

PRESS RELEASE

Recent BIR World Recycling Convention & Exhibition in Hong Kong (22-24 May 2017)

International Trade Council:

Recycling industry a major jobs creator

Brussels, 31 May 2017

Use of the terms “scrap”, “secondary raw materials” or “recycled raw materials” fully reflects their value as resources, the BIR International Trade Council’s Chairman Michael Lion underlined at the body’s latest meeting in Hong Kong on May 22.

Mr Lion of locally-based Everwell Resources made these observations in the context of two guest presentations, the first from Adina Renee Adler who is Senior Director of Government Relations & International Affairs at the US Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries. She argued that terminology was essential to achieving clarity on trade issues, such as those raised by China’s National Sword initiative.

Regarding the likely impact of America’s new President Donald Trump on trade policy, she said his clear priority was US job protection and creation. The fact that the US recycling industry was supporting well over half a million US jobs duly provided a useful starting point when talking to government, she added.

According to Ms Adler, the President’s pronouncements have tended to indicate that he is a supporter of free trade who will nevertheless take reciprocal action when another country raises a trade barrier.

Hon-Meng Wong, Assistant Director (Waste Reduction & Recycling) within the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China’s Environment Protection Department, informed delegates to the ITC meeting that only 35% of Hong Kong’s municipal solid waste (MSW) was recovered for recycling and that the remainder was consigned to landfill at a daily rate of 1.39kg per capita.

BIR – REPRESENTING THE FUTURE LEADING RAW MATERIAL SUPPLIERS

Hong Kong's blueprint for the sustainable use of resources sets the target of a 40% reduction in the waste disposal rate by 2022. To assist in reaching this goal, the intention was to introduce a quantity-based MSW charging scheme in 2019 "to bring about behavioural change", the speaker explained. He also noted that the government had spent more than US\$ 3.5bn on green procurement between 2013 and 2015, partly to boost markets for recycled products.

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