The Bureau of International Recycling (BIR) will strive to affirm its role as the world recycling organisation by “responding to the needs of developing countries” and by helping them to “catch up” in recycling terms. So said Dominique Maguin of Veolia Propreté France Recycling shortly after being confirmed as the new World President of BIR at the body's latest Spring Convention in Athens.

BIR and its members should represent “a pillar of excellence” and should look to make best use of its huge experience, he said. “Who could deny the usefulness of our operations in producing indispensable raw materials?” he asked a crowded auditorium at the Athens Hilton.

Mr Maguin has spent more than 30 years in the recycling industry. He served as President of the French recycling federation FEDEREC for nine years, President of the European Paper Recycling Association for two years, and President of the BIR Paper Division for seven years. He said it was a “great honour” to be elected World President of BIR during what was an “extraordinary era” for the recycling industry.

Outgoing World President Fernando Duranti of Leghe & Metalli International SRL of  
BIR

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Italy was unable to attend the Athens Convention on doctor's orders. In a message read out by BIR Director General Francis Veys, he thanked everyone within the organisation - including members - for their support during his four years in office. In reviewing this period, he expressed particular pride in the development of the organisation's Young Traders Group and in the growing success of BIR Conventions.

Convention Committee Chairman Robert Voss of UK-based Voss International confirmed that the Athens event was BIR's most successful ever in that it had attracted 1061 delegates and some 400 accompanying persons. The organisation hoped to welcome His Royal Highness Prince Albert to its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations in Monte-Carlo next May, he added.

The General Assembly in Athens also boasted an illustrious guest - the city's Mayor, Nikitas Kaklamanis. Through a number of initiatives, Athens is aiming to increase its collection of recyclables to 1kg per citizen per week. However, Mr Kaklamanis recognised that such progress required participation and education. "Recycling starts inside our heads," he declared. "Recycling is the only environmentally correct method of going forward." Anticipating forthcoming elections in Greece, the Mayor of Athens then called on all political parties to propose specific recycling initiatives as part of their campaigns.

BIR was able to report success on a number of other fronts at the General Assembly. Treasurer Anthony Bird of the UK-based Bird Group of Companies revealed "the best financial results ever achieved in the history of our organisation". A key factor in this excellent financial performance was the "remarkable" 25% increase in BIR membership last year. Membership Committee Chairman Michael Lion of Sims Group confirmed that the world body now counted 683 members (as of May 2 this year), including 43 national associations. BIR members were now to be found in a total of 67 countries, thus cementing the organisation's role as "the world spokesbody for the recycling industry", he said.

Andy Wahl of Newell Recycling of Atlanta Inc., USA, who is Chairman of BIR's Communications Committee, confirmed that the body's website was in the process of being revamped and that consideration was being given to the launch of a regular Ferrous World Mirror.

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