

## PRESS RELEASE

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### *Recent BIR World Recycling Convention (Round-Table Sessions) in New Delhi (14 - 16 October 2017)*

## ***Textiles Division:***

### **Rising pressure on India's recyclers despite "astounding" contribution**

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**Brussels, 20 October 2017**

India's textiles recycling sector employs more than one million people and, each year, turns over around US\$ 2 billion in processing some 5 million tonnes of material. But despite these "astounding numbers" in terms of social and economic contribution, the sector is under pressure from increasing labour costs, a freight cost disadvantage, ageing technology, high import duties and onerous licence requirements, lamented Nohar Nath in his guest presentation to the BIR Textiles Division meeting in New Delhi on October 15.

The CEO of India's Kishco Group also argued that the country's government and officialdom in general should look to alter their mindset and truly recognise the importance of recycling. He used the example of an established textiles waste importer whose imports were blocked recently when a customs official deemed them to be hazardous and demanded proof that this was not the case, thus costing the company time and income.

This is also "a very critical time", said Mr Nath, for Indian companies holding licences to import post-consumer textiles. They are facing an obligation to export 100% by weight of what they bring into the country - a measure that will force businesses into closure, he believes. Having noted that all post-consumer textiles for processing are imported and that none are collected domestically, the guest speaker stressed the effectiveness of recycling operations in India, with 99% of all materials being recycled. Even labels, buttons and zips are regularly sold into India's so-called "unorganised" market.

In opening the meeting, the BIR Textiles Division's President Mehdi Zerroug of Framimex in France argued that an "open and controlled" import of used clothing into the Indian and Chinese markets

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**BIR – REPRESENTING THE FUTURE LEADING RAW MATERIAL SUPPLIERS**

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would be an “extraordinary” development for the recycling industry and that BIR believed such a prospect “should be reasonably discussed”.

Regarding latest developments in the French market, Mr Zerroug reported a constant increase in volumes, driven both by environmental measures motivating municipalities to develop selective collections from the public and by the financial support provided by France’s eco-body to European sorters of French originals.

He went on to underline the difficulties involved in securing effective punishments for those guilty of the organised theft of material from collection bins while Alan Wheeler of the UK’s Textile Recycling Association complained of “the dumping of unlicensed collection banks in public car parks” and also the stealing of banks from legitimate operators. “Illegal operators have no legal right to take any of these banks, and because they are permanently depriving legitimate businesses of their property this constitutes theft and criminal prosecutions should be pursued,” he insisted.

Used clothing values in the UK are under pressure - particularly for the charity shop grade, Mr Wheeler also noted, while exports to Africa have remained firm amid regular complaints about delays in receiving payment.

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