



**BIR**

Bureau of International Recycling

BIR is the international trade association of the recycling industries. More than 50 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, 3rd June 2004**

### ***World Recycling Convention Berlin 24-26 May 2004***

#### **Tyres Committee: Urgent need for tyre recycling innovation**

EU landfill controls introduced in the summer of 2003 were effectively pushing a further 750,000 tonnes of scrap tyres into the marketplace each year, according to Barend Ten Bruggencate of VACO in The Netherlands, who chaired the BIR Tyres Round-Table in Berlin. The end result had been an increase in stocks, pressure on margins, a decline in the granulate price, and an even greater need for tyre recycling innovation.

On this final point, Mr Ten Bruggencate noted that collaborative research was already taking place between industry and some leading European universities, and that further investment in tyre recycling research was envisaged by the Brussels-based rubber industry organisation BLIC (Bureau de Liaison des Industries de Caoutchouc). He drew particular attention to the development in Canada of a building material derived from scrap tyres whose characteristics resembled those of

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stone. 'Tests have been done and the forecasts are really good,' he told delegates in Berlin.

The chairman talked of 'booming' sales of rubber granulate in The Netherlands for use in sports pitches, as well as of the potentially highly significant role that the cement industry could play 'in reducing the mountain of end-of-life tyres'.

Mr Ten Bruggencate said that several established EU member states - notably the UK - were encountering problems in implementing the legislation introduced last year relating to the landfilling of whole tyres, and were 'still relying on landfill for disposing of a significant proportion of their scrap tyre arisings'. Poland, meanwhile, had just become a member of the EU and would have difficulty in abiding by stricter environmental controls given that many of the country's private landfill operators appeared likely to go bankrupt in the near future.

Notification was required for exports of all wastes to Poland and to four other new member states of the EU - namely Hungary, Latvia, Malta and Slovakia, it was pointed out.

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